

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI**

Original Application No. 686/2023

In re : News item appearing in Northeast Now dated 27.10.2023 titled
**“Assam : Adil Hussain joins chorus urging Govt., NHAI to spare
centuryold trees for highway project”**

Date of hearing: 21.11.2023

**CORAM: HON’BLE MR. JUSTICE PRAKASH SHRIVASTAVA, CHAIRPERSON
HON’BLE DR. A. SENTHIL VEL, EXPERT MEMBER**

Respondent: Mr. Manu Beri, Adv. for NHIDCL
Mr. Balendu Shekhar, Adv. for NHAI (Through VC)

ORDER

1. This Original Application is registered *suo motu* on the basis of the news item titled **“Assam: Adil Hussain joins chorus urging Govt., NHAI to spare century-old trees for highway project”** appearing in “Northeast Now” dated 27.10.2023.

2. As per the said report, there is an allegation of cutting down of about 2000 trees for National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) road expansion between Guwahati to Goalpara in Assam.

3. Learned Counsel appearing for NHAI on advance notice has submitted that the project is being undertaken by the National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (NHIDCL) and the NHAI is not concerned with the said project.

4. Learned Counsel appearing for the NHIDCL on advance notice has sought time to obtain instructions and file the response.

5. Power of the Tribunal to take up the matter in *suo-motu* exercise of power has been recognized by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter of "*Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai vs. Ankita Sinha & Ors.*" reported in 2021 SCC Online SC 897.

6. In view of the fact that the OA involves substantial issue relating to compliance of environmental norms and provisions of the scheduled act, we deem it proper to implead the following as respondents in this OA:

- i. National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. through its Chairman.
- ii. State of Assam through its Chief Secretary.

7. Since the matter relates to Eastern Zone Bench, Kolkata, therefore, it is transferred to the Eastern Zone Bench, Kolkata for further appropriate action. Registry is directed to transfer the record of the OA to the Eastern Zone Bench, Kolkata.

8. List on 10.01.2024 before the Eastern Zone Bench, Kolkata.

Prakash Shrivastava, CP

Dr. A. Senthil Vel, EM

November 21, 2023
Original Application No. 686/2023
DV