

PIL against illegal saw mills and felling of trees in Meghalaya

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The illegal felling of trees and illegal operation of Sawmills in Meghalaya has assumed such wide and significant proportion that the said illegal operation of saw mills and also illegal felling of trees has resulted in severe public outcry in the State. The common conscious citizens of the country have reasons to be anxious in the face of gross mismanagement of the entire forest cover and resources of the State. The entire episode has now attained higher proportions in view of some recent developments which prima facie reveal the intention of the authorities manning the affairs of the State to help in achievement of undue gains to a few individuals at the cost of the Environment, depleting the Forest resources and Public Interest, and environmental safety.

A PIL was filed by Advocate Nayanjyoti Medhi on behalf of the Garo Students Union through the Khasi Hills Zone President Sanjeeb A Sangma and General Secretary Alex R Marak praying for urgent judicial intervention of the Gauhati High Court into the illegal operation of sawmills and also illegal felling of trees in the State of Meghalaya, more particularly in the Garo Hills region and the subsequent inaction by the department of forest and other authorities in the State of Meghalaya to ensure strict compliance of the Hon'ble Apex Court's orders passed in W.P 202 of 1995 [T.N. Godavarman Thirumulkpad versus Union of India]. It was prayed on behalf of the Garo Students Union that if Gauhati High Court does not urgently interfere to close down the illegal saw mills operating in the State of Meghalaya and monitor the entire conservation of natural forests, protection, forest rehabilitation, regeneration, afforestation, reforestation and new plantations, with a view to maintaining or restoring the ecological balance, the State will soon have depleted the entire forest cover leading to environmental imbalances of catastrophic proportions. The Division Bench comprising of Chief Justice Shri Jasti Chelameshwar and Justice Hrishikesh Roy has admitted the petition and issued notice to the Government of Meghalaya which was accepted by Government Advocate of Meghalaya Sri Ratul Goswami.

Further details may be had from Sanjeeb A Sangma at +91 98630 22587 or +91 94363 13284

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