

Serial No. 01
Regular List

HIGH COURT OF MEGHALAYA
AT SHILLONG

MC (PIL) No. 4 of 2026 in
PIL No. 2 of 2022

Date of Order: 05.03.2026

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
Dr. N. Mozika, DSGI
Ms. R. Colney, GA
Ms. C. Jala, Adv.

Per. H.S. Thangkhiew, Judge:

1. At the outset, this Court notes that the instant proceedings as also the last two dates concern only the incident that occurred at Thangsko, East Jaintia Hills District, as such it is deemed necessary that these proceedings be registered as MC (PIL) No. 4 of 2026 in PIL No. 2 of 2022.

2. In compliance of the order of this Court dated 24.02.2026, a Status Report on behalf of the State respondents has been filed today itself.

3. The learned Advocate General with Dr. N. Mozika, learned DSGI, has taken this Court through the Status Report, and has firstly submitted that with regard to the compensation to be disbursed to the next of kin of the deceased victims from Nepal, steps have been taken by the State administration as well as through the Ministry of External Affairs, to ascertain and verify the next of kin. Similarly, he submits with regard to the victims from Assam, intimation has been given to the respective Deputy Commissioners, for their assistance in the identification process. With regard to the victims from the vicinity, it is submitted that the compensation has been duly accorded.

4. The learned AG has also submitted that as per the observations of this Court, the terms of reference of the Commission of Inquiry has been expanded to include additional reference, which is reproduced hereinbelow:-

“g) To examine the nexus between the demand for and supply of illegal mined coal in the State of Meghalaya and the role of such persons, or authority, non-state groups including Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and to recommend measures for strengthening institutional mechanisms, fixing accountability and preventing recurrence.”

5. Added to this, is the order whereby Shri D.N.R. Marak, IPS, Inspector General of Police, (Law & Order) has been nominated to head the Special Investigating Team (SIT). The attention of this Court has also been drawn to the steps which have been taken by the State respondents which includes the transfer of certain officials in the Mining Department.

6. With regard to the cases registered, charge-sheeted pending investigation on the illegal extraction, transportation of coal and also explosives etc., the learned Advocate General prays that 4(four) weeks' time may be allowed to enable the State respondents to come up with tangible materials with regard to (i) Disbursal of compensation (ii) Progress of Special Investigating Team (SIT) and (iii) Progress of Investigations in the respective cases, which have been given in the summary appended to the Status Report.

7. With regard to the incident that has been reported in Today's paper in connection with the capsizing/accident of a coal-laden truck, the Superintendent of Police, who is present in Court today has produced copies of a delivery challan and also a consignment note, which shows that the coal in question was being transported to a cement plant in Lumshnong, from Assam, and not illegal coal as reported.

8. Accordingly, list this matter on 13.04.2026, for status report.

9. The personal appearance of Mr. Pankaj Rasgania, Superintendent of Police, East Jaintia Hills District and Mr. Vikash Kumar, the former Superintendent of Police, East Jaintia Hills District, shall stand dispensed with, on the next date.

(W. Diengdoh)
Judge

(H.S. Thangkhiew)
Judge

Meghalaya
05.03.2026
"V. Lyndem PS"