



2023:HHC:9058

Karam Chand vs. The State of H.P. & others

CWPIL No. 85 of 2022

24.03.2025 Present: Mr.Pushpender Kumar, Advocate, vice
Mr.Kulbhushan Khajuria, Advocate, for the
petitioner.

Mr.Rakesh Dhaulta, Additional Advocate
General, for the respondents-State.

Mr.Sat Prakash, Advocate, for respondent
No.4.

Mr.Gaurav Kumar, Advocate for respondent
No.5.

Mr.Sanjeev Bhushan, Senior Advocate,
alongwith Mr.Sohail Khan, Advocate, for Om
Prakash, Deputy Ranger.

In compliance of directions dated 06.11.2024

Inquiry Report has been submitted by Conservator of Forests,
Chamba Forests Circle, Chamba, H.P., wherein he, in his
findings, has observed as under:-

“3.5 Given the fact that illicit felling of
11 trees occurred I Sagti RF, the field
staff of Forest Department and HPSFDCL
could have prevented such illicit felling
had they been vigilant and closely
monitored the ongoing felling operations
in Lot no. 14/2022-23. The concerned
Forest Guard of Shakti Beat and Deputy
Ranger of Seikothi Block could have
taken proactive measures to prevent
illicit felling. Similar alertness and close
monitoring should have been put in place
by the concerned field staff of HPSFDCL
also.

4.0 Conclusion

Based on the above findings, the
following conclusion is hereby made:-

4.1 Damage caused to the tune of
Rs.16,67,408/- has to be recovered from
HPSFDC Ltd as per existing guidelines
and instructions. The Divisional Manager,
FWD Chamba HPSFDC Ltd. Has to
process the matter of paying damage bill
to H.P. Forest Department without further
delay. It is also found that Shri Puneet
Kumar the then Forest Guard in charge of



Shakti Beat and Dy Shri Mahinder Singh the then Block Officer in charge of Sei Kothi Block failed to take cognizance of illicit felling in RF Sagti in lot No.14/2022-23 till the time Sh. Karam Chand filed a complaint. Had they been vigilant, the illicit felling could have been prevented. The competent authority of HPSFDC Ltd. may take similar action against their negligent staff as per the rules governing HPSFDC Ltd.”

From the above, it is apparent that officers/officials of the Forest Department as well as H.P. State Forest Corporation, were found negligent or involved in illicit felling in reference. Though, in the report, it has been proposed that action should have been taken by the Competent Authority against the officers/officials but there is nothing on record with respect to any action taken against the officers/officials, who are responsible for or who have failed to prevent/check illicit felling, as stated in the Inquiry report submitted by Conservator of Forests, Chamba Forest Circle, Chamba.

In aforesaid background, Chief Secretary and Additional Chief Secretary (Forests) to the Government of H.P., as well as Managing Director, HPSFDC are directed to ensure initiation of action against the erring officers/officials responsible for illicit felling well before next date of hearing and to file their personal affidavits in this regard.

Necessary affidavits be filed on or before 25.04.2025.

Response to the Inquiry Report, if any, be filed within two weeks.



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List for consideration on 01.05.2025 before
appropriate Bench.

Name of Mr.Rajesh Kumar, Advocate, be reflected
in the cause list in future as a counsel for Om Prakash.

(Vivek Singh Thakur)
Judge

(Ranjan Sharma)
Judge

March 24, 2025
(Purohit)