

BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
(EASTERN ZONE BENCH, KOLKATA)

O.A. No. 79 of 2025/EZB

ORIGINAL APPLICATION

under National Green Tribunal Act' 2010

In the matter of:

Subhas Datta

.....Applicant

-Versus-

State of West Bengal and Others

.....Respondents

INDEX

SI No.	Particulars	Pages
1.	Synopsis of the case	A-B
2.	List of the dates	C
3.	Main Application	1-15
4.	Verification	16
5.	Annexure – P/1	17
6.	Annexure – P/2	18
7.	Annexure – P/3	19
8.	Annexure – P/4	20-26
9.	Annexure – P/5	27-30
10.	Annexure – P/6	31-32
11.	Annexure – P/7	33-39
12.	Annexure – P/8	40
13.	Annexure – P/9	41-42
14.	Annexure – P/10	43
15.	Annexure – P/11	44
16.	Annexure – P/12	45
17.	Annexure – P/13	46-47
18.	Annexure – P/14	48-53

Applicant

*Subhas Datta*  
SUBHAS DATTA

Office: 25/1, Guitendal Lane, Howrah-711 101'

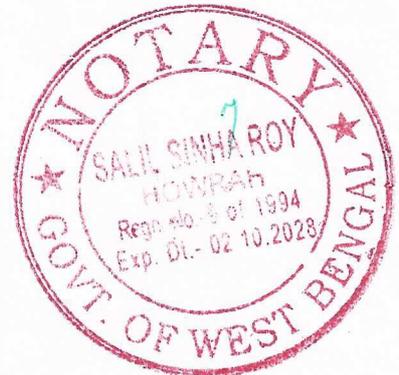
Residence: 55/2, Panchanantala Road,

P.O.+P.S.+Dist. - Howrah-711 101(for both)

Telephone : 033 -2638 3526,

Mobile : 09830 752 752

Email : subhasdatta@rediffamil.com



28 APR 2025

**SYNOPSIS OF THE CASE**

That Sonajhuri forest in Shantiniketan is a natural forest. This is considered to be a natural heritage also. This forest is famous for its scenic landscape and known as "Red Earth Forest."

That there is a signboard affixed by the Birbhum Forest Division specifically stating that Sonajhuri is a forest land where entry is prohibited for the common people. Unfortunately in the Sonajhuri Forest a big daily market has now started where several thousands of traders and tourists gather every-day. Such commercial practices in the forest area are causing various types of environmental and other hazards.

HOTELS/RESORTS/GUEST HOUSES COMING-UP THERE

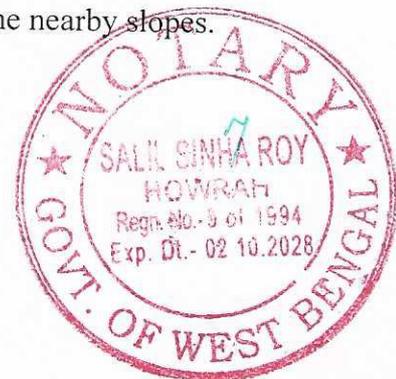
That there are ~~mushroom~~ <sup>mushrooming</sup> hotels/resorts/guest houses at the side of the Sonajhuri Forest area and some of which appeared to be partly on the forest land. It is a matter of surprise that how building plans of such hotels/resorts have been sanctioned by the local Panchayet. There is no other form of administrative approval of such establishments.

PLASTIC AND OTHER SOLID WASTES MOUNTING

That there is no system of solid-wastes and plastic-wastes management for which the entire forest area has now become full of plastic and other solid wastes. No disposal system of such waste is found there.

NO SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEM WITHIN THE VICINITY OF SONAJHURI FOREST

That although huge number of buildings/establishments have come-up almost within the forest area and its adjacent areas there is no drainage and sewage system in the area for which the waste water of hotels/ resorts is discharged to the nearby slopes.



28 APR 2025

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#### MOTOR VEHICLES PARKED INSIDE THE FOREST AREA

That hundreds of motor vehicles, both by the tourists and also by the traders are parked well inside the Sonajhuri Forest area, which is a great source of air-pollution in the area.

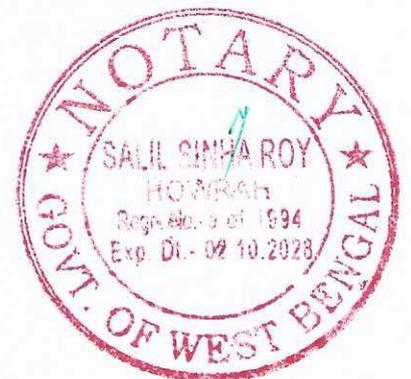
#### ROOT BOUNDING/STUMPING OF TREES

That there are evidences of root bounding/stumping of the trees in the Sonajhuri Jungle by using concrete and thrown-away wine/hard drink bottles there. It is a matter of great concern that how such activity has been allowed there.

#### LIFTING OF THE UNDERGROUND WATER BY MECHANICAL DEVICES

In the forest area all the hotels/resorts/establishments are lifting underground water through mechanical devices and there is no permission from the concerned authority in this regard.

The controlling authorities are ignoring such rampant commercial activities well within the forest area. In fact they have become silent spectators to such environmental hazards being caused in the area. Without judicial interventional, the problems cannot be resolved. Hence this Application

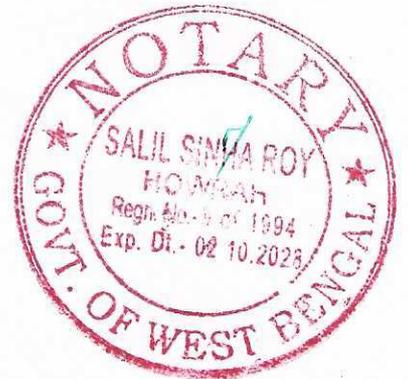


28 APR 2025

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LIST OF DATES

Sl No.	Dates	Particulars
1.	2003	In Sonajhuri forest area weekly Saturday Hat started.
2.	15.04.2008	West Bengal Pollution Control Board issued the Direction in the matter of operation of hotels, restaurant, resorts within 1 KM <sup>radius of</sup> <del>at</del> reserve forest. <span style="float: right;"><i>Soubh</i></span>
3.	January/February 2024	Daily market started in the Sonajhuri forest area.
4.	07.04.2025	The applicant has visited the Sonajhuri forest area.
5.	22.04.2025	The applicant has sent memorandum to the concerned authorities.



28 APR 2025

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
(EASTERN ZONE BENCH, KOLKATA)**

**ORIGINAL APPLICATION**

**National Green Tribunal Act, 2010**

**O. A. No. \_\_\_\_\_ of 2025/EZB**

In the matter of:

Subhas Datta

.....Applicant

-Versus-

State of West Bengal and Others

.....Respondents

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

1. Subhas Datta

Son of Late Baneswar Datta,

25/1, Guitendal Lane,

P.O. + P.S. + District – Howrah

Pin code – 711101, West Bengal

..... Applicant

1. **STATE OF WEST BENGAL,**

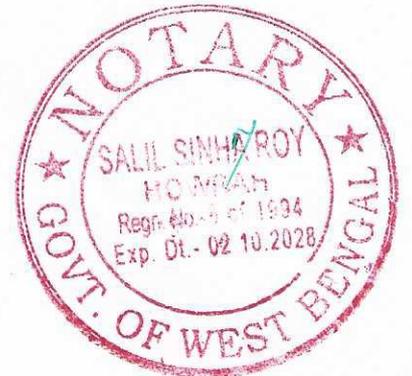
(Notice through the Chief Secretary),

Nabanna, 325, Sarat Chatterjee Road,

Shibpur, Howrah - 711102

Tel -033-22535130

cs-westbengal@nic.in



28 APR 2025

2. **DEPARTMENT OF FOREST**

(Notice through the Additional Chief Secretary),

Govt. of West Bengal,

Araanya Bhawan,

10A, Block LA, Sec-III, Salt Lake

Calcutta - 700106

Tel- 033-2335 4030

[acsforestwb@gmail.com](mailto:acsforestwb@gmail.com)

3. **DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT,**

Govt. of West Bengal,

(Notice through the ~~Principal~~ <sup>Additional Chief</sup> Secretary),

Environment Department,

5th Floor, Pranisampad Bhawan,

Block LB-II, Salt Lake, Sec-III,

Bidhannagar, Kolkata - 700 106

Tel-033-2335-2742

~~acsemwb@wb.gov.in~~ <sup>acsemwb@gmail.com</sup> [acsemwb@gmail.com](mailto:acsemwb@gmail.com)

4. **WEST BENGAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD**

(Notice through the ~~Member Secretary~~ <sup>Member Secretary</sup>),

Paribesh Bhawan, 10A Block L.A, Sec-III,

Salt Lake, Bidhannagar, Kolkata - 700106

Tel-0332335-8213

[ms.wbpcb-wb@bangla.gov.in](mailto:ms.wbpcb-wb@bangla.gov.in)

5. **DISTRICT MAGISTRATE,**

<sup>BIRBHUM</sup>  
(Notice through the District Magistrate)

Birbhum, Administrative Building,

Suri Main Road ,

Suri, Birbhum -731101

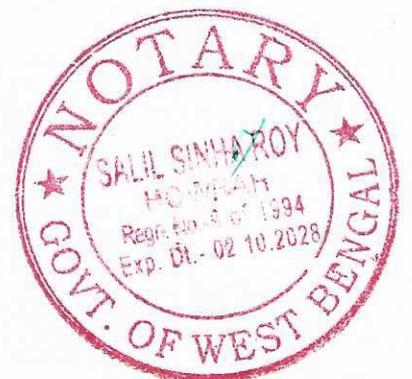
Tel- 03462-255222

[dm-bir@nic.in](mailto:dm-bir@nic.in)

6. **SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE,**

<sup>BIRBHUM</sup>

2



28 APR 2025

~~(Notice through the Superintendent of Police)~~  
*Superintendent*

Birbhum District Police,

Suri – 731101

Tel- 0342-255353

*spbirbhum*  
~~teleconsuri@policewb.gov.in~~

7. DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER,  
*BIRBHUM*  
~~(Notice through the Forest Officer)~~

Birbhum Division,

Barabagan, Suri, Birbhum - 731103

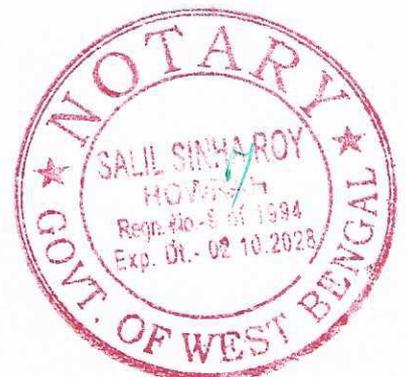
Tel- 0342-255262

~~dfobirbhum2010@gmail.com~~

*dfobis-wb@nic.in*

..... Respondents

- A. The address of the Applicant as given above is for the service of notices of this application and that of their representatives.
- B. The addresses and e-mail details of the respondents as given above are for service of notices of this application and that of their representatives.
- C. The Applicant named above begs to present the Original Application on the issue of environmental and other various types of degradations that are taking place inside the Sonajhuri Forest area where the forest area is being exploited for commercial purposes. The controlling authorities have become silent spectators to these misdeeds. Without immediate judicial intervention these environmental disorders cannot be stopped. Hence this petition is being filed.



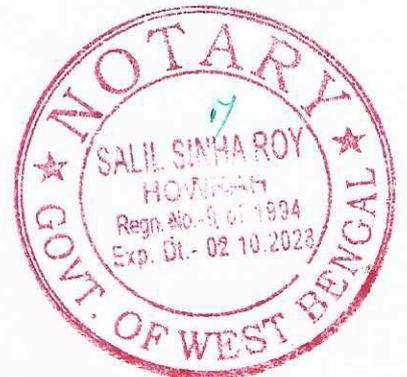
28 APR 2025

Most Respectfully Sheweth

I, Subhas Datta, aged about 77 years, son of Late Baneswar Datta, by Religion – Hindu, occupation Chartered Accountant, residing at 25/1, Guitendal Lane, P.S+P.O+Dist. - Howrah, Pincode-711101, do hereby solemnly declare and say as follows:-

**FACTS IN BRIEF:**

1. That the applicant is the environmental activist and public spirited person. He is engaged in different social, environmental and philanthropic activities since 1977. The applicant is second to none in the fields of ventilating the grievances of the common people. There is hardly any major public issue in the State of West Bengal on which the applicant has not tried to project the peoples' demands before different appropriate authorities.
2. That the applicant has organized series of movements on ecology, environment and on different social aspects of the State of West Bengal. Some of such activities had to face police atrocities, arrests and institution of false and fabricated criminal proceedings against the applicant. On the basis of the Writ Petition (No. 380 of 1995) filed by the applicant in April 1995 before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India the first Environment Bench, which is popularly called as the Green Bench, had been constituted in the High Court at Calcutta in June 1996.
3. That various activities of the applicant have been recognized by several media giants during the past few decades, brief of which is as follows: -
  - a) Times of India, the leading English daily had projected the applicant as the "Hero of the Country" in the year 2007.



28 APR 2025

b) India Today, the prestigious English Weekly had recognized the applicant as one of the “fifty pioneers of the country” and published a special edition on 7th July 2008, detailing the activities undertaken by him.

c) Hindusthan Times, the leading English daily had recognized the applicant in 2012 as one of the “25 change makers of the country” and given felicitation.

d) Times of India, the English daily, had nominated the applicant as “Hero of Calcutta – 2013.”

e) The Telegraph, one leading English daily published from Calcutta and National Insurance Company had given “True Legends Award 2018” to the applicant.

4. That several other forms of recognitions have been given to the applicant from time to time, the brief of some of which is as follows:

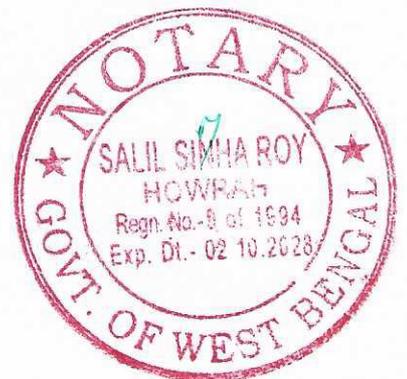
a) Research work had been carried out by one German Scholar covering the applicant’s activities in 2000, which was afterwards published as book titled “Taking the State to Court” by the Oxford University Press, London.

b) European Green Party leaders had invited the applicant in 2009 to Brussels, Belgium to discuss the possibility of forming Green Party in India. Meeting had been held with U. K. Green Party leader in London in 2009.

c) In order to adopt the same practices for Ganga cleaning the applicant had participated in Thames River cleaning operation in London, organized by Thames 21, in 2005.

d) Several weeklies in different languages have published articles on the applicant’s activities during the last few decades.

28 APR 2025



e) He had visited London/Glasgow in 2013 and met the respective port authorities to ascertain the methodology of dredging by saving the marine bio-diversity for adopting the same process by the Calcutta Port Trust.

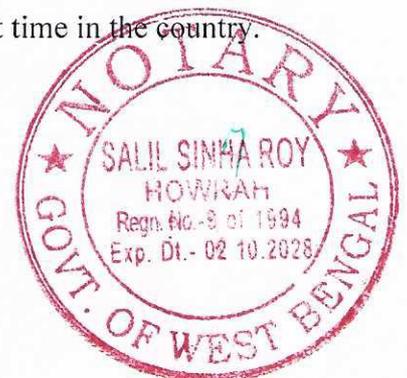
f) There are about thirteen thousand newspaper clippings on various news covering the activities of the applicant carried out during the last more than three decades.

5. That during the past forty years the applicant has been continuously fighting hard to save and protect the environment and ecology of the State of West Bengal and some of the Eastern and North Eastern States of the country. The applicant has brought about one hundred and thirty environmental matters and also various matters of public interest before the Hon'ble Apex Court of the Country, Environment Bench (Green Bench) and Public Interest Litigation Bench of the High Court at Calcutta, National Green Tribunal and also have been interacting on various related issues and assisting/assisted the Hon'ble Courts (High Court and NGT) as Amicus Curiae in some matters.

6. That few of the moves of the applicant have been recognized otherwise by and or before the Judicial forum, the brief of which is as follows:-

a) On the basis of the pleadings/petition before the High Court at Calcutta The West Bengal Trees (Protection and Conservation in Non-Forest Areas) Act 2006 was enacted.

b) Based on his petition before the High Court, Calcutta, compensation under The Public Liability Insurance Act 1994 had been awarded to the victims of air pollution caused by a reputed industrial house for the first time in the country.



c) Six Supreme Court Judges from Thailand came to Calcutta and had interactive sessions with the applicant where the Consulate General of US had also been present. The Hon'ble Judges had visited the High Court at Calcutta to view/hear proceedings and the arguments made by him before the Public Interest Litigation Bench of the High Court at Calcutta.

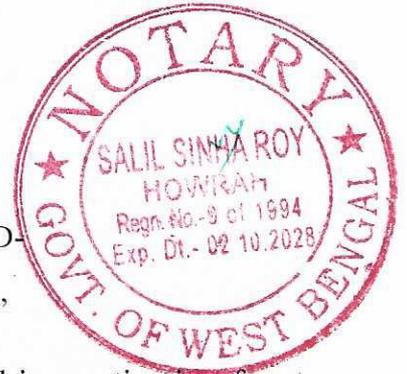
7. That Sonajhuri forest in Shantiniketan is a natural forest. This is considered to be a natural heritage also. This forest is famous for its scenic landscape and known as "Red Earth Forest." This forest is named because of its Sonajhuri trees. The meaning of Sonajhuri is 'droplets of gold.' It is a true beauty in the forest and the same attracts huge number of visitors everyday. The applicant has downloaded one photograph of this forest from the internet, the copy of which is enclosed as ANNEXURE -P/1.

#### FOREST LAND BOARD AT SONAJHURI

8. That during the recent visit to Sonajhuri Forest it has been evident by the applicant that there is a big sign board affixed by the Birbhum Forest Division at the said forest land, which reads as follows:-

**"FOREST LAND'**

**UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY IS PROHIBITED-  
TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED"**



The said sign board specifically indicates that the land in question is a forest land. The photograph of such sign board has been taken by the applicant, which is enclosed as ANNEXURE - P/2.

9. That earlier Sonajhuri Hat used to be held within the forest area of Birbhum only on Saturday where few marginal people used to sell their commodities, mostly hand made

artifacts to the limited number of visitors there. About 20 years back the applicant had the occasion to visit the Sonajhuri Hat which was in a very low at the extreme corner of the forest area. There is/was a small sign board stating "Saturdays Khoyai forest different hat, established in 2003." Still the old sign board of the hat exists there and the applicant has taken one photograph of the same, which is enclosed as ANNEXURE –P/3.

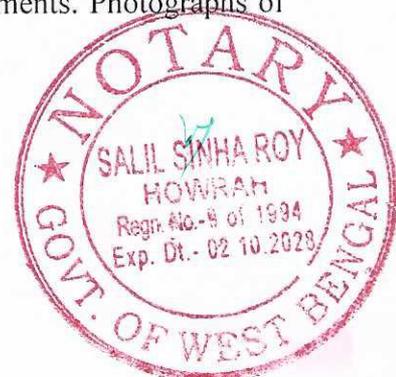
10. That during the recent past due to lack of control and monitoring of the forest land and also because there is no administrative command, about 3000 to 4000 traders have started their daily business there. Thousands of tourists are visiting this site everyday and at the weekend and on other holidays, the pressure of visitors increases considerably.

#### SONAJHURI BAZAR INSTEAD OF HAT

11. That the concept of HAT means that it sits once or twice in a week. But presently, sometimes in the January/February 2024 the Hat has been converted into a daily market as if it is a big commercial centre, which has already been over saturated. Because of such rampant commercial activities, the forest is being depleted and many Sonajhuri trees are either cut and/or badly damaged for which the density of the forest has considerably been reduced. Some photographs of this Sonajhuri Bazar have been taken which are enclosed and marked as ANNEXURE –P/4.

#### HOTELS/RESORTS/GUEST HOUSES ARE COMING-UP THERE

12. That there are ~~mushroom~~ <sup>mushrooming</sup> hotels/resorts/guest houses at the side of the Sonajhuri Forest area and some of which appeared to be partly on the forest land. It is a matter of surprise that how building plans of such hotels/resorts have been sanctioned by the local Panchayet. There is no other form of administrative approval of such establishments. Photographs of



few hotels/resorts at Sonajhuri have been taken on 07.04.2025, which are enclosed and marked as ANNEXURE –P/5.

13. That as per the DIRECTION issued by the West Bengal Pollution Control Board vide notification no. EN/871/T-II-4/002/2008, dated 15<sup>th</sup> April 2008 certain mandates have been given and the main part of such Direction is – “hotels, restaurants and resorts are not developed within a radius of 1 KM of reserve forest area, notified wild life sanctuaries within the State of West Bengal without prior permission of the State Board.

It is further surfaced in the said Direction of State Pollution Control Board as follows:-

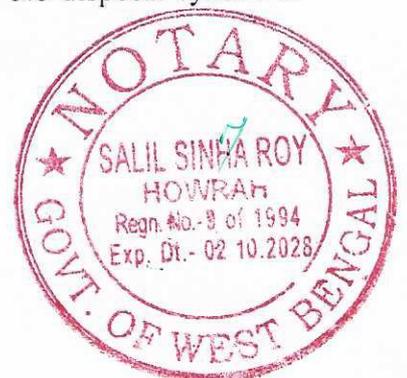
*“AND WHEREAS it has come into the surface that due to mushroom growth of hotels, restaurant and resorts in the fringe area of the reserve forest and wild life sanctuaries tranquility of forest area is at stake and various problems crop up for healthy maintenance of the wild life.*

*AND WHEREAS some precautionary measures need to be maintained at the time of issuance of ‘Consent to Establish’ and ‘Consent to Operate’ to the hotels, restaurants and resorts outside the forest area for maintaining tranquility and bio-diversity of the forest area.”*

The applicant encloses the copy of the DIRECTION of the West Bengal Pollution Control Board which is marked as ANNEXURE –P/6.

**PLASTIC AND OTHER SOLID WASTES ARE MOUNTING**

14. That there is no system of solid-wastes and plastic-wastes management for which the entire forest area has now become full of plastic and other solid wastes. No disposal system of



such waste is found there. The forest area is littered with plastic and other wastes, the photographs of which have been taken and enclosed as ANNEXURE – P/7.

NO SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEM WITHIN THE VICINITY OF SONAJHURI FOREST

15. That although huge number of buildings/establishments have come-up almost within the forest area and its adjacent areas there is no drainage and sewage system in the area for which the waste water of hotels/ resorts is discharged to the nearby slopes contaminating a large area thereof. There is no controlling and monitoring authority to arrest such hazards. The applicant has taken photographs of the discharge of untreated drainage/sewage system, which are enclosed as ANNEXURE –P/8.

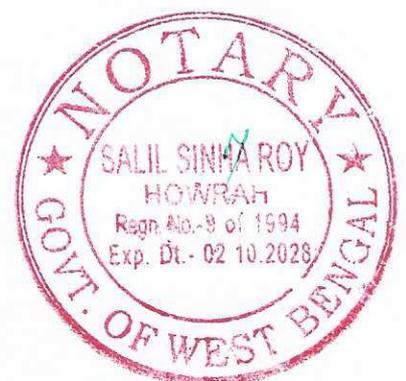
CONVENIENCE  
NO PUBLIC CONVEYANCE IN THE AREA

16. That everyday about fifty thousands people are visiting the Sonajhuri Market area that exist in the forest, there is no workable public <sup>convenience</sup> ~~conveyance~~ system for which the people are forced to use, rather misuse the forest corners. Thus the entire area is getting polluted.

SEVERAL MOTOR VEHICLES ARE PARKED INSIDE THE FOREST AREA

17. That hundreds of motor vehicles, both by the tourists and also by the traders are parked inside the Sonajhuri Forest area, which is a great source of air-pollution in the area. For reasons not known to anybody, such parkings are allowed well inside the forest area. The photographs of the motor vehicles parked inside the forest area have been taken, which are enclosed as ANNEXURE – P/9.

18. ROOT BOUNDING/STUMPING OF TREES



That there are evidences of root bounding/stumping of the trees in the Sonajhuri Jungle by using concrete and thrown-away wine/hard drink bottles there. It is a matter of great concern that how such activity has been allowed there. There is no sign of any sorts of up keep of the trees and some of the trees are badly decayed and damaged because of the absence of any upkeep. The applicant has taken photographs of such root bounding of trees in Sonajhuri forest are enclosed as ANNEXURE – P/10.

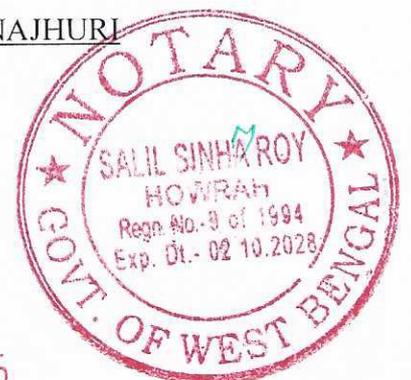
LIFTING OF THE UNDERGROUND WATER BY ~~M~~MECHANICAL DEVICES THERE

19. That in the absence of any water distribution system in the forest area all the hotels/resorts/establishments are lifting underground water through mechanical devices and there is no permission from the concerned authority in this regard. Since Bolpur area is a draught-prone area and the said indiscriminate lifting of underground water may cause a disaster in the area where during summer there is acute water shortage. The applicant has taken photographs of the lifting of underground water by mechanical device which are enclosed as ANNEXURE – P/11.

USE OF LOGS/WOODS IN THE FOREST AREA

20. That it has been evident that there is rampant use of woods and logs inside the forest area the actual source of which could not be ascertained. It is apprehended that such woods have been procured from the fallen/cut/dead trees. Forest Department appear to be a silent spectators <sup>to</sup> this misdeeds. The photographs of dumped wood in front of a hotel at Sonajhuri have been taken and are enclosed as ANNEXURE – P/12.

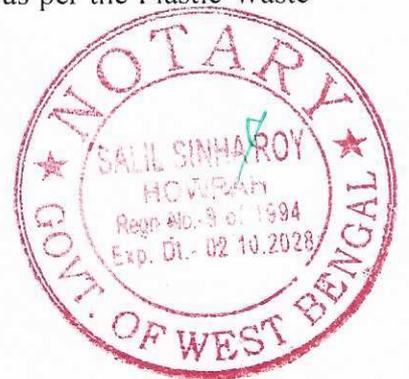
EVIDENCES OF DAMAGED AND DECAYED TREES IN SONAJHURI



21. That recent visit to the Sonajhuri forest area has revealed that several trees are damaged/decayed considerably in the forest area, the photographs of which have been taken, which are enclosed and marked as ANNEXURE –P/13.
22. That the wrong actions and/or inaction on the part of the concerned authorities <sup>Smack</sup> ~~smack~~ of serious lapses which are causing severe environmental and other hazards in the Sonajhuri Forest Area of Bolpur/Shantiniketan. If the misdeeds are not arrested at the earliest, it may cause several permanent damages to the forest, flora and fauna of the area. For the sake of the survival of this natural forest, specific directions in some fields warranting time bound actions of the respondents have become necessary. In this context it is pertinent to maintain that there is no other alternative but to approach this temple of justice for redressal of this chronic problem.

#### GROUNDS

- I. For that the concerned Respondents have not taken steps for the preservation and conservation of the Sonajhuri Forest in Bolpur/Shantiniketan;
- II. For that Respondents concerned have allowed misuse of this natural forest by indulging the non-forest activities inside the Sonajhuri forest area;
- III. For that the concerned Respondents have wrongfully allowed the prohibitive acts inside the Eco-sensitive Zone of the Sonajhuri Natural forest area;
- IV. For that concerned Respondents have failed to take steps as envisaged under The Municipal Solid Waste (Management and Handling) Rules 2016;
- V. For that the concerned Respondents have not taken steps as per the Plastic Waste Management Rules;



- VI. For that there is failure on the part of the Respondents concerned to discharge their statutory duties by not taking steps to stop environmental hazards in the Sonajhuri Forest;
- VII. For that the Respondents concerned have failed to take steps as envisaged under The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974;
- VIII. For that the Respondents concerned have not taken any step as should have been taken under The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981;
- IX. For that it is the bounden duty of the the Respondents concerned to take all smeasures and steps as envisaged under The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- X. For that the Respondents concerned have failed to take appropriate steps as required under Article 21 of the Constitution of India;
- XI. For that there is failure on the part of the Respondents concerned to act in terms of the mandate as set out under Article 48A of the Constitution of India;

#### LIMITATION

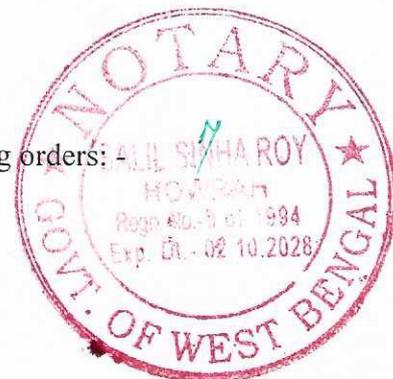
23. That the environmental disorders being caused through the prohibited activities in the natural forest at Sonajhuri has started in the recent past and is continuing since then. The applicant has been working actively to address several environmental matters concerning Shantiniketan/Bolpur for a long period. There are media reports in this regard. He has visited the place on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025 and has sent representation to the authorities on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025, the photocopy of which with postal receipt is enclosed as ANNEXURE – P/14

#### PRAYERS

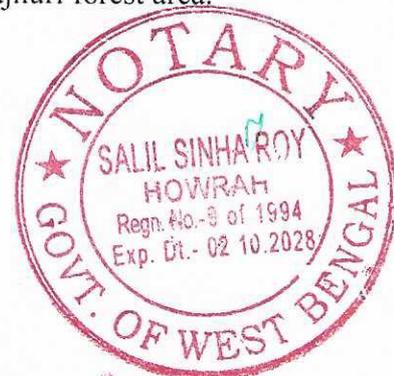
This application is made bonafide and for the ends of justice.

Your applicant therefore humbly prays Your Honour for the following orders:

28 APR 2025



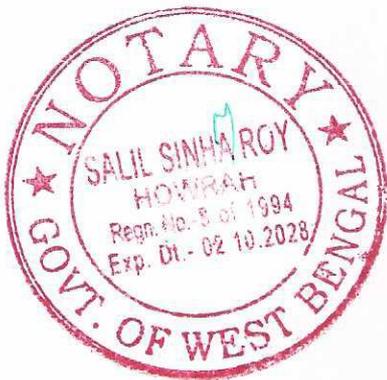
- i. To direct the concerned Respondents to initiate actions for stopping the rampant commercial activities inside the forest area of Sonajhuri forest at Bolpur/Shantiniketan.
- ii. To direct the concerned Respondent to take steps for preserving and conserving the Sonajhuri Forest of Bolpur/Shantiniketan.
- iii. To direct the Respondents concerned not to allow operation of daily market in the eco-sensitive zone of Sonajhuri forest area.
- iv. To direct the concerned Respondents not to foul the forest area of Sonajhuri by plastic and other wastes.
- v. To stop illegal operations of all hotels/resorts at the closest vicinity of Sonajhuri forest area of Bolpur/Shantiniketan.
- vi. To direct the concerned Respondents not to allow any parking of motor vehicles inside the forest area of Sonajhuri.
- vii. To direct the concerned Respondents to stop <sup>fouling</sup> ~~fouling~~ of the area through discharge of untreated sewage/ drainage water in the open of Sonajhuri forest area.



28 APR 2025

- viii. To direct for immediately stopping the lifting of underground water through mechanical devices in and around the Sonajhuri Forest area.
- ix. To direct the concerned Respondents to take appropriate steps as envisaged under The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 .
- x. To direct the concerned Respondents to take appropriate steps as envisaged under The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.
- xi. To direct the concerned Respondents to take appropriate steps under The Environment (Protection) Act, 1987.
- xii. Such other and/or further order or orders be made and/or direction or directions be given as the Hon'ble Tribunal may deem fit and proper

*Subhas Datta*  
Subhas Datta



VERIFICATION

SL. NO. .... 2-3009

I, Sri Subhas Datta, son of Late Baneswar Datta, aged about 77 years, by occupation Chartered Accountant, by religion Hinduism, residing at 25/1, Guitendal Lane, Post Office, Police Station and District - Howrah, Pin code - 711101, do hereby declare and state that the contents of the paragraph nos. 7-6, 8, 9, 11-15, 17-21 & 23..... are true to the best of knowledge and the contents of the paragraph nos. 7, 10 & 16..... are my information derived from the relevant records which I verily believe to be true and the rests are my respectful submissions before the Hon'ble Tribunal.

*Subhas Datta*  
DEPONENT

Prepared by me in my office

*Subhas Datta*  
(Subhas Datta)

Applicant-in-person

Date : 26.04.2025

Place: Howrah.

IDENTIFIED BY ME &  
SIGNED / L.T.I TAKEN IN MY PRESENCE

*Kalpada Dhali*  
Advocate

Kalpada Dhali (Army Rtd)  
Advocate, M.A., LL.B  
Registration No.- WB/669/2007  
Judges' Court, Howrah



SOI EMNLY AFFIRMED & DECLARED  
BEFORE ME ON IDENTIFICATION

*28 4-25*

SALIL SINHA ROY  
NOTARY HOWRAH

28 APR 2025



Photograph of Shonajhuri Forest at Bolpur as downloaded from the Internet

28 APR 2025



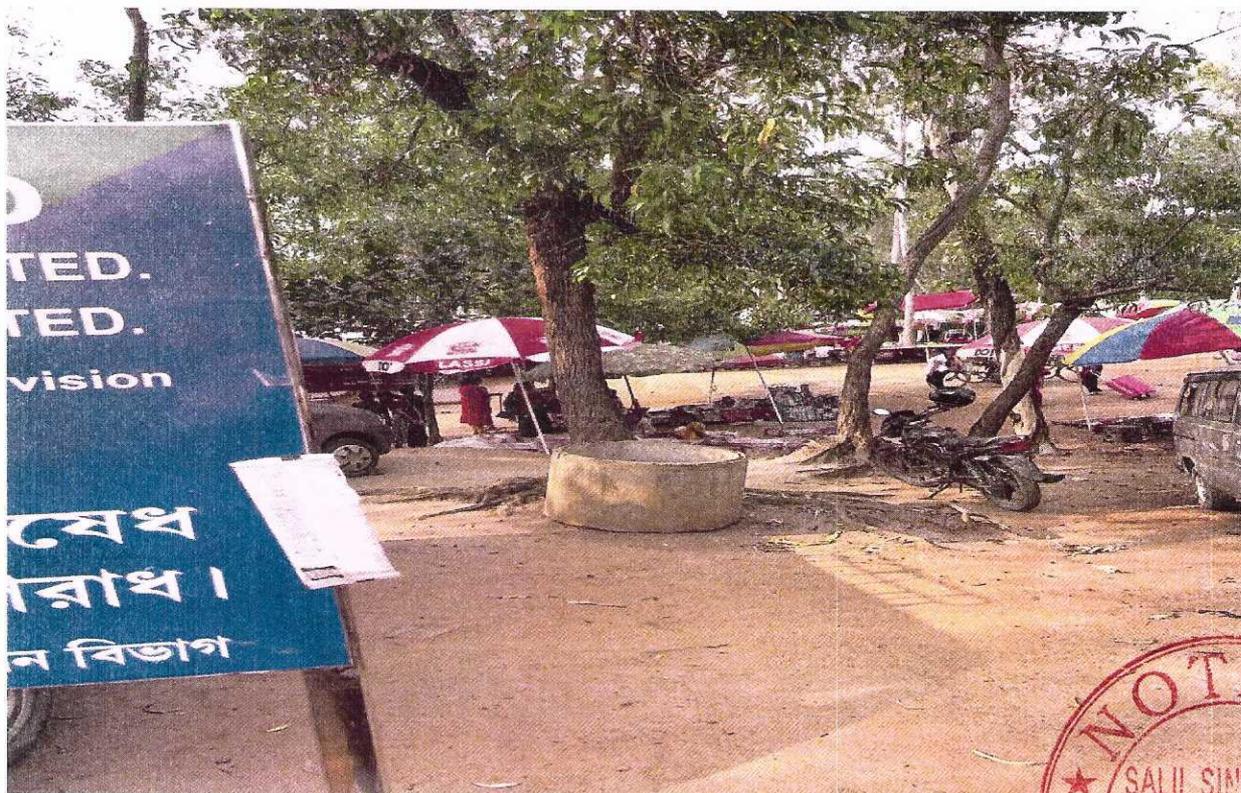
Photograph taken on 07/04/2025 showing the display board affixed by Birbhum Forest Division at Sonajhuri Forest area stating it to be forest land where entry is prohibited

28 APR 2025



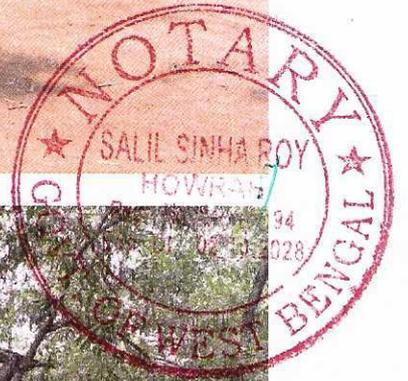
Photograph taken on 07.04.2025 showing the old signboard of Saturday's Sonajhori Hat that used to be held only on Saturday

28 APR 2025



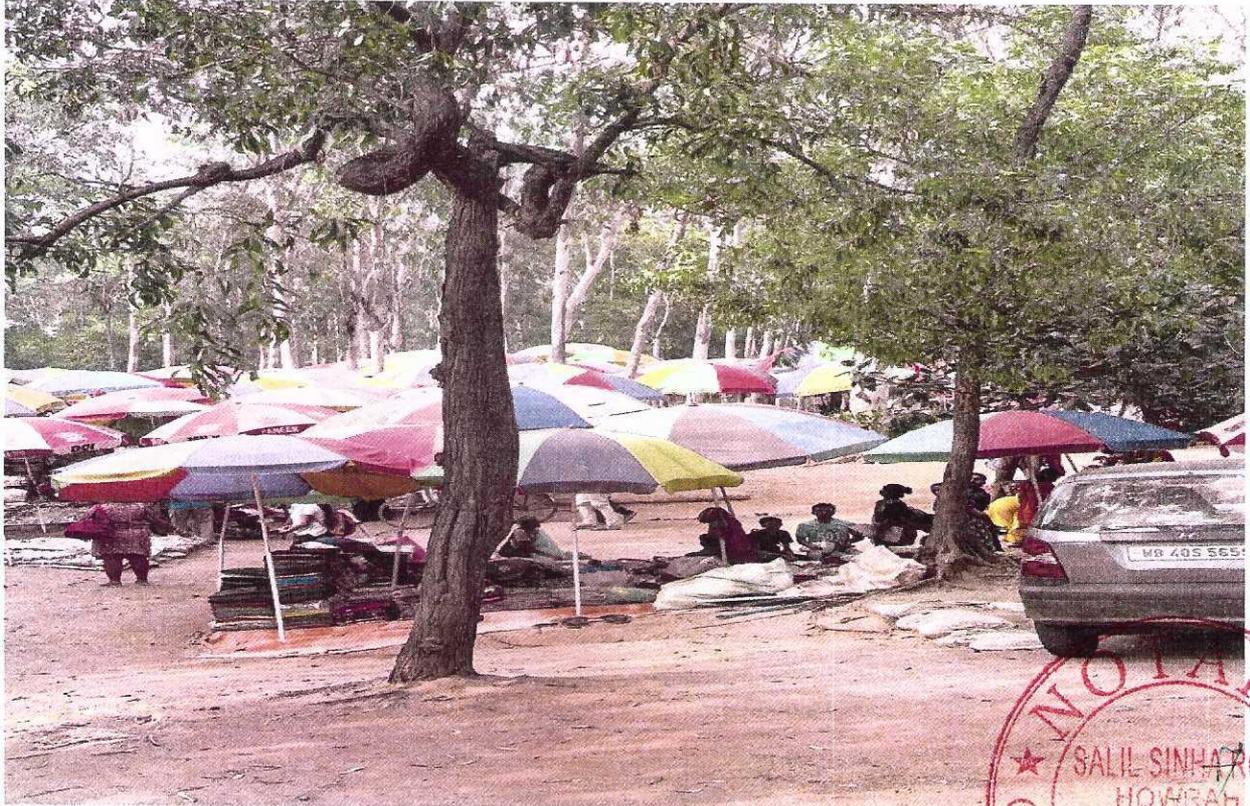
Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing full-fledged market going on inside the Sonajhuri Forest area

28 APR 2025



Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing full-fledged market going on inside the Sonajhuri Forest area

28 APR 2025



NOTARY  
SALIL SINHA ROY  
HOWRAH  
Regn. No. - 9 of 1994  
2028  
BENGAL



Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing full-fledged market going on inside the Sonajhuri Forest area

28 APR 2025



SECRETARY  
S. S. SINHA ROY  
HOWRAH  
94  
028  
BENGAL

Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing full-fledged market going on inside the Sonajhuri Forest area

28 APR 2025



Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing full-fledged market going on inside the Sonajhuri Forest area

28 APR 2025



NOTARY  
SALIL SINHA ROY  
WRAH  
NO. 5 of 1994  
Dt - 02.10.2028  
WEST BENGAL

Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing full-fledged market going on inside the Sonajhuri Forest area

28 APR 2025



NOTARY  
SALIL SINGH ROY  
HUMNAH  
Reg. No. of 1994  
Exp. Dt. - 02.10.2028  
COUNTY OF WEST BENGAL



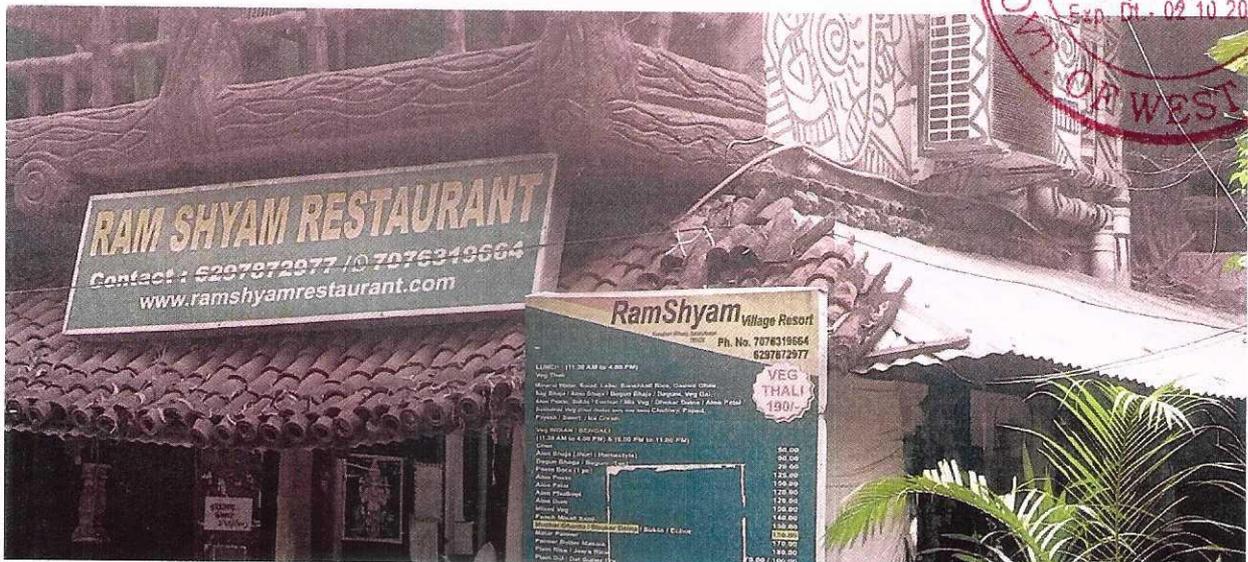
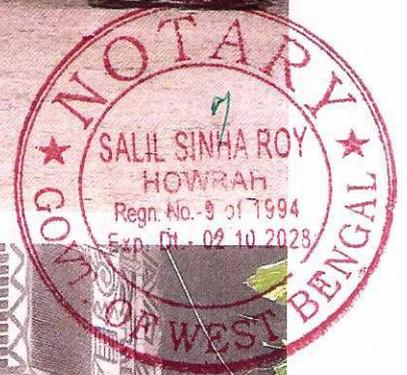
Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing full-fledged market going on inside the Sonajhuri Forest area



Photograph taken on 07/04/2025 showing Shakuntala Village Resort in the Sonajhuri Forest area

SECRETARY  
SALIL SINHA ROY  
HOWRAH  
Regn No. - 6 of 1994  
Exp. Dt. - 02 10.2028  
GOVT. OF WEST BENGAL

28 APR 2025



Photographs taken on 20/04/2025 showing Ram Shayam Hotel in Sonajhuri area



Photograph taken on 07/04/2025 showing Shakuntala Village Resort inside the Sonajhuri Forest area

NOTARY  
SUNIL SINHA ROY  
HOWRAH  
Regn. No. 9 of 1994  
2028  
GOVT. OF WEST BENGAL



Shakuntala Village Resort  
Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the ~~Sonajhuri tree root~~ tree root bounding done by ~~concrete using wire bottles~~ inside the Sonajhuri Forest area ~~forest area~~

28 APR 2025



Department of Environment  
Government of West Bengal  
'G' Block, (2nd. Floor)  
Writers' Buildings, Kolkata - 700001

No. EN/871/T-II-4/002/2008

Dated: April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008

### DIRECTION

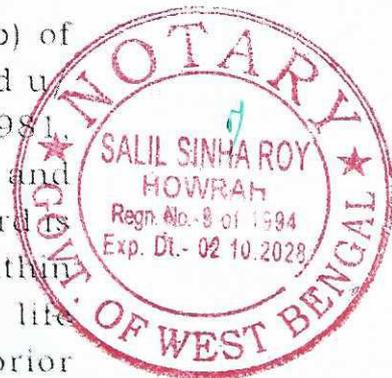
WHEREAS, Department of Environment, Government of West Bengal, is entrusted for prevention and control of pollution and also for promotion of sustainable development within the State of West Bengal, taking into consideration of the natural resources and natural character of the concerned areas;

AND WHEREAS West Bengal Pollution Control Board (hereinafter will be referred to as the 'State Board') under the Department of Environment is issuing 'Consent to Establish' and 'Consent to Operate' to the different hotels, restaurants and resorts;

AND WHEREAS it has come into the surface that due to mushroom growth of hotels, restaurants and resorts in the fringe area of the reserve forest and wild life sanctuaries tranquillity of forest area is at stake and various problems crop up for healthy maintenance of the wild life;

AND WHEREAS some precautionary measures need to be maintained at the time of issuance of 'Consent to Establish' and 'Consent to Operate' to the hotels, restaurants and resorts outside the forest area for maintaining tranquillity and bio-diversity of the forest area;

HENCE, in exercise of the powers conferred u/s. 18(b) of the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and u/s. 18(b) of the Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and in conformity of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Rules made thereunder, West Bengal Pollution Control Board is directed hotels, restaurants and resorts are not developed within a radius of 1 KM of reserve forest area, notified wild life sanctuaries within the State of West Bengal without prior permission of the State Board. Such permission should be given



within a month from the date of submission of the Consent Form duly completed in all respects.

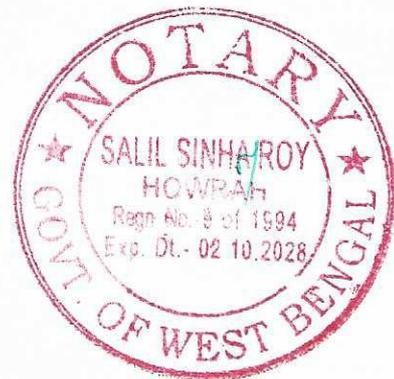
It is further directed that while issuing permission in respect of such hotels, restaurants or resorts within a radius of 1 K.M. of Reserve Forest and Wild Life Sanctuaries, consultation with the Department of Tourism, Government of West Bengal, is necessary before issuing 'Consent to Establish' and 'Consent to Operate'.

This order will take immediate effect.

By Order,

Sd/-

( M. L. Meena )  
*Principal Secretary to  
the Govt. of West Bengal*  
Department of Environment



28 APR 2025



NOTARY  
SALIL SINHA ROY  
HOWRAH  
994  
2028  
WEST BENGAL

Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the Sonajhuri forest area being full of plastic at every corner

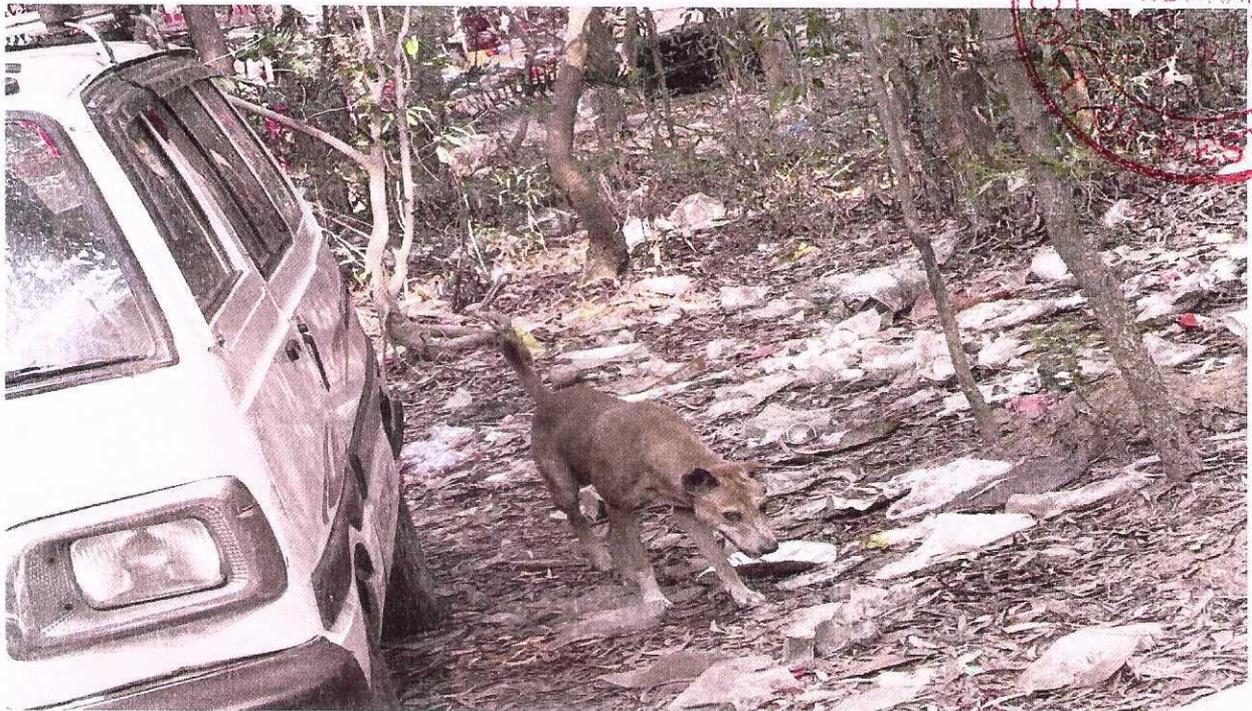
28 APR 2025



NOTARY  
SALU SINHA ROY  
Regn No-8 of 1994  
Exp. On-07/04/2028  
WEST BENGAL

Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the Sonajhuri forest area being full of plastic at every corner

28 APR 2025



Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the Sonajhuri forest area being full of plastic at every corner

28 APR 2025



Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the Sonajhuri forest area being full of plastic at every corner

28 APR 2025



NOTARY  
SALIL SHANUROY  
HOWRAH  
Regd. No. 21/1994  
Exp. Dt. 02.12.2028  
WEST BENGAL

Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the Sonajhuri forest area being full of plastic at every corner

28 APR 2025



NOTARY  
SANKU SHARMA ROY  
HOWRAH  
1984  
30.2028  
WEST BENGAL

Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the Sonajhuri forest area being full of plastic at every corner

28 APR 2025



Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the Sonajhuri forest area being full of plastic at every corner

28 APR 2025



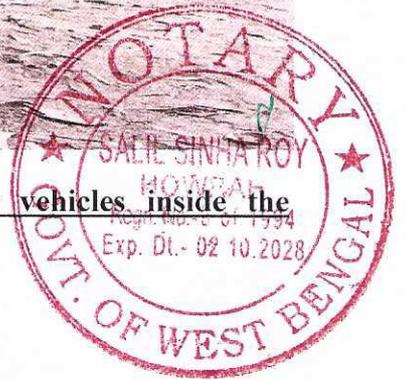
ROY  
Regn. No. 2 of 1994  
2028  
BENGAL

Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the discharge of untreated waste water from hotel/establishment inside Sonajhuri Forest area

28 APR 2025



Photograph taken on 07/04/2025 showing the parking of motor vehicles inside the Sonajhuri Forest area where regular market is going on



28 APR 2025



NOTARY  
SALIL SINGH ROY  
Regn. No. 8 of 1994  
BENGAL



Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the parking of motor vehicles inside the Sonajhuri Forest area where regular market is going on

28 APR 2025



NOTARY  
SUNIL KINHA ROY  
KOLKATA  
Regn No. 3 of 1994  
Etd. On: 12.10.2028  
WEST BENGAL

Photograph taken on 07/04/2025 showing the Sonajhuri tree root bounding done by concrete using wine bottles inside the Sonajhuri Forest area forest area

28 APR 2025



NOTARY  
SALIL KUMAR ROY  
HOWRAH  
Registration No. of 1994  
Exp. Dt. - 02.10.2028  
WEST BENGAL

Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the operation of mechanical device for lifting the underground water in Shakuntala Village Resort in the Sonajhuri Forest area

28 APR 2025



Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the wooden plank dumped inside the Sonajhuri Forest area where regular in front of Shakuntala Villege Resort

28 APR 2025

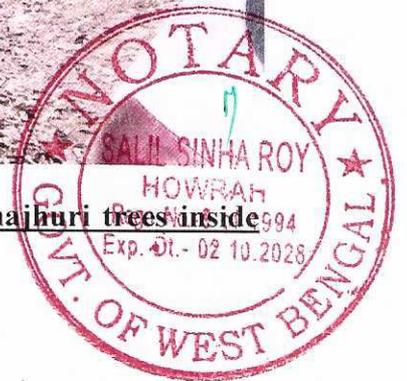


Photographs taken on 07/04/2025 showing the position of damaged Sonajhuri trees inside the Sonajhuri Forest area

28 APR 2025



Photograph taken on 07/04/2025 showing the position of damaged Sonajhuri trees inside the Sonajhuri Forest area



28 APR 2025

**Subhas Datta**  
Chartered Accountant  
Environmental Activist

48

Annexure - P/14

Resi: 25/1, Guitendal Lane, Howrah-711 101  
55/2, Panchanantala Road, Howrah-711 101  
Contact: (033) 2638 3526, 9830752752 (M)  
Email: subhasdatta@rediffmail.com

To  
The Chief Secretary,  
Govt. of West Bengal,  
Nabanna, 325, Sarat Chatterjee Road,  
Shibpur, Howrah - 711102

22.04.2025

Sir, Sub:- Misuse of Sonajhuri Forest Land within Birbhum Forest Division for commercial uses

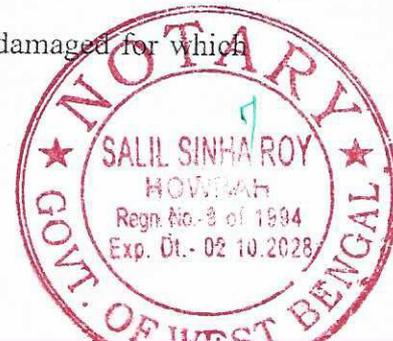
I beg to draw your kind attention to the following points in respect of various types of misuses of the forest land within the Birbhum Forest Division for immediate necessary action:-

1. That as per the display board fixed by the Birbhum Forest Division the land, popularly called as Sonajhuri Forest, is being subjected to various types of commercial exploitations causing environmental hazards there, the brief of which is stated in the subsequent paragraphs.

SONAJHURI BAZAR

2. That earlier Sonajhuri Hat used to be held within the forest area of Birbhum only on Saturday where few marginal people used to sell their commodities, mostly hand made artifacts to the limited number of visitors there. During the recent past due to lack of control and monitoring of the forest land and also because there is no administrative command, about 3000 to 4000 traders have started their daily business. Thousands of tourists are visiting this site everyday and at the weekend and on other holidays, the pressure of visitors increases considerably.
3. That the concept of HAT means that it sits once or twice in a week. But presently the Hat has been converted into a daily market as if it is a big commercial centre, which has already been over saturated. Because of such rampant commercial activities, the forest is being depleted and many Sonajhuri trees are either cut and/or badly damaged for which the density of the forest has considerably been reduced.

28 APR 2025



PLASTIC AND OTHER SOLID WASTES ARE MOUNTING

4. That there is no system of solid-wastes and plastic-wastes management for which the forest area has now become full of plastic and other solid wastes. No disposal system of such waste is found there.

HOTELS/RESORTS/GUEST HOUSES ARE COMING-UP THERE

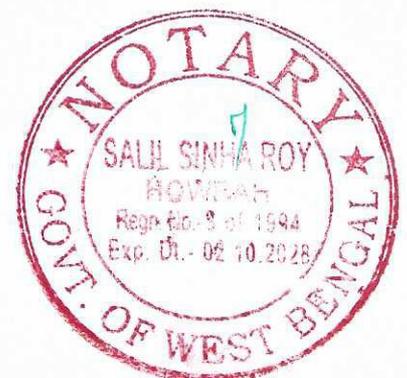
5. That there are mushroom hotels/resorts/guest houses at the side of the Sonajhuri Forest area and some of which appeared to be partly on the forest land. It is a matter of surprise that how building plans of such hotels/resorts have been sanctioned by the local Panchayet. There is no other form of administrative approval of such establishments.
6. That as per the DIRECTION issued by the West Bengal Pollution Control Board vide notification no. EN/871/T-II-4/002/2008, dated 15<sup>th</sup> April 2008 certain mandates have been given and the main part of such Direction is – “hotels, restaurants and resorts are not developed within a radius of 1 KM of reserve forest area, notified wild life sanctuaries within the State of West Bengal without prior permission of the State Board.

It is further surfaced in the said Direction of State Pollution Control Board as follows:-

*“AND WHEREAS it has come into the surface that due to mushroom growth of hotels, restaurant and resorts in the fringe area of the reserve forest and wild life sanctuaries tranquility of forest area is at stake and various problems crop up for healthy maintenance of the wild life.*

*AND WHEREAS some precautionary measures need to be maintained at the time of issuance of ‘Consent to Establish’ and ‘Consent to Operate’ to the hotels, restaurants and resorts outside the forest area for maintaining tranquility and bio-diversity of the forest area.”*

28 APR 2025



7. That the extensive tourism in the Sonajhuri Forest Area and its adjacent area has caused various types of environmental hazards within the forest area, which should immediately be stopped.

NO SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEM WITHIN THE VICINITY OF SONAJHURI FOREST

8. That although huge number of buildings/establishments have come-up almost within the forest area and its adjacent areas there is no drainage and sewage system in the area for which the waste water of hotels/ resorts is discharged to the nearby slopes contaminating a large area thereof. There is no controlling and monitoring authority to arrest such hazards.

NO PUBLIC CONVEYANCE IN THE AREA

9. That everyday almost fifty thousand people are visiting the Sonajhuri Market area that exists within the forest, there is no public conveyance system for which the people are forced to use, rather misuse the forest corners. Thus the entire area is getting polluted.

NUMBER OF MOTOR VEHICLES ARE PARKED INSIDE THE FOREST AREA

10. That hundreds of motor vehicles, both by the tourists and also by the traders are parked inside the Sonajhuri Forest area, which is a great source of air-pollution in the area. For reasons not known to anybody, such parkings are allowed well inside the forest area.

ROOT BOUNDING/STUMPING OF TREES

11. That there are evidences of root bounding/stumping of the trees in the Sonajhuri Jungle by using concrete and used wine/hard drink bottles there. It is a matter of great concern that how such activity has been allowed there. There is no sign of any sorts of up keep of the trees and some of the trees are badly decayed and damaged because of the absence of any upkeep.

LIFTING OF THE UNDERGROUND WATER BY NMECHANICAL DEVICES THERE

28 APR 2025



12. That in the absence of any water distribution system in the area all the establishments within and adjacent to forest area the hotels/resorts/establishments are lifting underground water through mechanical devices and there is no permission from the concerned authority in this regard. Since Bolpur area is a draught-prone area and the said indiscriminate lifting of underground water may cause a disaster in the area where during summer there is acute water shortage.

USE OF LOGHS/WOODS IN THE FOREST AREA

13. That it has been evident that there is rampant use of woods and logs inside the forest area the actual source of which could not be ascertained. It is apprehended that such woods have been procured from the fallen/cut/dead trees of the forest itself.. Forest Department appears to be a silent spectator to this misdeed.

In view of the position as stated above I like to request you to direct for initiating immediate steps to arrest such fouling activities there inside the Sonajhuri forest of Birbhum.

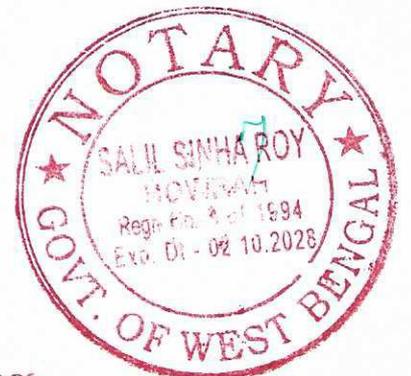
With regards & best wishes

Yours Faithfully

*Subhas Datta*  
(Subhas Datta)

C.c. To,

- a) The Principal Secretary,  
Department of Environment,  
Govt. of West Bengal,  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Pranisampad Bhawan,  
Block LB-II, Salt Lake, Sec – III,  
Bidhannagar, Calcutta – 700106
- b) The Member Secretary,  
West Bengal Pollution Control Board,



28 APR 2025

52

Paribesh Bhawan, 10A, Block LA, Sec-III,  
Salt Lake, Bidhannagar, Calcutta - 700106

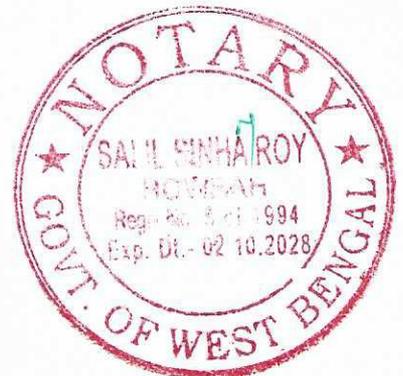
c) District Magistrate & Collector,  
Birbhum,  
Prashasan Bhavan,  
Suri, Birbhum - 731101

d) Superintend<sup>ent</sup> of Police,  
Birbhum District Police,  
Suri - 731101

e) District Forest Officer,  
Birbhum Division,  
Barabagan,  
Suri, Birbhum - 731103

f) Additional Chief Secretary,  
Forest Department,  
Government of West-Bengal,  
Araanya Bhawan,  
10A, Block LA, Sec III  
Calcutta - 700106.

P.T.O



28 APR 2025

EW061849246IN IVR:6987061849246  
 SP HOWRAH HD <711101>  
 Counter No:1,22/04/2025,11:01  
 To:THE PRINCIPAL,SALI LAKE,SEC-11  
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 Amt:41.30, Tax:6.30, Amt.Paid:41.00(Cash)  
 <Track on www.indiapost.gov.in>  
 <Dial 18002666666><Wear mask -Stay safe>

EW061849260IN IVR:6987061849260  
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 To:THE DIV.FONES,BIRBHUM DIVISION  
 PIN:731103, Barabagan SO  
 From:SUBHAS DATI,25/1 BITNDAL LAN  
 Wt:50gms  
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 <Track on www.indiapost.gov.in>  
 <Dial 18002666666><Wear mask -Stay safe>

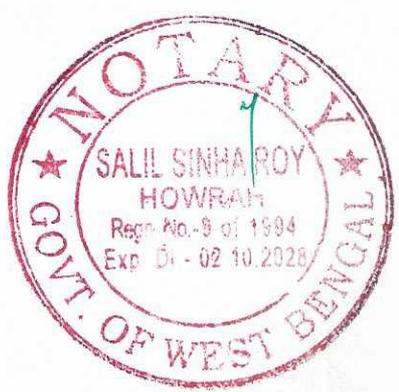
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 SP HOWRAH HD <711101>  
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 PIN:711102, Sipur SO  
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 Wt:50gms  
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 <Dial 18002666666><Wear mask -Stay safe>

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 PIN:731101, Suri HO  
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 <Dial 18002666666><Wear mask -Stay safe>

EW290555783IN IVR:6987290555783  
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 PIN:700106, Bidhan Nagar IB Market SO  
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 Wt:50gms  
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 <Track on www.indiapost.gov.in>  
 <Dial 18002666666><Wear mask -Stay safe>

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 <Track on www.indiapost.gov.in>  
 <Dial 18002666666><Wear mask -Stay safe>

EW061849250IN IVR:6987061849250  
 SP HOWRAH HD <711101>  
 Counter No:1,22/04/2025,11:01  
 To:THE MEMBER SE,10A BLK LA,SEC-1  
 PIN:700106, Bidhan Nagar IB Market SO  
 From:SUBHAS DATI,25/1 BITNDAL LAN  
 Wt:45gms  
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 <Track on www.indiapost.gov.in>  
 <Dial 18002666666><Wear mask -Stay safe>



28 APR 2025