

Serial No.01
Supplementary List

HIGH COURT OF MEGHALAYA
AT SHILLONG

PIL No.2/2022

Date of Order: 23.02.2022

In Re Suo Motu Illegal Mining of Coal Vs. State of Meghalaya
in the State of Meghalaya

Coram:

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanjib Banerjee, Chief Justice
Hon'ble Mr. Justice W. Diengdoh, Judge

Appearance:

For the Petitioner/Appellant (s) : –
For the Respondent (s) : Mr. B Bhattacharjee, AAG

For several months it has been widely reported, inter alia, in the newspapers regarding the illegal coal mining in the State.

An article has been published in *The Shillong Times* today with the heading “Mask of rat-hole mining falls in state.” The correspondent has given a detailed description of how he was taken to a particular village in the West Khasi Hills District bordering the South Garo Hills District. A photograph has also been published in the newspaper to highlight the “rat-hole mining” that is being indulged in a widespread manner.

It also appears from the relevant article and other newspaper reports that a complaint has been lodged in such regard by the Nokma of Nengchigen against certain persons, including the police, alleging widespread illegal mining of coal within the clan lands.

It is imperative that the matter be immediately looked into. An independent report should be filed by the Chief Secretary to the State and the Director General of Police when this matter appears a week hence, preferably, upon visiting the areas. It is made clear that the matter

complained of needs to be looked into, without any political interference; or else, the Court may be constrained to appoint a fact-finding committee or even put a special investigation team in place or take the assistance of some agency so that the matter is appropriately and thoroughly investigated in accordance with law and the persons involved are brought to book.

Both the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police will be free to take the assistance of the relevant correspondent from *The Shillong Times* who visited the area and has described the entire scenario in great detail in the article published today.

Mr. B Bhattacharjee, learned Additional Advocate General, is present in Court and has been called upon by the Court to immediately communicate this order to the appropriate personnel. The matter requires immediate, serious attention.

List on March 2, 2022.

(W. Diengdoh)
Judge

(Sanjib Banerjee)
Chief Justice

Meghalaya
23.02.2022
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