

**HIGH COURT OF TRIPURA
AGARTALA
WP(C) NO.391 OF 2025**

Sri Atanu Saha and anr.
Vs.
State of Tripura and ors.

HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE (ACTING)

Present:

For the Petitioner(s) : Mr. T.D. Majumder, Sr. Advocate.
Mr. K.L. Debbarma, Advocate.
Mr. D. Kalai, Advocate.

For the Respondent(s) : Mr. Kohinoor N. Bhattacharya, G.A.
Mr. M. Debbarma, Addl. G.A.

21.07.2025

Order

1. This present writ petition has been filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India seeking the following reliefs:-

“i. Issue a rule upon the respondents to show cause as to why a Writ of Mandamus, directing the respondents to count the two-year Forest Ranger Training Period (1997-1999) in the petitioners' service career and grant consequential service and financial benefits, shall not be issued.

ii. Issue rule upon the respondent No. 4 to show cause as to why a Writ of Mandamus directing the respondents to rescind the decision dated 17.03.2025 (Annexure-16 supra), shall not be made.

iii. Issue a Writ of Certiorari to show cause as to why they shall not be asked to send for records, relevant to subject matter of the proceedings, from the custody of respondents for rendering substantial justice for quashing or cancelling the decision of the Finance Department's vide Note No. 47 & e-file system under U.O No. 5900/FIN(ESTT-11)/25 dated 05.07.2025 being arbitrary, illegal, shall not be made.

iv. Make the rules absolute in terms of prayer nos. (i), (ii) & (iii) as above.

v. Pass any other order(s) as deemed fit and proper.”

2. Heard Mr. T.D. Majumder, learned Senior Counsel, assisted by Mr. K.L. Debbarma, learned counsel appearing for the petitioners, as well as Mr. M. Debbarma, learned Additional Government Advocate, appearing for the State-respondents.

3. Mr. Majumder, learned Senior Counsel appearing for the petitioners, submits that the petitioners are Forest Rangers employed under the Forest Department, Government of Tripura. They were selected through a competitive process conducted by the Tripura Public Service Commission (TPSC) in 1997, pursuant to Advertisement No. 4/97, for a two-year Forest Ranger Training Course (1997–1999). After successfully completing the training, they were appointed as Forest Rangers on 27.10.1999. However, their service benefits, including seniority and financial benefits, were calculated only from the date of appointment, not from the commencement of their training in 1997. Learned Senior Counsel contends that this is contrary to the Recruitment Rules of 1980 and past practice, whereby earlier batches (e.g., 1982–84) and subsequent batches (e.g., 2007–09) of Forest Rangers were granted service benefits from the commencement of their training. The updated Recruitment Rules of 2005 also support this practice. The petitioners' representation submitted in 2023 was forwarded to the Forest Department, which recommended counting the training period. However, the Finance Department rejected the proposal without providing cogent reasons, vide its

decision dated 05.07.2025. The learned Senior Counsel argues that this denial is discriminatory, as similarly situated Forest Rangers from other batches received such benefits. This has caused the petitioners significant prejudice, including loss of seniority and promotion opportunities. Having no alternative remedy, they have approached the High Court of Tripura under Article 226 of the Constitution.

4. On the other hand, Mr. M. Debbarma, learned Additional Government Advocate appearing for the State-respondents, submits that the decision taken by the State-respondents is just, proper, and within the ambit of law.

5. Heard and perused the materials on record.

6. On perusal of the records, it is seen that the 2nd respondent, the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (HoFF), by letter dated 17.03.2025, communicated to the petitioner No.1, the decision of the 3rd respondent, i.e., Secretary, Finance Department.

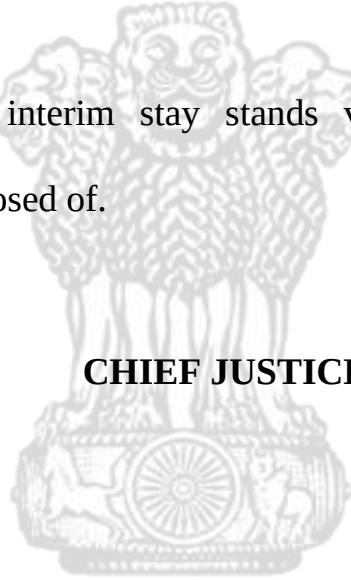
7. A fair reading of the said communication indicates that the Finance Department rejected the petitioner claim, expressing its inability to consider the matter. However, no cogent legal reasoning has been provided as to why the petitioner is not entitled to the relief claimed. A reasoned order is necessary to enable the petitioners to challenge the same before the competent Court of law or authority, if aggrieved.

8. In the absence of such reasoning, this Court finds that there is no proper communication to the petitioner from respondents No. 2 and 3, and no speaking order, if passed, has been communicated.

9. In view of the above, the respondents are directed to communicate their decision to the petitioner(s) preferably in the form of a speaking order at the earliest, preferably within a period of 1(one) month from the date of receipt of a copy of this order. In the event the petitioners are aggrieved, they are at liberty to challenge the same, and the doctrine of *res judicata* shall not apply.

10. As a sequel, any interim stay stands vacated. Pending application(s), if any, also stand disposed of.

CHIEF JUSTICE (ACTING)



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