



Serial No. 01
Daily List

HIGH COURT OF MEGHALAYA
AT SHILLONG

PIL No. 2 of 2025

Date of order: 29.04.2025

Registrar General, High Court of Meghalaya

...Appellant

- versus -

State of Meghalaya represented by the Chief Secretary, Government of Meghalaya.

...Respondent

Coram:

Hon'ble Mr. Justice I.P. Mukerji, Chief Justice

Hon'ble Mr. Justice W. Diengdoh, Judge

Appearance:

For the Petitioner : -

For the Respondent : Mr. A. Kumar, AG with
Ms. R. Colney, GA
Dr. N. Mozika, DSGI with
Ms. K. Gurung, Adv.

i)	Whether approved for reporting in Law journals etc.:	Yes/No
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ii)	Whether approved for publication in press:	Yes
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Note: For proper public information and transparency, any media reporting this judgment is directed to mention the composition of the bench by name of judges, while reporting this judgment/order.

JUDGMENT: (per the Hon'ble, the Chief Justice) (Oral)

This public interest litigation was started pursuant to an order dated 11th December, 2024 by the Supreme Court. It requested us to initiate this litigation for the purpose of “ground truthing” of wetlands and identification of Ramsar sites amongst those waterbodies, in this State.



As explained by the learned Advocate General, not all waterbodies can be categorised as Ramsar sites. Waterbodies of a particular minimum area, depth, unique nature, characteristics and its natural habitat qualify as Ramsar sites. The purpose of the Supreme Court order was to ensure that suitable orders were passed by a High Court upon the State for identification, preservation and maintenance of these waterbodies in accordance with the resolution taken in the Ramsar Convention.

Learned Advocate General has filed a report dated 29th April, 2025 prepared by the Chief Conservator of Forests (Administration), Department of Forests and Environment of the State government.

The submissions of learned Advocate General based on this report have been most informative, convincing and detailed. He placed paragraph 10 of the affidavit which stated that all categories of wetlands comprising of 66 lakes/ponds, 1 oxbow/cut off meander, 6 riverine wetlands, 18 waterlogged bodies, 100 river/streams, 9 reservoirs/barrages and 25 tanks/ponds had been inspected by the Meghalaya State Wetland Authority and the personnel of the Chief Conservator of Forests (Administration), Department of Forests and Environment of the State government.

“Ground truthing” of these wetlands had been completed. It is opined in the report by the Chief Conservator of Forests of the State government that none of the above wetlands qualify as a Ramsar site.

The said report is accepted and taken on record.

We find that the writ petition [*Writ Petition (C) No. 304 of 2018*] in which the said order was passed by the Supreme Court on 11th December, 2024 is still pending.



Although there is no direction to this effect, we direct the Registrar General of this Court to affirm an affidavit in the said writ petition before the Supreme Court on behalf of the State of Meghalaya and this Court stating the above steps which have been taken in compliance with its said order, including all orders passed by this Court and the said report dated 29th April, 2025 of the State. The said affidavit should only be filed after obtaining appropriate leave from the highest court.

This public interest litigation is disposed of.

(W. Diengdoh)
Judge

(I.P. Mukerji)
Chief Justice

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