

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
NAGPUR BENCH : NAGPUR
PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION NO. 9 OF 2022

Ms. Prerna Singh Bindra

-- Petitioner/s

Vs.

The State of Maharashtra & Ors.

-- Respondent/s

Mr. K.P. Mahalle, Advocate for the Petitioner.

Ms. Ketki Joshi, in-charge Government Pleader for Respondent
Nos. 1 to 5.

CORAM : NITIN JAMDAR &
ANIL L. PANSARE, JJ.

DATE : 02 MARCH 2022

P. C. :

Heard learned Counsel for the parties.

2. The Petitioner has brought this petition in the public interest, making a grievance that there are encroachments in the reserved forest area of the Khadsangi Range of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, Buffer Zone.

3. Learned Counsel for the Petitioner states that the Respondent – Forest Officers have issued communications to remove the encroachment; however, no further action has been taken. Regarding the prayer for continuous monitoring of encroachments in this area by this Court is concerned, the learned Counsel for the Petitioner does not press for the same and states that he will restrict the prayer in respect of prayer clause (i).

4. The grievance in the petition is regarding the failure of Respondent No.4 – Deputy Director (Buffer) and Respondent No.5 – Range Forest Officer in removing the encroachment. Learned in-charge Government Pleader informs that the seniormost officer in this regard, who can look into the issue and give necessary directions to these Respondents, would be the Respondent No.2 – Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife). Learned in-charge Government Pleader states that the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests will consider the petition as representation and take necessary steps per law.

5. We direct that the present petition, regarding prayer clause (i), be placed before Respondent No.2 - Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife). Respondent No.2 would look into the grievance of the Petitioner. If it is correct, proceed to take the necessary action as per law after following the due procedure. Considering the importance of the issue, the steps be taken as early as possible, subject to other urgent commitments.

6. We direct that if Respondent No.2 proceeds to issue directions to take action, then all other concerned authorities of the State will extend necessary co-operation to the Respondents.

7. The Public Interest Litigation is disposed of in the above terms.

[ANIL L. PANSARE, J.]

[NITIN JAMDAR, J.]