
(2025) 07 MEG CK 0595

In the Meghalaya High Court

Case No : Public Interest Litigation No. 2 Of 2024

Geraldine G. Shabong

APPELLANT

Vs

State Of Meghalaya & Ors.

RESPONDENT

Date of Decision : 22-07-2025

Acts Referred:

Citation : (2025) 07 MEG CK 0595

Hon'ble Judges : I.P. Mukerji, CJ; W. Diengdoh, J

Bench : Division Bench

Advocate : K. Paul, S. Panthi, S. Chanda, N.D. Chullai, E.R. Chyne

Judgement

The scope of this public interest litigation now covers the entire State of Meghalaya.

By our order dated 24th June, 2025, we had expressed our deep concern on the allegation made by the petitioner that in the Lawsohtun area of East Khasi Hills District there was indiscriminate and large-scale felling of trees to the extent of changing the entire landscape of the area.

We had also perused the report of the State government dated 20th June, 2025 filed pursuant to an earlier order of this Court. By that order, a State Level Committee had been constituted by the Court to supervise the process of dealing by forest officials, with applications by individuals for felling or part felling or lopping off branches of trees likely to cause danger to life or property or both.

While dealing with the report, in our order dated 24th June, 2025, we had directed the Committee to be more proactive instead of delegating the work to subordinate Forest Officers. We called for a further report to be considered today.

Accordingly, a further report dated 18th July, 2025 is filed in Court today. It is quite an extensive report.

Mr. Paul, learned Senior Advocate appearing for the petitioner wants to peruse the report in detail. Accordingly, such time is given.

It appears from this report that the large-scale felling of trees in the Lawsohtun area of East Khasi Hills District was done to facilitate the construction of the Shillong Peak Ropeway Cable Car Project at Raid Laban Reserve Forests and Raid Laban Forest by the Tourism department of the State government upon obtaining appropriate approval for forest clearance from the Central government. It is also stated in the report that the Central government has provided compensatory land to the State government for afforestation. To this Mr. Paul submits that this land is situated in another district and would serve no purpose in improving the environment of the said area of East Khasi Hills District.

It also prima facie appears from the report that the Committee has been considering applications for felling or lopping off branches of trees with more attention and upon scrutiny of all details.

We make this PIL returnable on 30th July, 2025 for hearing.

In the meantime, the petitioner may file a rejoinder affidavit dealing with the report.