

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI  
ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 545 OF 2024**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

NEWS ITEM TITLED "SOME MIND-BOGGLING DATA" SAYS MANIPUR CHIEF MINISTER ON FOREST COVER LOSS" APPEARING IN NDTV.COM DATED 04.05.2024.

**INDEX**

<b>S No</b>	<b>Particulars</b>	<b>Page No</b>
1.	Reply Affidavit On Behalf Of State Of Manipur	1-6
2.	<b>ANNEXURE A1</b> True and correct copies of the relevant extracts of India State of Forest Reports of 1987 showing forest covers of Manipur	7
3.	<b>ANNEXURE A2</b> True and correct copies of the relevant extracts of India State of Forest Reports of 2021 showing forest covers of Manipur	8

Date:01.03.2025

Filed By

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**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
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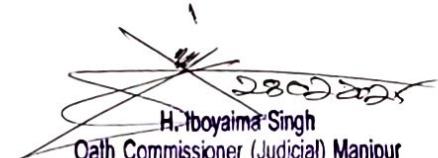
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NEWS ITEM TITLED "SOME MIND-BOGGLING DATA" SAYS MANIPUR CHIEF MINISTER ON FOREST COVER LOSS" APPEARING IN NDTV.COM DATED 04.05.2024.

**REPLY AFFIDAVIT ON BEHALF OF STATE OF MANIPUR**

I, Arun Kumar Sinha, Principal Secretary (Environment, Forest and Climate Change), Government of Manipur, do hereby solemnly affirm and state as under:-

1. I am working in the aforesaid capacity and I am conversant with the facts of the present case and therefore, competent to depose the present affidavit on behalf of the State of Manipur.
2. That, the present reply affidavit in terms of the direction of this Hon'ble Court in the present suo-motu petition taking cognizance of a news item featured in ntdv.com.
3. That, it is submitted that as per the reports of the India State of Forest Reports of 1987 and 2021 published by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), Government of India, the forest cover of Manipur was 17,679 sq.km and 16,598.27 sq. km respectively. It is further submitted that

  
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 Regd. No. 587 of 2025

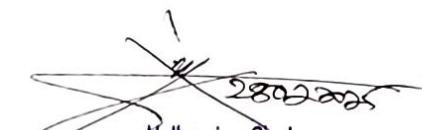


the State lost forest cover of 1,080.73 sq. km. from the period 1987 to 2021.

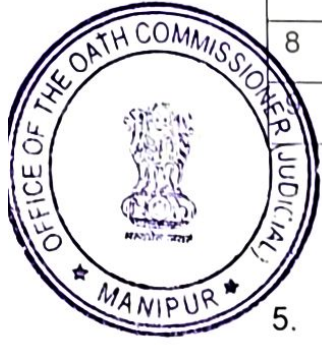
True and correct copies of the relevant extracts of India State of Forest Reports of 1987 and 2021 showing forest covers of Manipur are marked and annexed herewith as **ANNEXURE A1 (Page No. 7 )** and **ANNEXURE A2 (Page No. 8 )** respectively.

4. That, it is respectfully submitted that from 1987 to 2021, there were losses and gains in the State's forest covers. The forest cover lost in the State differs from district to district. For instance, from 2011 to 2021 the state lost 491.73 sq. km. While districts namely Churachandpur, Tamenglong, Senapati, Chandel and Imphal West have lost forest cover, districts namely Bishnupur, Thoubal, Imphal East and Ukhrul have gained forest cover. The district-wise changes in forest cover from 2011 to 2021 are as below:

Sl. No.	Name of District	Forest cover as ISFR 2011 (Sq. Km)	Forest cover as ISFR 2021 (Sq. Km)	Change of forest cover in Sq. Km from 2011 to 2021 {(+) increase, (-) loss}
1	Churachandpur	4275.00	3879.04	-395.96 Sq. Km
2	Tamenglong	3902.00	3794.62	-107.38 Sq. Km
3	Senapati	2183.00	2091.79	-91.21 Sq. Km
4	Chandel	2829.00	2811.07	-17.93 Sq. Km
5	Imphal West	55.00	51.95	-3.05 Sq. Km
6	Bishnupur	21.00	22.28	1.28 Sq. Km

  
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 Oath Commissioner (Judicial) Manipur  
 Regd. No. 587 of 2025

7	Thouba!	56.00	59.35	3.35 Sq. Km
8	Imphal East	220.00	264.42	44.42 Sq. Km
	Ukhrul	3549.00	3623.75	74.75 Sq. Km



5. That, it is submitted that the illegal poppy cultivation, forest fire, shifting cultivation, diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes under the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and establishment of new villages in the forests, particularly in Unclassed Forests are the major challenges faced by the State. They are also the major causes leading to deforestation and loss of forest cover in the State. Of late, illegal poppy cultivation has become the major cause of degradation of forests in the State.
6. That, the State Government has been taking proactive action against illegal poppy cultivators in the State. It is submitted that during the last 3 (three) years, poppy plantations over 56,777.35 acres (229.78 sq. km) inside the forest area of districts such as Kangpokpi, Churachandpur, Senapati, Kamjong, Chandel, Ukhrul, Tengnoupal, Tamenglong and Noney have been destroyed.
7. That, forest fire is another major cause leading to destruction of forests and loss of forest cover in the State. To combat and control forest fires, the State has prepared a State Action Plan and all necessary actions

  
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 Oath Commissioner (Judicial) Manipur  
 Regd. No. 587 of 2025



to prevent and control forest fires have been taken up. It is submitted that the number of forest fire alerts reported by the Forest Survey of India has declined from 16,619 in 2020-21 to 7,386 (2020-21), 6,934 (2022-23) and 8,954 (2023-24).

8. That, diversion of forest land for developmental activities under the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 also contributes to the reduction of forest cover in the State. Since 1961, forest area of 54.36 sq. km has been diverted for developmental activities in the state.
9. That, as per the India State of Forest Report, 2021, the State of Manipur has 16,598.27 sq. km accounting for 74.34 % of the geographical area of the State which is well above the 66% (two-thirds) prescribed by the National Forest Policy 1988.
10. That, as many as 413 encroachers have been evicted from 2015 to 2023 from the Reserved Forests and Protected Forests in the State. The year wise number of encroachers evicted from 2015 to 2023 is as under:

Year	No. of encroachers evicted
2015	64
2016	58
2018	79
2019	18
2020	5

  
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 Oath Commissioner (Judicial) Manipur  
 Regd. No. 587 of 2025

2022	116
2023	73



That, it is respectfully submitted that eviction of encroachers from the Reserved Forests and Protected Forests has been taken up across the entire State without discriminating between communities.

12. That, the State Forest Department has been taking up various programs and schemes to conserve and develop the forest and wildlife resources. State Afforestation programs like State Plan, Green India Mission, CAMPA, Chief Minister's Green Manipur Mission, etc. have taken over 13.716 ha during the last three years from 2021 to 2024.
13. That, It is submitted that the Forest Department, Government of Manipur is also working on a plan to raise extensive bamboo plantation in forest areas where poppy cultivation has been destroyed.
14. That, due to extensive plantation and protection measures taken up by the State in the last few years, the growing stock of Manipur Forests has increased by 24% as per the latest India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023 published by the Forest Survey of India, Government of India.

  
 H. Iboyaima Singh  
 Oath Commissioner (Judicial) Manipur  
 Regd. No. 587 of 2025



It is humbly prayed that the present Reply Affidavit be taken on record.

DEPONENT

  
(Arun Kumar Sinha)

Principal Secretary (Forests, Evt. & CC)

Government of Manipur

**Principal Secretary**  
**(For, Evt. & CC)**  
Government of Manipur

#### VERIFICATION

I, the deponent above named do hereby verify that the contents of foregoing paras are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. No part of it is false and nothing material has been concealed therefrom.

Verified at Imphal on this 28<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2025.

DEPONENT

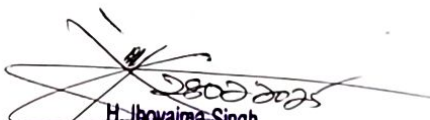
  
(Arun Kumar Sinha)

Principal Secretary (Forests, Evt. & CC)

Government of Manipur

**Principal Secretary**  
**(For, Evt. & CC)**  
Government of Manipur

<p>Solemnly affirmed before me on <u>28022025</u> <u>FRIDAY</u> at <u>1:PM</u> in the Court premises by the declarant who is identified by <u>Neevali Ad</u> The declarant seems to understand the contents fully well on their being read over and explained to him/her.</p>
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H. Iboyalma Singh  
Oath Commissioner (Judicial) Manipur  
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## ANNEXURE A1

TABLE - 2.3

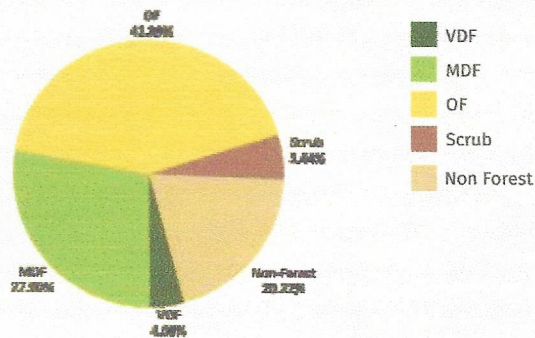
## ACTUAL FOREST AREA BY DENSITY CLASSES

(Area in km<sup>2</sup>)

Sl. No.	State/UT	Dense Forest (crown density above 40%)	Open Forest (crown density 10-40%)	Mangroves	Total Tree covered area
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1.	Andhra Pradesh	28580	21119	495	50194
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	51096	9404	-	60500
3.	Assam	18415	7971	-	26386
4.	Bihar	13490	15258	-	28748
5.	Coa (including Daman & Diu)	763	522	-	1285
6.	Gujarat	7850	5293	427	13570
7.	Haryana	43	601	-	644
8.	Himachal Pradesh	9908	2974	-	12882
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	12978	7902	-	20880
10.	Karnataka	16394	15870	-	32264
11.	Kerala	8569	1833	-	10402
12.	Madhya Pradesh	72174	55575	-	127749
13.	Maharashtra	27244	20032	140	47416
14.	Manipur	4670	13009	-	17679
15.	Meghalaya	5749	10762	-	16511
16.	Mizoram	2938	16154	-	19092
17.	Nagaland	6379	7972	-	14351
18.	Orissa	28573	24391	199	53163
19.	Punjab	96	670	-	766
20.	Rajasthan	3048	9430	-	12478
21.	Sikkim	1867	972	-	2839
22.	Tamil Nadu	10866	7491	23	18380
23.	Tripura	340	5403	-	5743
24.	Uttar Pradesh	18876	12567	-	31443
25.	West Bangal	3512	3223	1076	8811
26.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	6807	110	686	7603
27.	Chandigarh	-	2	-	2
28.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	187	50	-	237
29.	Delhi	-	15	-	15
30.	Pondicherry	-	8	-	8
31.	Lakshadweep	-	-	-	-
All India Total		361412	276583	4046	642041

## 13.16.1 Forest Cover

## ANNEXURE A2

Figure 13.16.1  
Forest Cover  
of ManipurTable 13.16.2 Forest Cover  
of Manipur (in sq km)

Class	Area	% of GA
VDF	904.99	4.05
MDF	6,228.49	27.90
OF	9,464.79	42.39
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,598.27</b>	<b>74.34</b>
Scrub	1,214.98	5.44

Table 13.16.3 District- wise Forest Cover in Manipur

(in sq km)

District	Geo-geographical Area (GA)	2021 Assessment				%of GA	Change wrt 2019 assessment	Scrub
		Very Dense Forest	Mod. Dense Forest	Open Forest	Total			
Bishnupur <sup>TH</sup>	496	0.00	0.78	21.50	22.28	4.49	0.78	2.14
Chandel <sup>TH</sup>	3,313	11.30	929.21	1,870.56	2,811.07	84.85	-52.28	145.71
Churachandpur <sup>TH</sup>	4,570	42.19	1,593.15	2,243.70	3,879.04	84.88	-40.47	163.69
Imphal East <sup>TH</sup>	709	0.00	56.62	207.80	264.42	37.29	-9.84	13.51
Imphal West <sup>TH</sup>	519	0.00	14.68	37.27	51.95	10.01	0.20	9.40
Senapati <sup>TH</sup>	3,271	264.74	695.58	1,131.47	2,091.79	63.95	-44.79	317.65
Tamenglong <sup>TH</sup>	4,391	392.15	1,696.10	1,706.37	3,794.62	86.42	-49.82	194.72
Thoubal <sup>TH</sup>	514	0.00	1.15	58.20	59.35	11.55	-11.41	11.90
Ukhru <sup>TH</sup>	4,544	194.61	1,241.22	2,187.92	3,623.75	79.75	-41.00	356.26
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>22,327</b>	<b>904.99</b>	<b>6,228.49</b>	<b>9,464.79</b>	<b>16,598.27</b>	<b>74.34</b>	<b>-248.63</b>	<b>1,214.98</b>

## 13.16.1.1 Forest Cover Inside and Outside Recorded Forest Area (or Green Wash)

The Forest Cover inside and outside Recorded Forest Area (RFA) has been analysed in different categories and presented in Table given below.

Table 13.16.4 Forest Cover Inside and Outside Recorded Forest Area (or Green Wash) in Manipur

(in sq km)

Forest Cover Inside the Recorded Forest Area (or Green Wash)				Forest Cover Outside the Recorded Forest Area (or Green Wash)			
VDF	MDF	OF	Total	VDF	MDF	OF	Total
895	5,743	8,195	14,833	10	485	1,270	1,765
6.03%	38.72%	55.25%		0.57%	27.48%	71.95%	

\*in case of Manipur, Green Wash boundaries have been used.