

01.07.2026
M/L No.123
Court No.12
(gc)

**MAT 160 of 2026
CAN 1 of 2026**

**Balaram Mahata & Anr.
Vs.
The State of West Bengal & Ors.**

Mr. Lalratan Mandal,
Mr. Dilip Kumar Sadhu

... for the Appellants.

Ms. Susmita Saha Dutta, Ld. A.G.P.,
Ms. Tanusree Ghosh

... for the State.

Mrs. Usha Maity,
Ms. Anita Khatri

... for the Respondent No.8.

1. Affidavit-of-service filed in Court today is taken on record.
2. We are inclined to interfere with the order of His Lordship. The allegation of unauthorized construction should be looked into by the Panchayat authorities. The issue of encroachment on the appellants' land is a matter to be decided in a civil suit, but the civil court does not have any jurisdiction to either initiate proceeding for unauthorized construction or reach the said proceeding to its logical conclusion under the provisions of Section 23 of the West Bengal Panchayat Act, 1973.
3. Thus, the appellants are granted permission to file a comprehensive representation before

the Panchayat authorities only with regard to the allegation of unauthorized construction, thereby, indicating the nature of the unauthorized construction and the nature of the allegation. The claim of ownership of the appellants in respect of the land on which the construction was allegedly being raised, is neither a part of this proceeding, nor will it be a part of the proceeding to be initiated by the concerned Gram Panchayat.

4. His Lordship found that the dispute was civil in nature and the appellants had raised objections before the concerned Gram Panchayat long after the construction has been completed. Thus, no order should be passed. In our view, the law requires permission for construction. The law empowers the Gram Panchayat to look into such allegations and take appropriate steps.
5. The representation shall be served upon the private party, i.e., upon the respondent no.8 and the concerned Gram Panchayat will act and proceed in accordance with law.
6. While doing so, the following procedure should be adhered to:-
 - a) An inspection of the site shall be conducted. Such inspection shall be held in the presence of the appellants

and the respondent no.8. An advance notice of the inspection shall be served upon the appellants and the respondent no.8. If the parties are not available to accept notice, the same shall be affixed at a conspicuous place in the premises.

- b) A report of such inspection shall be prepared along with the sketch map, indicating the extent and nature of unauthorized construction, if any.
- c) Such report shall be handed over to the parties. The question of right, title, possession, encroachment and boundary dispute, shall not be decided by the Gram Panchayat. The only issue to be decided will be whether there is any sanction or permission for such construction.
- d) A hearing shall be given to the appellants and the respondent no.8. The parties must also be allowed to furnish their written objection/version to the report and adduce oral and documentary evidence in support of their contentions before the competent authority. All points raised by either party, will be decided.

e) A reasoned order shall be passed and communicated to the parties. On the basis of what transpires at the hearing and during inspection, the proceedings shall be reached to its logical conclusion in accordance with law, upon due compliance of Section 23(5) of The West Bengal Panchayat Act, 1973.

7. This order shall not be construed as an opinion of this Court on the correctness of the allegations made by the appellants. All the issues, will be decided by the concerned authority, in accordance with law, independently.
8. The entire exercise shall be completed within a period of four months from the date receipt of appellant's representation.
9. Under such circumstances, the appeal and the connected application are disposed of.
10. Urgent Xerox certified copy of this order, if applied for, be given to the parties upon compliance of all necessary formalities.

(Shampa Sarkar, J.)

(Smita Das De, J.)