

WATER QUALITY INDIA ASSOCIATION

(A not-for-profit Company under the Companies Act, 2013)

CIN: U41000KA2014NPL205981

NGT Case - Friends NGO Vs. RO Purifiers

2015 - 2025

Empowering India's Water Quality



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(A not-for-profit Company under the Companies Act, 2013)

Registered Office: #38/1&2, Ahmed Plaza, First Floor, Beratena Agrahara, Hosur Main Road, Bengaluru - 560100

E-mail: wqia2015@gmail.com

Website: <https://wqia.in>



Industry: Non-Profit Organization**Headquarters:** Bengaluru, Karnataka**Founded:** 2014**Specialties:** Membership, Legal Support, Education Programme, Awareness Programme

The Water Quality India Association (WQIA) is a premier, nationally recognized organization dedicated to advancing the water quality sector in India. As a leading trade body, WQIA brings together stakeholders from across the water treatment industry, including manufacturers, suppliers, regulatory authorities, and research institutions, to promote best practices, innovation, and sustainable solutions for water purification.

Founded with the mission to improve the quality of drinking water and contribute to public health in India, WQIA plays a crucial role in shaping the water treatment industry by setting high standards for both products and practices. The association is committed to promoting safe, reliable, and sustainable water solutions that protect consumers from waterborne diseases and ensure access to clean water for all.



At the core of WQIA's operations is its emphasis on collaboration, advocacy, and education. Through active participation in policy discussions, legal matters, and the development of industry standards, WQIA ensures that its members are equipped with the knowledge and tools needed to navigate the evolving landscape of water treatment. WQIA also works tirelessly to raise public awareness and provide technical expertise to ensure that water treatment systems are not only effective but also environmentally responsible.



With a strong track record of collaboration with government agencies, industry leaders, and environmental organizations, WQIA continues to be a key driver of innovation in the water quality sector. Its initiatives, such as the launch of product certifications like the "Seal of Purity", the development of national standards for water purification, and ongoing advocacy for policy changes, highlight its commitment to creating a future where clean and safe drinking water is accessible to all.

The purpose envisioned for WQIA to focus on:

- To promote and protect interests of drinking water treatment industry
- Increase WQIA membership and participation in Trade Shows
- Introduce WQIA Education through Qualified Water Professional Certified Service Technician Training Programmes.
- Help with local government relations and develop or adopt India Standards and Regulations
- Protecting WQIA membership logo
- Develop consumer education and awareness program
- Set up two meetings in a year to discuss industry issues

WQIA's membership spans the length and breadth of the water industry, and by joining the association, companies and professionals gain access to valuable resources, networking opportunities, and a platform to contribute to shaping the future of the water quality industry in India.

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Letter From The WQIA

Dear Team,

As we mark another year of progress, we are filled with pride and gratitude for the dedication, innovation, and passion that each of you brings to the Water Quality India Association. It has been an incredible journey over the past decade, and together we've witnessed remarkable improvements in the water quality sector across India. While we have made great strides, we recognize that there are still significant challenges ahead, and our collective work remains crucial in ensuring that clean and safe water is accessible to all.

Over the past ten years, the water quality landscape in India has evolved substantially. We've seen advancements in water purification technologies, increased awareness about water conservation, and greater emphasis on sustainable practices. As an association, we have been at the forefront of driving change through initiatives such as **WQIA meetings**, associated with **WAPTAG, WAPTEMA, SRW** and **Government Institutions**. These platforms have enabled collaboration among industry experts, technology developers, and stakeholders to improve water treatment solutions and tackle aquatic pollution.

In addition to our ongoing projects, the India NGT case has highlighted the pressing need for rigorous enforcement of water quality standards. We continue to work closely with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) to align on water treatment guidelines and contribute to the development of standards that reflect our commitment to quality. Furthermore, our efforts in policy advocacy and collaboration with the government have resulted in initiatives aimed at improving the efficiency of water purification systems across the nation.

Our various WQIA events, seminars, and workshops have further empowered our community, showcasing the progress we've made and reinforcing our commitment to clean water. These occasions have allowed us to learn from each other and inspire new solutions for the future.

We are proud of what we have accomplished, but the journey does not end here. We have many more milestones to achieve, and with your support and dedication, we will continue to push the boundaries of innovation, sustainability, and excellence in water quality. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to each of you for your contributions, and I look forward to our continued collaboration in creating a secure future.

Thank you for being an essential part of this association, and together, let's continue to make a lasting difference.



Team WQIA

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About NGT Case

The Water Quality India Association (WQIA) has been actively involved in a significant case before the National Green Tribunal (NGT) concerning the use of Reverse Osmosis (RO) technology in water purification. This case has been pivotal in addressing environmental concerns related to water treatment practices in India.

Background of the Case:

In May 2019, the NGT issued an order banning the use of RO systems in areas where the Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) in drinking water are less than 500 mg per liter. This decision was based on a joint report by the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), and the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. The report criticized RO companies for misleading consumers by claiming that RO technology could remove all impurities, whereas it is primarily effective for desalination. Additionally, the report highlighted that RO systems often waste a significant amount of water during the purification process.

WQIA's Involvement:

In response to the NGT's order, WQIA, representing the interests of RO companies, filed a petition in the Supreme Court seeking a stay on the NGT's directive. The association argued that the NGT's ban was premature and lacked a comprehensive understanding of the technology's benefits, especially in areas with high TDS levels. WQIA also presented a report from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), which indicated that drinking water quality in several Indian cities did not conform to BIS standards, underscoring the need for effective water purification solutions like RO systems.

Supreme Court's Response:

On November 22, 2019, the Supreme Court declined to stay the NGT's order. The Court noted that the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) was already in consultation with the NGT to implement its order. The Court directed WQIA to present its concerns to the MoEF&CC within ten days, emphasizing the need for a balanced approach that considers both environmental sustainability and public health.

Implications and Ongoing Developments:

The NGT's decision has had significant implications for the water purification industry in India. It has prompted discussions on the environmental impact of RO systems, particularly concerning water wastage and energy consumption. The case has also highlighted the necessity for stringent water quality standards and the role of technology in achieving safe drinking water.

The case remains a subject of ongoing deliberation. WQIA continues to engage with regulatory bodies to advocate for the interests of the water purification industry, aiming to find a solution that balances technological advancement with environmental responsibility.

This case underscores the complex interplay between technological innovation, environmental conservation, and public health in the water purification sector. It highlights the importance of collaborative efforts among

industry stakeholders, regulatory authorities, and environmental organizations to develop sustainable and effective water treatment solutions.

Progress Update: Collaboration with BIS, NGT, and CPCB

We are pleased to share that WQIA has made remarkable strides with the invaluable support of all our members. One of the key areas of progress has been our ongoing involvement with key regulatory and environmental bodies, including the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the National Green Tribunal (NGT), and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). These collaborations have been pivotal in advancing our mission to uphold water quality standards and contribute to sustainable community water projects.

BIS Standards and Community Water Projects

As part of our ongoing commitment to improving water quality and safety, WQIA has been actively engaged with BIS, which is responsible for setting and updating national standards for water quality and treatment systems. The association has been involved in discussions around the periodic revisions of these standards, ensuring that they reflect the latest scientific research, technological advancements, and the needs of the industry. This collaboration has allowed us to contribute meaningfully to the development of standards that will ensure safer and more sustainable water treatment processes across the country.

In addition, WQIA's involvement in community water projects continues to grow. These projects focus on providing clean and safe drinking water to underserved communities. Through collaborations with local governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders, we are working on initiatives that bring the benefits of clean water to rural and urban areas alike. The success of these projects relies on the support and engagement of our members, whose expertise and commitment to water quality make a significant impact.

NGT Case Involving WQIA

One of the key areas where WQIA has played a crucial role is in our ongoing case with the National Green Tribunal (NGT). As you may know, the NGT is a specialized body established to handle environmental matters and enforce the principles of sustainable development. The NGT case involving WQIA revolves around issues related to water pollution, effluent discharge standards, and the broader regulatory framework for water management in India. WQIA has been actively involved in advocating for stricter enforcement of water quality regulations and the implementation of more sustainable practices for water treatment and waste management. We have represented the interests of our members and the broader water treatment industry in front of the tribunal, stressing the need for more robust compliance with environmental standards. Our efforts are aimed at addressing both industrial and municipal water pollution, as well as advocating for improvements in the enforcement of existing laws related to water quality.

The NGT case has also highlighted the importance of collaboration between various stakeholders in the water sector, including the government, private sector players, and environmental organizations. WQIA has been at the forefront of facilitating these discussions, ensuring that the concerns of the water treatment industry are heard and considered in decision-making processes. Our participation in this case will ultimately help shape future regulations that will safeguard water resources for generations to come.

CPCB and Environmental Regulations

In addition to our work with BIS and NGT, WQIA continues to engage with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) on various matters related to environmental compliance, pollution control, and sustainable practices in water treatment. The CPCB plays a critical role in monitoring and regulating pollution levels in India, and our association's involvement ensures that the water treatment industry remains aligned with national environmental standards.

Through these collaborations, WQIA is able to provide input on industry-specific concerns, advocate for policy changes, and contribute to the development of environmental guidelines that are both practical and effective. Our collective efforts are aimed at improving the overall environmental footprint of water treatment practices, reducing water pollution, and promoting the long-term sustainability of water resources.

Updates on NGT Matter

Mr Pratap Venugopal, Senior Counsel of the Supreme Court, representing WQIA in the NGT matter updated members on the case.

NGT Case Update on the RO Systems Matter

In the ongoing National Green Tribunal (NGT) case, Friends NGO has filed an application against the Delhi & District Cricket Association (DDCA) and other associated entities, alleging that water is being misused at the Kotla Cricket Club. Specifically, the NGO raised concerns about the use of water and the environmental impact of water systems being employed, including reverse osmosis (RO) technology, at the Kotla ground.

During the hearing, the NGT made a significant observation that while the environmental impact of water usage must be regulated, they did not consider the manufacture and sale of RO systems to be inherently harmful. This observation was made while the Tribunal directed the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to conduct a thorough investigation. The CPCB has been tasked with collecting water samples from a variety of locations, including houses supplied by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) and other corporations, as well as from the tanks or sources supplying water to various parts of Delhi. These samples will be analyzed to assess their quality and to understand the environmental impact of the water supply, with the findings to be presented in the next hearing.

The CPCB has requested an adjournment to gather and file a more detailed report based on the samples collected. Meanwhile, DDCA has requested additional time to prepare and submit their response regarding the allegation that they are using RO water at the Kotla Cricket Ground. The NGT has adjourned the case to October 31, directing all other defendants who have not filed their responses to do so within two weeks. The Tribunal has also given Friends NGO the liberty to file a rejoinder (a response to the defendants' reply) within the same two-week period.

Strategy and Way Forward for WQIA

Given the ongoing nature of the case, the Water Quality India Association (WQIA), which is a recognized and registered association within the water industry, has taken on the responsibility of defending RO systems and their manufacturers. As the case proceeds, it is clear that the burden of defense rests largely on WQIA, as they represent the interests of RO manufacturers, suppliers, and other stakeholders in the water purification industry.

One of the key challenges highlighted in the update is that governmental agencies and authorities, including the CPCB, have been slow to submit their reports and replies before the NGT. This delay can significantly affect the progress of the case, making it imperative for WQIA to correct and complete information is presented before the Tribunal. In particular, WQIA is advised to provide relevant studies, reports, and data that can bolster the case for the continued use of RO water purification systems, addressing any misconceptions about their environmental impact, especially concerning water waste or RO reject.

In addition to legal strategies, WQIA has been advised by Mr. Pratap Venugopal, Senior Counsel of the Supreme Court, who is representing the association in the NGT case, to educate consumers on how RO reject water could be reused. Mr. Venugopal emphasized that, despite a strong legal defense, it is essential for RO manufacturers and stakeholders to be more proactive in demonstrating sustainability in the use of RO systems. This includes informing consumers about methods to reuse reject water in ways that reduce environmental impact, such as using it for non-potable purposes like gardening, cleaning, or industrial uses.

Moreover, it was recommended that the recycling of RO reject water should be featured in all written communication materials produced by RO manufacturers, such as brochures, advertisements, and user guides. This will help consumers understand the benefits and environmental responsibility of using RO systems, potentially alleviating concerns raised by NGOs and environmental bodies.

To be continued:

The case is currently sub judice, meaning it is still under judicial review, and the NGT has directed the relevant authorities to come up with their defense arguments. As the hearing continues, WQIA's active involvement is critical to ensure that accurate information about the benefits and responsible use of RO water purification systems is presented.

In the meantime, it is also essential for WQIA members to adopt a proactive approach by promoting the reuse of RO reject water and incorporating these environmentally sustainable practices into their communications. This proactive stance can go a long way in showing a commitment to both water quality and environmental responsibility.