



IN THE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA AT BENGALURU

DATED THIS THE 18TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2025

PRESENT

THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE B M SHYAM PRASAD

AND

THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE T.M.NADAF

WRIT PETITION NO. 38147 OF 2025 (S-KSAT)

C/W

WRIT PETITION NO. 38293 OF 2025 (S-KSAT)

IN WP No. 38147/2025

BETWEEN:

Digitally
Signed by
REKHA R
Location :
High Court of
Karnataka

THE STATE OF KARNATAKA
REP. BY SRI T. HEERALAL I F S
CHIEF CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS AND
RECRUITMENT AUTHORITY
CHAMARAJANGARA CIRCLE
CHAMARAJANAGARA - 571313.

...PETITIONER

(BY SRI.REUBEN JACOB., AAG FOR
SRI. V. SHIVAREDDY., AGA)



NC: 2025:KHC:54131-DB
WP No. 38147 of 2025
C/W WP No. 38293 of 2025

AND:

RAJESH NANCHI
S/O RAJU
AGE ABOUT 23 YEARS
R/AT MASTHIGUDI PUNAR
VASATHI KENDRA, ANNUURU POST,
MYSORE DISTRICT - 571114
MYSURU.

...RESPONDENT

THIS WP IS FILED UNDER ARTICLES 226 AND 227 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA PRAYING TO a) QUASH THE ENTIRE PROCEEDINGS IN CONTEMPT APPLICATION C.T.A. NO.3/2025 ARISING OUT OF A.NOS. 1705-1707/2024 PENDING BEFORE THE HONBLE KARNATAKA STATE ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL, AT ANNEXURE-A, INCLUDING THE IMPUGNED ORDERS DATED 24/10/2025, 05/12/2025 AS BEING WITHOUT JURISDICTION, ARBITRARY, VIOLATIVE OF NATURAL JUSTICE AND CONTRARY TO SETTLED CONTEMPT JURISPRUDENCE; b) DECLARE THAT THE PETITIONER HAS FULLY AND BONAFIDE COMPLIED WITH THE ORDER DATED 27/09/2024 IN A.NOS. 1705-1707/2024 AND THAT NO CASE OF WILFUL OR DELIBERATE DISOBEDIENCE IS MADE OUT AGAINST THE PETITIONER; c) ISSUE A WRIT OF CERTIORARI OR ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE WRIT, ORDER OR DIRECTION SETTING ASIDE ALL



NC: 2025:KHC:54131-DB
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CONSEQUENTIAL PROCEEDINGS ARISING OUT OF
CONTEMPT APPLICATION BEARING C.T.A. NO.3/2025 IN
A.NOS. 1705-1707/2024 AT ANNEXURE-A PENDING
BEFORE THE HONBLE KARNATAKA STATE
ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL, BENGALURU, INCLUDING
THE FRAMING OF CHARGES, DIRECTION FOR
PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND ORDERING FOR FIXING
OF DATE OF TRIAL.

IN WP NO. 38293/2025

BETWEEN:

1. THE STATE OF KARNATAKA
REPRESENTED BY
THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY TO GOVT.,
DEPT.OF FOREST, ECOLOGY AND
ENVIRONMENT,
M.S.BUILDING, BENGALURU-01.
2. THE PRINCIPAL CHIEF
CONSERVATOR OF FOREST,
ARANYA BHAVAN, 18TH CROSS,
MALLESHWARAM,
BENGALURU-560 003.
3. THE CHIEF CONSERVATOR OF FOREST,
AND RECRUITMENT AUTHORITY,
CHAMARAJANAGAR CIRCLE,
CHAMARAJANAGAR-571 313.

...PETITIONERS

(BY SRI. REUBEN JACOB., AAG FOR
SRI. V. SHIVAREDDY., AGA)



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AND:

1. SRI.MADA,
S/O CHELUVAIAH,
AGED ABOUT 32 YEARS,
R/AT VADERAHALLL,
MUTHIGECHIKKATHALAALU,
H.D.KOTE, TALUK,
MYSURU DISTRICT-571 121.
2. SRI. MANJAPPA Y.B.,
S/O RAJU, AGED ABOUT 29 YEARS,
AGED ABUT 28 YEARS,
R/AT YAHWANTHAPURA,
SARAGURU HOBLI,
H.D.KOTE TALUK,
MYSURU DISTRICT-571 127.
3. SRI. RAJESHA NANCHI,
S/O. RAJU,
AGED ABOUT 24 YEARS,
R/AT MASTHIGUDI PUNAR
VASATHI KENDRA,
ANNURU POST,
MYSORE DISTRICT-571 114.
4. SRI.SURESH,
AGED ABOUT MAJOR,
C/O. OFFICE OF
THE CONSERVATOR OF FOREST, AND
RECRUITMENT AUTHORITY,
CHAMARAJANAGAR CIRCLE,
CHAMARAJANAGAR-571 101.
5. SRI. KUMARA,
AGED ABOUT MAJOR
C/O OFFICE OF THE CONSERVATOR OF



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FOREST AND RECRUITMENT AUTHORITY,
CHAMARAJANAGAR CIRCLE,
CHAMARAJANAGAR-571 101.

6. SRI.MAHESHA,
AGED ABOUT MAJOR
C/O OFFICE OF THE CONSERVATOR
OF FOREST AND RECRUITMENT AUTHORITY,
CHAMARAJANAGAR CIRCLE,
CHAMARAJANAGAR-571 101.

...RESPONDENTS

THIS WP IS FILED UNDER ARTICLES 226 AND
227 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA PRAYING TO (a)
SET ASIDE ORDER DATED 27.09.2024, PASSED IN A.
No. 1705-1707/2024 BY THE HONBLE KARNATAKA
STATE ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL, AT ANNEXURE-A,
IN SO FAR AS PARAGRAPH 15; (ii) IS CONCLUDED.

THESE PETITIONS, COMING ON FOR
PRELIMINARY HEARING, THIS DAY, ORDER WAS MADE
THEREIN AS UNDER:

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE B M SHYAM PRASAD
and
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE T.M.NADAF



ORAL ORDER

(PER: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE B M SHYAM PRASAD)

The State of Karnataka, represented by the concerned officers from the Department of Forest and Ecology and Environment, has filed a writ petition in W.P.No.38293/2025 calling in question the order dated 27.09.2024 in Application Nos.1705-1707/2024 on the file of the Karnataka State Administrative Tribunal at Bengaluru [for short, '*the Tribunal*']. The next writ petition in W.P.No.38147/2023, though the cause title of the petition reads is by the State of Karnataka, is on behalf of the Chief Conservator of Forest and Recruitment Authority, Chamarajanagar Circle, Chamarajanagar [*the Chief Conservator of Forest*] calling in question the Tribunal's orders dated 24.10.2025 and 05.12.2025 in Contempt proceedings in CTA No.3/2023.



2. The Tribunal, by the order dated 07.11.2025 in CTA No.3/2023, has issued a bailable warrant for the Chief Conservator of Forest's presence, and by the impugned order dated 05.12.2025, the Tribunal, recalling the order dated 07.11.2025, has framed charges and scheduled the contempt application for trial on 02.01.2026. The material circumstances leading to these impugned orders are as follows.

[a] The Conservative of Forest and Recruitment Authority, Chamarajanagar Circle, Chamarajanagar has issued notification dated 16.09.2023 [Annexure-R7] to fill up 32 posts of *Forest Watchers* [Group-D posts] within the Chamarajanagar Circle.

[b] The Complainant¹ has offered his candidature, and he, being aggrieved by his non-inclusion, has joined the others calling

¹ *The respondent in W.P.No.38147/2023, and he is referred to accordingly in this Order.*



in question the final selection list dated
16.03.2024².

[c] The complainant has sought for reservation as a person from a Scheduled Tribe [*the Forest Tribe category*], and the authorities have contested this application on the ground that the applicant being a resident of Mysuru District, could not have applied for selection under that category.

[d] The Tribunal has disposed of this applications on 27.09.2024³ directing the authorities to verify the documents submitted by the respondent and, if eligible under the relevant notification, to consider his case for appointment. The Tribunal's directions read as under:

² The application with the Tribunal is in No. 1705-1707/2024.

³ The Tribunal's order in this application is impugned in W.P.No.38293/2025.



"The Respondent No.3 is directed to re-verify the documents submitted by applicant No.3 Sri Rajesha Nanchi for him being a resident from H.D. Kote Taluk and if eligible as per relevant Notification being a part of the 5 Tiger Reserve in Chamarajanagar Circle to consider his case for appointment".

3. The authorities did not call in question this direction, and in fact acting in compliance with such directions, they have examined the documents filed by the complainant issuing the Endorsement dated 30.10.2024. It is essentially stated in this Endorsement [for which the selection notification] that it would include Chamarajanagar District and reservation under the aforesaid category would only be to those who live in this District and that the complainant, because he is a resident of Mysuru District, cannot be considered for appointment under reservation as a *Forest Watcher* within the Chamarajanagar Circle.



4. The complainant has filed the subject contempt application with the Tribunal; at the first instance, the Litigation Conducting Officer from the office of the Assistant Conservative Forest, Chamarajanagar Circle, Chamarajanagar, has filed a compliance affidavit reiterating the terms of the Endorsement; and upon the Tribunal issuing a warrant, the Chief Conservator of Forest's has filed a Counter Affidavit on 21.11.2025. It is on perusal of this affidavit that the Tribunal has found it proper to frame charges against the officer on 05.12.2025 based on the reasoning in the order dated 24.10.2025 where initial opinion is recorded. The Tribunal has recorded thus as the reasons⁴ for its *prima facie* opinion:

Thus, as shown above, the Accused/ Respondent has himself clearly held that some portion of H.D. Kote Taluk, which is in Mysore District falls under Nagarahole Forest Zone.

⁴ This Extract is not verbatim but is almost the same subject to some minor change.



The continuation of the said observation shows that the Bandipura and Nagarahole Forest Zones are considered for the present vacancy. However, even after admitting in Annexure-R3 that the complainant is a resident of H.D. Kote Taluk and the said Taluk falls within the Nagarahole Forest Zone, the Accused/ Respondent gave a different reasoning to reject the complainant's application stating that Chamarajanagar Circle falls within the Chamarajanagar District and as such, only the residents of Chamarajanagar District can be considered. In the enthusiasm to give reasons, it appears that the Accused / Respondent has forgotten what is mentioned in the order passed in A. Nos. 1705 to 1707/2024 and forgot the fact that even this Tribunal had noticed that the applicant before it [complainant in the present contempt application] was a resident of H.D. Kote Taluk falling within Mysore District, however, some portion of H.D. Kote Taluk was coming under Bandipura Forest Zone.

Even according to Annexure-R3, H.D. Kote Taluk comes under Nagarahole Forest Zone. Thus, revenue administration District was not required to be kept in the forefront while considering Wildlife Division or Tiger Reserve.



Since, the Accused / Respondent has ignored and mechanically reproduced its previous order in A.Nos. 1705 to 1707/2024 with some substitution of words and addition of few words, we are of the view that there is no compliance of the order from the Accused / Respondent side. Hence, matter is required to be proceeded further by framing charge.

5. Sri Reuben Jacob, a learned Additional Advocate General, submits that the Chief Conservator of Forest, who has assumed office after the Tribunal's order and the first compliance affidavit, has verified documents once again and filed his affidavit bringing on record stating as below, and the learned Additional Advocate General submits that the complainant cannot be accommodated even if he is a resident of H.D. Kote Taluk [Mysore District].

[a] *The selection notification is for 32 vacant posts of Forest Watchers in four reserves within Chamarajanagar Circle including five posts in Bandipura Tiger Reserve Region.*



- [b] The respondent could have applied for five notified posts for Bandipura Tiger Reserve Region because a portion of Bandipura Tiger Reserve Region includes a certain area within H.D. Kote Taluk.*
- [c] The complainant, though entitled to claim reservation, had to participate only under the General Category because no post is reserved for the local candidate from a Scheduled Tribe.*
- [d] The Complainant has scored much lower than the cut of marks of the general merit candidate.*

6. On the State's grievance with the Tribunal's direction in its order dated 27.09.2024⁵, this Court is of the opinion that the Tribunal should examine these circumstances to decide whether such direction must be reviewed, and therefore, the State/the Chief Conservator of Forest must apply. The writ petition in W.P.No.38293/2025 must be disposed of with liberty in this regard. Further this

⁵ This Order is called in question in W.P.No. 38293/2025



Court opines that if the Tribunal must consider on whether its directions as aforesaid must prevail on an application filed by the State/ the Chief Conservator of Forest, the continuation of contempt proceedings would not be a just course. The contempt proceedings, if an application is filed, must stand deferred subject to the outcome in the application. In the light of the afore, the following:

ORDER

[i] The writ petition in W.P.No.38293/2025 stands disposed of with liberty to the State to file application with the Tribunal for clarification/review of its order dated 27.09.2024 observing that all questions on merits of the circumstances now brought on record are left open to be considered by the Tribunal after due notice to the complainant.

[ii] The writ petition in W.P.No.38147/2025 is disposed of requesting the Tribunal to defer the



contempt proceedings scheduled to be held on 02.01.2026 in CTA No.3/2023 if the details of the application for clarification/review is placed on record on the next date of hearing until the outcome of such application.

[iii] In these circumstances, the personal appearance of the officer in the contempt proceedings in CTA No.3/2025 is exempted from the next date of hearing before the Tribunal.

Sd/-
(B M SHYAM PRASAD)
JUDGE

Sd/-
(T.M. NADAF)
JUDGE

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