

## "Constitution bench to hear Mahasangh case on January 10



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The Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court will hear cases 562/2012, 876/2014, 311/2015, and 68/2016, brought by the Asom Samyukta Mahasangh of Assam, represented by Motiur Rahman and 102 Khilonjiya tribal organizations, against the Government of India, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of External Affairs, the Election Commission, the Registrar General of India, the Government of Assam, and the All Assam Students' Union. The cases were previously heard by two-judge benches of Justices Rohinton Fali Nariman and Ranjan Gogoi in 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016, but were referred to a five-judge Constitution bench for final trial because the defendants were unable to provide sufficient arguments based on the Constitution. The trial was held on two constitutional benches during the tenure of Supreme Court Chief Justice Jagdish Singh Khehar in 2017 and 2018.

The following Chief Justices of the Supreme Court have ordered the convening of a constitutional bench: Tirtha Singh Thakur (2015-2017), Deepak Mishra (2017-2018), Ranjan Gogoi (2018-2019), Sharad Arvind Bobde (2019-2021), Nathulapati Venkat Ramana (2021-2022), and Uday Umesh Lalit (2021-2022). Chief Justice Lalit established the bench, which is still in session. In 2019, Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi denied Mahasangh's request to cancel the constitutional bench. This event has been recorded as a negative occurrence in the history of the Supreme Court.

Motiur Rahman, a representative of the mahasangh, informed a news agency that a five-judge constitutional bench will finalize the case on January 10 with guidance from the Attorney General and Solicitor General and issue an order setting the date for a continuous hearing of the constitutional bench. Rahman is hopeful that the constitutional bench will provide justice for Mahasangh.

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Assam Times Staff. [editor@assamtimes.org](mailto:editor@assamtimes.org)

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