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BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL,
EASTERN ZONE BENCH, KOLKATA

Original Application No. _____ of 2025

IN THE MATTER OF: *VIOLATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL & CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS*
Hemanta Kumar Panda *DUE TO INDISCRIMINATE ROADSIDE TREE FELLING, BOLANGIR*

Petitioner

Versus

State of Odisha & Others
Respondents

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Place: Bolangir, Odisha,

PIN- 767001

Date: - 19/06/2025

Hemanta w. Panda.

Signature:

Hemanta Kumar Panda

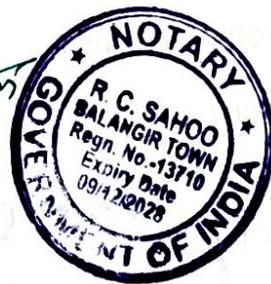
Applicant (Party-in-Person)

Mob-9437367999

bolhemanta.panda@gmail.com

Made Part of Affidavit

R. C. Sahoo
R.C. Sahoo
Notary, Balangir Town



IN THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
Eastern Zone Bench at Kolkata
Original Application No. _____ of 2025

IN THE MATTER OF:

Violation of environmental and constitutional rights due to indiscriminate roadside tree felling in Bolangir District, Odisha.

Petitioner-

Hemanta Kumar Panda

RTI Activist, Social Activist, and Public-Spirited Citizen
At-Tikrapara, Po/Dist- Bolangir, Odisha, PIN-767001
Age: 59 years

Versus-

- 1. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Odisha**
Aranya Bhawan, Bhubaneswar – 751003
- 2. District Collector, Bolangir**
Office of the Collector, Bolangir
- 3. Chief Secretary, Government of Odisha**
Lok Seva Bhawan, Bhubaneswar – 751001
- 4. Additional Chief Secretary, Forest, Environment & Climate change Department, Government of Odisha, Kharavela Bhawan,**
Bhubaneswar-751001

SYNOPSIS

This is a heartfelt plea from a citizen, not just as an environmental activist, but as a son of the soil of Bolangir — a land once adorned with green corridors of shade-giving trees, chirping birds, and vibrant village life under their canopy. Over the past decade, thousands of mature trees — some as old as 50 years — have silently fallen one after another in the name of “development”. What stands in their place now is not progress, but heat, dust, and silence.

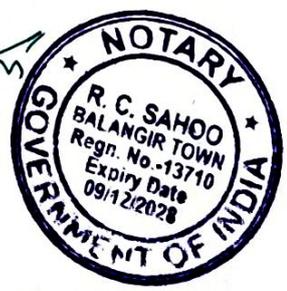
The Applicant, Hemanta Kumar Panda, aged 59, is an RTI activist and social worker from Bolangir District, Odisha. He has filed this petition under Sections 14 and 15 of the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010, after exhausting every

Hemanta K. Panda

Made Part of Affidavit

R. C. Sahoo

R.C. Sahoo 19.6.23
Notary, Balangir Town



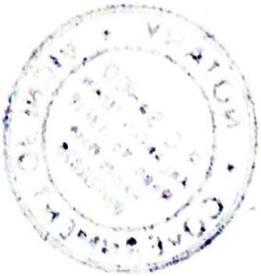
peaceful remedy to raise alarm over the mass felling of roadside trees across Bolangir. These trees — including neem, pipal, banyan, mango, and Ashok — were not just part of the environment but part of our childhood, our festivals, our folklore, and our very identity.

Through RTI applications, the Applicant uncovered that over 15,000 trees were felled in the last five years alone — with no transparent record of public consultation, environmental clearance, or compensatory afforestation. The ecological impact is visible: summer temperatures have risen sharply, soil erosion is increasing, biodiversity is declining, and rural livelihoods are affected. The question is not just about trees — it is about the constitutional right to life, clean air, and ecological balance under Article 21..

This petition is filed by me as Party-in-Person in public interest — to awaken the conscience of the administration, to remind all stakeholders of their duty towards future generations, and to stop the irreversible damage being done in the name of infrastructure. The Applicant humbly seeks the Hon'ble Tribunal's intervention to halt further felling, ensure accountability, and mandate a policy framework that respects both nature and development in my Bolangir District.

If trees had a voice, this petition would have come from them. But since they don't, the Applicant leads them his.

Hermanita w. Paroda
19/6/25



INVESTIGATION TO BE MADE

Made Part of Affidavit

R.C. Sahoo
R.C. Sahoo 19.6.25
Notary, Balangir Town



IN THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

Eastern Zone Bench at Kolkata

Original Application No. _____ of 2025

IN THE MATTER OF:

Violation of environmental and constitutional rights due to indiscriminate roadside tree felling in Bolangir District, Odisha.

Petitioner-**Hemanta Kumar Panda**

RTI Activist, Social Activist, and Public-Spirited Citizen

At-Tikrapara, Po/Dist- Bolangir, Odisha, PIN-767001

Age: 59 years

Versus-

1. **Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Odisha**
Aranya Bhawan, Bhubaneswar – 751003
2. **District Collector, Bolangir**
Office of the Collector, Bolangir
3. **Chief Secretary, Government of Odisha**
Lok Seva Bhawan, Bhubaneswar – 751001
4. **Additional Chief Secretary, Forest, Environment & Climate change**
Department, Government of Odisha, Kharavela Bhawan,
Bhubaneswar-751001

PETITION UNDER SECTION 14 AND 15 OF THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL ACT, 2010

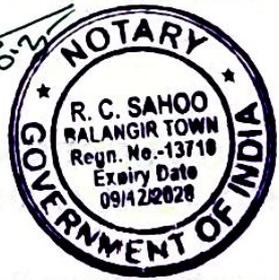
I, **Hemanta Kumar Panda**, aged 59, RTI Activist and Social Activist, residing at At-Tikrapara, Po/Dist- Bolangir, Odisha, respectfully file this application under Sections 14 and 15 of the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010, seeking urgent intervention of this Hon'ble Tribunal in the matter of indiscriminate roadside tree felling in Bolangir District under the pretext of road widening and infrastructure development.

Over the last ten years, my district has witnessed a **drastic depletion of green cover**, especially along roads that were once shaded by dense rows of neem,

Hemanta K. Panda

Made Part of Affidavit

R. C. Sahoo
R.C. Sahoo 19.06.22
Notary, Balangir Town



banyan, pipal, Ashok, and mango trees. These trees were 40 to 50 years old and formed a vital part of the ecosystem, providing nesting grounds to birds, shelter to animals, and relief to humans from extreme heat.

RTI responses accessed by me reveal that **over 15,000 mature roadside trees** have been felled in Bolangir District in the last five years alone. Year wise tree felling number in the RTI reply of the PIO of Divisional Forest Office, Balangir is annexed in annexure- . There is **no clear evidence of public consultation, transparency, or visible environmental clearance** preceding this mass cutting. If any clearance was taken, it has not been disclosed publicly. This raises serious questions on compliance with environmental regulations, particularly the **Environment Protection Act, 1986** and the **Forest Conservation Act, 1980**.

The felling of trees on such a scale has contributed to a **significant rise in local temperature**, soil erosion, and ecological imbalance. **Relocation or transplantation** of trees has not been attempted, despite it being a viable and recommended practice in many parts of India.

It is worth noting that the **State Government itself had earlier issued a ban on sawmills within a 5 km radius of reserved forests in BALANGIR DISTRICT**, recognising the threat of deforestation. Ironically, the same administration is permitting or facilitating mass cutting of old trees under various development projects — without informing the people properly about the implementation of compensatory or sustainable practices.

This act violates the Environment Protection Act, 1986, the Forest Conservation Act, 1980, and the constitutional right to life under Article 21. The tree felling also contradicts the principle of sustainable development and intergenerational equity.

As a concerned citizen, RTI activist and environmental advocate, I urge this Hon'ble Tribunal to intervene to **protect the remaining green cover and direct future projects to adopt sustainable tree management, including transplantation wherever feasible**.

The Applicant is filing this petition as Party-in-Person and humbly requests the Hon'ble Tribunal to register the application and list it for urgent consideration.

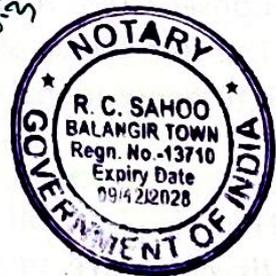
The Applicant respectfully seeks the indulgence of this Hon'ble Tribunal to issue appropriate directions to prevent further environmental degradation.

GROUNDS—

Heemananta W. Panda

Made Part of Affidavit

R. C. Sahoo
R.C. Sahoo 19.06.23
Notary, Balangir Town



- A. Violation of Environment Protection Act, 1986 and Forest Conservation Act, 1980.
- B. Lack of transparency, environmental clearance, and public consultation.
- C. Non-adoption of sustainable alternatives such as tree relocation and compensatory afforestation practically at ground level.
- D. Violation of Article 21 – Right to life with dignity and clean environment.
- E. Failure to uphold principles of sustainable development and intergenerational equity.
- F. Denying environmental justice by not implementing alternative method.

LIMITATION

This application is within limitation as the matter is of a continuing nature. The latest instances of tree felling occurred recently, and RTI replies confirming unlawful practices were received only in recent times. The cause of action is always alive, and immediate intervention is needed to prevent further environmental loss. Tree felling for road widening is a common practice in Odisha. Historically Bolangir District of Odisha did have significant areas of dense forest. While the District is now considered draught-prone and faces challenges related to de-forestation and livelihood issues. The district's forest cover has decreased over time due to various factors but now a day the main factor is tree felling by the government agencies for road widening and various projects.

INTERIM PRAYER

The Applicant further prays that this Hon'ble Tribunal may kindly be pleased to:

Direct the Respondents to maintain status quo and immediately halt all ongoing or proposed roadside tree felling activities in Bolangir District, Odisha, until the final disposal of the present application, in order to prevent further irreversible environmental harm.

PRAYER

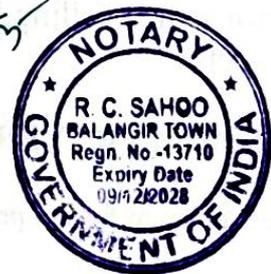
In light of the above, the Applicant humbly prays that this Hon'ble Tribunal may graciously be pleased to:

Hemanta W. Panda

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Made Part of Affidavit

R. C. Sahoo
R.C. Sahoo
Notary, Balangir Town



1. Direct the Respondents to immediately halt all future roadside trees felling in Bolangir District unless prior environmental clearance and public consultation is conducted.
2. Constitute an independent inquiry to assess the extent and legality of massive tree felling in the last five years in Bolangir District.
3. Mandate a district-level Compensatory Afforestation Plan with public participation and periodic disclosures.
4. Direct the concerned authorities to adopt tree transplantation/relocation practices in future infrastructure projects.
5. Direct the Chief Secretary, Government of Odisha, to frame a comprehensive State-level policy on road green corridor preservation, tree felling transparency, and relocation norms.
6. Ensure strict compliance with the Environment Protection Act, 1986; Forest Conservation Act, 1980; and Article 21 of the Constitution of India.
7. The Hon'ble NGT may give direction to the State of Odisha to constitute a state level High power Committee to decide on tree felling permission in projects involving 25 or more trees.
8. Pass any such other order(s) as this Hon'ble Tribunal may deem fit in the interest of justice, equity, and environmental protection.

This petition is filed by the Applicant in the larger public interest to protect and preserve the environment, and to uphold constitutional and ecological balance in the Bolangir region.

Place: Bolangir

Date: - 19/6/2025



Hemanta w. Panda, 19/6
Hemanta Kumar Panda
 Applicant (Party-in-Person)

VERIFICATION

CHECKED AND VERIFIED BY ME AT BOLANGIR ON DATE 19th JUNE 2025.

Hemanta w. Panda,
 SIGNATURE

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Made Part of Affidavit

R. C. Sahoo
R.C. Sahoo
Notary, Balangir Town



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Application for...
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BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
EASTERN ZONE BENCH, KOLKATA
ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. ___ OF 2025

IN THE MATTER OF:
Hemanta Kumar Panda ...Applicant
Versus
State of Odisha & Others ...Respondents



NOTARIAL REGISTER
Vol. No. 5
SI No. 4127
Date 19.06.2025

A F F I D A V I T

I, **Sri Hemanta Kumar Panda**, aged about 59 years, S/o Late Nanda Kishor Panda, Resident of At-Tikrapara, Po/Dist – Bolangir, Odisha, Pin-767001 do hereby solemnly affirm and state as follows:

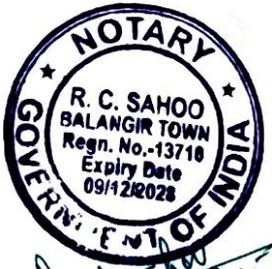
1. That I am the Applicant in the above-mentioned Original Application and am fully competent to swear this affidavit.
2. That I have read and understood the contents of the accompanying Original Application and affirm that the facts stated therein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and the application has been prepared under my instructions.

Hemanta w. Panda
DEPONENT
(Signature of Hemanta Kumar Panda)

VERIFICATION

Verified at **Bolangir** on this the 19th day of **June 2025**, that the contents of the above affidavit are true and correct to my knowledge and belief. No part of it is false and nothing material has been concealed therefore.

Hemanta w. Panda
DEPONENT
(Signature of Hemanta Kumar Panda)



R. C. Sahoo
19.06.25

AFFIDAVIT
Hemanta Ku. Panda having been
Identified by Sri. *R. C. Sahoo* Advocate
Solemnly affirm this *19th* day of *June* 2025
as before Sri R.C. Sahoo NOTARY, Balangir Town. Read over and
explained the contents to the deponent who admitted
to have understood correctly at the time of
making this affidavit
R. C. Sahoo
R.C. Sahoo 19.6.25
NOTARY, Balangir Town.

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ANNEXURE – A

IN THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
Eastern Zone Bench at Kolkata

Original Application No. ___ of 2025

IN THE MATTER OF:

Violation of environmental and constitutional rights due to indiscriminate roadside tree felling in Bolangir District, Odisha.

Applicant: Hemanta Kumar Panda

Title:

RTI Reply from the Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Bolangir regarding tree felling (dated 06/05/2025)

Description:

This annexure contains an official reply under the Right to Information Act, 2005, received from the Divisional Forest Officer, Bolangir. It states that over 15,000 trees were cut down during the last five years as part of various road widening projects. The species include neem, pipal, banyan, Ashok, and mango, which were originally planted along roadsides. This RTI reply is crucial evidence establishing the scale of tree felling in Bolangir district.

Enclosure:

- ❖ Photocopy of RTI reply letter vide Letter No. 1691 / 2F-RTI. / 2025 dated 06/05/2025

Hemanta w. Panda

Item No.2 RTI Information Regarding Tree Felling Year wise Last 5 Years

2020-21

SI No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
1	Patnagarh-Damkipali Road	1186
2	Tusura- Gudvela Road	123

2021-22

SI No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
1	Hanuman Mandir at Sudpada Road	22
2	Deogaon -Desandh Road	43
3	Belpada-Dhumabhata Road	59
4	Barpali- Balangir	1400

2022-23

SI No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
1	Chingerbandh to Dandrabahal Road ODR	422
2	Barapudugia to Bhutiarbahal Road	148
3	Khaprakhol to Harishankar	1577
4	Balangir-Chandanbhati Road	144
5	Uparjhar to NH-26 Road Via Rengali, Phatamunda, Jalia ODR	328
6	Balangir-Kantabanji-Bangomunda-Chandotara	827
7	Deogaon - Tikrapada Road	227
8	Balangir- Sonapur Road Near Govt Hospital Chhak	1
9	Balangir-Arjunpur-Tusura-Deogaon	168 & Poles 48
10	Patnagarh- Padampur Road	1096
11	Patnagarh-Khaprakhol-Harishankar Road	1608

* THE SUM TOTAL OF THE NO. OF TREE FELLING IN 5 YEAR IS 15,016 FOR ROAD WIDENING

2023-24

SI No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
1	Belgaon to Rigdol - NH-59	2150
2	Salebhata- Agalpur Road	188
3	Bharsuja to Loisingha Road	77
4	Charbhata to Satighat	1364

2024-25

SI No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
1	Deogaon- Tikrapada	703
2	Balangir - Arjunpur-Tusura Deogaon	52
3	Titilagarh- Sindhekela Road	668
4	Saintala - Tikrapada Road	375
5	Agalpur-Nagaon-Mahakhand	60

Manab
Public Information Officer
Balangir Forest Division.

Hemanta W. Panda.

**Item No.5 RTI Information Regarding Tree Felling Year wise Last 10 Years
(Project Wise)**

2015-16		
SI No.	Name of the Project	No. of trees
Nil		
2016-17		
SI No.	Name of the Project	No. of trees
2017-18		
SI No.	Name of the Project	No. of trees
2018-19		
SI No.	Name of the Project	No. of trees
1	Railway Land at Badmal Station	1781
2019-20		
SI No.	Name of the Project	No. of trees
Nil		
2020-21		
SI No.	Name of the Project	No. of trees
Nil		
2021-22		
SI No.	Name of the Project	No. of trees
1	New Bustand, Near RTO Office, Balangir	75
2022-23		
SI No.	Name of the Project	No. of trees
1	RR Colony AT- Khujenpali, LSIP Balangir	51 & Poles-1055
2	RR Colony At- Jhankarpali, LSIP Balangir	711 & Poles-915
3	Costruction Ring Road in Balangir Town	171
2023-24		
SI No.	Name of the Project	No. of trees
1	Truck Parking terminus - Bijakhaman	3
2	Titilagarh Railway Station (Amritbharat)	22
3	Bypass Road Balangir Town	2137
2024-25		
SI No.	Name of the Project	No. of trees
1	AMP Energy C & I Eleven PVT Ltd.	752
2	Construction Building of Kendriya Vidyalaya, ULBA	83 & 74 Nos. Poles

Hemanta w. Parada.

3	Integrated Infrastructure Complex, Kharlikani	131 & Poles 415 Nos.
4	Water Treatment Plant At- Dhubalpada, Balangir	575 & 250 Nos Poles
5	OAV, Chandrapur	78 & Poles-79

Manus
Public Information Officer
Of Divisional Forest Officer
Balangir Forest Division
Balangir Forest Division.

Heronanta w. Panda.

Item No.3 RTI Information Regarding Tree Felling Year wise Last 15 Years (Balangir to Khaprakhol)		
2010-11		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
Nil		
2011-12		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
Nil		
2012-13		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
Nil		
2013-14		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
Nil		
2014-15		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
Nil		
2015-16		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
Nil		
2016-17		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
1	Balangir-Kantabanji-Bangomunda- Chandotara	1479
2017-18		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
Nil		
2018-19		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
1	Patnagarh -Khaprakhol- Harishankar- Lathore	687
2019-20		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
1	Belpada- Baijalsagar-Bhanpur-Pithapadar ODR	717
2020-21		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
1	Patnagarh-Damkipali Road	1186
2021-22		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
1	Belpada-Dhumabhata Road	59
2022-23		
Sl No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
1	Khaprakhol to Harishankar	1577
2	Balangir-Kantabanji-Bangomunda- Chandotara	827

Hemanta v. Bala.

3	Patnagarh-Khaprakhol-Harishankar Road	1608
2023-24		
SI No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
Nil		
2024-25		
SI No.	Name of the Road	No. of trees
Nil		

Manus
04.5.25
Public Information Officer
Sub-Divisional Forest Officer
Balangir Forest Division
Balangir Forest Division.

fermanta w. Panda

ଭାରତ ନିର୍ବାଚନ ଆୟୋଗ
ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA
ଭୋଟର ଫଟୋ ପରିଚୟ କାର୍ଡ - ELECTOR PHOTO IDENTITY CARD

XLQ0190439



ନାମ : ହେମନ୍ତ କୁମାର ପଣ୍ଡା
Name : Hemanta Kumar Panda
ପିତାଙ୍କ ନାମ : ନନ୍ଦା କିଶୋର ପଣ୍ଡା
Father's Name : Nanda Kishor Panda

Hemanta w. /a/De.