

2. The learned Advocate General has taken this Court through the Report to show the actions taken by the State in implementing the recommendations that have been made by the Committee, under several heads.

3. This Court however, notes that there are still areas of concern, which needs to be addressed urgently by the State. Firstly, is with regard the survey by Satellite imagery of the coal bearing areas, wherein it is reported that NESAC, which had been requested to undertake the project, has expressed its disability due to unavailability of high resolution Indian satellites. As seen from the recommendations of the Committee, it is absolutely necessary that imagery of the coal bearing areas be documented. The learned Advocate General on this issue has apprised the Court that the Meghalaya Basin Development Authority may be engaged by the State respondents in this regard, to take up this task.

4. Secondly, another aspect which is seen in the Status Report that needs urgent attention, is the conduct of inspection and verification by the State respondents on the allegations of fresh illegal coal mining in South West Khasi Hills District. In the 25th Interim Report filed by the Committee, this has been highlighted, and the recommendation is for monitoring and for checking at regular intervals, which appears to be

difficult as per the reports of the Additional Deputy Commissioner, filed before the Committee, wherein it has been stated that “there are also countless abandoned coalmines, some of which could be easily activated in a very short time period”. It is also stated in the Report that technical and logical support be provided to enable sealing of entrance to these mines by explosives to prevent reactivation.

5. Further, another area which deserves attention is with the setting up of Smart Integrated Check Gates in Borsora, Bagli and Cherragoan, inasmuch as, the recommendations of the Committee, as per the State Government has not yet been implemented, due to the unavailability of a suitable location to establish the said Smart Integrated Check Gate. As per the Status Report, a suggestion is given that a designated route be identified, for transporters to use, failure of which the coal would be seized. This also is yet to be acted upon, by the State Government.

6. Apart from the abovenoted areas of concern, it appears that on other fronts, as per the recommendations of the Committee, the directions are being carried out, to some extent.

7. Let this matter appear again on 02.12.2024, to enable the State respondents to apprise the Court as to the exact steps that have been

taken on the points noted above. Further, the learned Advocate General over and above the information to be provided, shall also apprise the Court with regard to the demurrage charges that have been levied, and the inventoried coal that is still remaining to be transported.

8. List accordingly.

(W. Diengdoh)
Judge

(H.S. Thangkhiew)
Judge

Meghalaya
28.10.2024
"V. Lyndem PS"