



Serial No. 02
Regular List

HIGH COURT OF MEGHALAYA
AT SHILLONG

PIL No. 2 of 2022

Date of Order: 27.04.2026

In Re: (Sou Motu): Illegal Mining of Vs. State of Meghalaya & Ors.
coal in the State of Meghalaya

Coram:

Hon'ble Mr. Justice H. S. Thangkhiew, Judge
Hon'ble Mr. Justice W. Diengdoh, Judge

Appearance:

For the Petitioner(s) :

For the Respondent(s) : Mr. A. Kumar, AG with
Ms. R. Colney, GA
Dr. N. Mozika, DSGI with
Ms. M. Myrchiang, Adv.

Per. H.S. Thangkhiew, Judge:

1. As recorded in the last order dated 15.04.2026, the Thirty Seventh Interim Report of Hon'ble Mr. Justice B.P. Katakey Committee (Retd.) has been filed. This report has flagged certain issues with regard to the noncompliance of several clauses of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 2024. The fact that none of the Police Cases cases registered, have



been investigated properly by the investigating agency has been noted, which includes investigation into the involvement of the recorded land owners in the coal mining activities, or over whose land illegally mined coal and illegal coal mining activities have been found. The fixation of accountability of concerned officials in terms of the Thirty Fifth Interim Report is also reported to be not satisfactory, as also with the steps taken with regard to the missing 4141.83 MT illegally mined coal.

2. The Thirty Seventh Interim Report being detailed and exhaustive touching upon many aspects, in the view of this Court needs a detailed status report to be filed by the State respondents to all the issues raised. A copy of the same is made over to Ms. R. Colney, learned GA, who is present in Court today.

3. This Court has also perused the Status Report filed to the Thirty Fifth Interim Report , and is constrained to note that with regard to the death of an individual namely (L) Mosaid Ali, which had occurred in the vicinity of an illegal coal mine at Umthe area under Sutnga Elaka, in spite of the observations of the Committee, Detailed Report dated 15.01.2026, by the Local police and the medical report, that attributed his death to severe crush injuries, The Deputy Commissioner in a letter dated 20.03.2026, has however come to a perverse finding, wherein he has stated that there is an absence of



credible evidence, directly linking to the death of the said person with any illegal coal mining activity, and as such payment of compensation to the legal heirs would require further substantiation. This Court in the face of the Detailed Report filed as far back as on 15.02.2026, and noted by the Committee in its 35th Interim report, cannot comprehend on what basis the compensation has been denied to the said deceased person. The Deputy Commissioner East Jaintia Hills is therefore directed to immediately contact the relatives of the deceased and grant compensation Rs. 3 lakhs, as allowed to the other victims of coal mining accident at Thangsko. It would also do well to obtain further details as to the nature of occupation of (L) Mosaid Ali, and as to how he happened to be engaged in illegal mining apart from ascertaining the identity of his employers.

4. With regard to the other information contained in the Status Report, such as measures to curb illegal coal mining, transportation of illegal mined coal to the designated depots, utilization of the funds on obtaining approval from the Oversight Committee, proposal for treatment and mine closure plan, and also installation of DMR check-gates, the same will be re-examined after a status report is filed to the Thirty Seventh Interim Report.



5. It is also directed that a further remuneration of a sum of Rs. 4 lakhs including amounts for secretarial expenses, shall be paid to the Hon'ble Mr. Justice B.P. Katakey (Retd).
6. List this matter on 01.06.2026, for further orders.

(W. Diengdoh)
Judge

(H.S. Thangkhiew)
Judge

Meghalaya
27.04.2026
"V. Lyndem PS"