

1236

year 1976 for harvesting of 60,000 cum of timber annually from the productive forest area of Little Andaman. After the Corporation had worked for 10 years, a lease agreement was signed between the respondent Corporation and the Andaman and Nicobar Administration in 1987 wherein and whereby only 19,600 Ha. of forest area was leased out to the Corporation for period of 30 years, retrospectively from 1.4.1977 and the regulatory management of the leased out forests was assigned to Andaman and Nicobar Forest and Plantation Development Corporation Ltd.. The respondent Corporation therefore, had to confine its activities within the parameters of 19,600 ha of the reserved Forests outside the tribal Reserve. After the signing of the lease agreement in the year 1987. Thus there is no loss of forest cover within the tribal reserve as a result of the activities of the respondent Corporation.

21. That with reference to statements made in paras 21 to 28 the same are denied and disputed except that are specifically and expressly admitted. As stated in paras ut-supras the geographical area of Little Andaman Island is 73,200 ha and the entire area of the Little Andaman was declared as reserved Forests vide Notification No. 59/G.635 of 1962 dated 17-4-1963. I say that the respondent Corporation was working in the Forest area leased out to them by the Central Govt. Vide order dated 17.1.1977. Therefore, the contention of the writ petitioners as stated in the