

PRESS NOTE

EXCERPT

The National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, on 1st November 2018 (order attached), dismissed the applications (attached) filed by three main oil marketing companies of the Country (OMC's -IOCL, BPCL, HPCL) seeking extension of time ranging from three months to three years for implementing the order dated 28.09.2018 (attached) of the Tribunal directing them to install Stage I and Stage II Vapour Recovery Systems (VRS) in all fuel retail outlets and storage facilities in the National Capital by 31.12.2018. It further expanded the scope of the order for implementation to the entire NCR region, setting the deadline to 01.02.2019.

DETAILED NOTE

The National Green Tribunal had in April 2016 issued notice on a Petition seeking installation of the Vapour Recovery Systems at fuel transference centres, loading stations and retail outlets, in order to trap the release of Volatile Organic Compounds (BTX- Benze Toulene and Xylene) during transfer of petroleum products.

The NGT had on 28.09.2018, accepted the Petition and directed that the work of installation of Stage I and II VRS should be completed by 31.10.2018 for retail outlets selling more than 300KL per day and 31.12.2018 for outlets selling less than 300 KL per day.

In a show of concern and steadfastness, the NGT bench comprising of Justice Adarsh Goel, Justice S.P. Wangdi and Expert Member Dr Nagin Nanda, replying to the statement of the senior counsel appearing for the OMC's that petrol pumps will run dry if the order of the tribunal is to be followed with the given timeline, said that “ **people are dying, we are human beings too, we cannot watch people die because of this pollution**”. The counsel then stated that this pollution is because of Haryana and Punjab, said: “**no, what you are releasing is far more harmful, you have had two years to comply with the CPCB directions**” (in this regard). The bench also stated that “**let the fuel pumps run dry; we would be healthier if we rode bicycles**”. “ **We could have given you extension of a few days or a week but not for years and that extension would have been on a cost per day**”.

The Court also expanded the scope of installation of Vapour Recovery System to the entire NCR region setting the deadline for installation to 01.02.2019.

The details of NCR region are given below:

“The NCR as notified covers the whole of NCT-Delhi and certain districts of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, covering an area of about 53,817 sq. kms. The sub-region wise area details are as under:

Sub-Region	Name of the Districts	Area (in sq kms)
Haryana	Faridabad, Gurgaon, Mewat, Rohtak, Sonapat, Rewari, Jhajjar, Panipat, Palwal, Bhiwani (including Charkhi Dadri), Mahendragarh, Jind and Karnal (thirteen districts).	25,327
Uttar Pradesh	Meerut, Ghaziabad, Gautam Budh Nagar, Bulandshahr, Baghpat, Hapur and Muzaffarnagar (seven districts).	13,560

Rajasthan	Alwar and Bharatpur (two districts).	13,447
Delhi	Whole of NCT Delhi.	1,483