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IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION

WRIT PETITION NO.4980 OF 2017

Anandvan Samajik Unnati Sahakari Vriksha
Lagwad Sanstha Maryadit
through its duly authorized members
Milind Purushottam Deshpande and Anr. ...Petitioners

Versus

State of Maharashtra and Ors. ...Respondents

Mr. Prahlad Paranjape (through video-conferencing) with Ameya Borwankar for the Petitioners.

Ms. Kavita Solunke, Addl.G.P. with Mr. M. M. Pable, A.G.P. for the Respondents-State.

CORAM: BHARATI DANGRE &
ASHISH S. CHAVAN, JJ.

DATE : 12th OCTOBER 2026

P.C. *:*

1. In the wake of the directions issued by us in a bunch of Writ Petitions, the lead Petition being Writ Petition No.1536 of 2017, decided on 23rd July 2026, as well the directions issued in Writ Petition

No.5344 of 2026 decided on 24th August 2026, we deem it appropriate to permit the petitioners to prefer a representation to the Deputy Conservator of Forests and permit the petition to be treated as a representation to be placed before the Scrutiny Committee which shall follow the mandate as set out in the Government Resolution dated 13th August 2026, issued by the Revenue and Forest Department, streamlining for redressal of grievance of those who claim that their lands have been wrongly mutated as 'Private Forests' without following the procedure laid down in Section 35 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927.

We expect the entire exercise to be completed by the Department with expediency, since the issue involved in the Writ Petition is pending for a considerable length of time and in our view despite clear directions being issued about the parameters that would govern acquisition of Private Forest. We, therefore, expect utmost promptitude on behalf of the State Government.

On culmination of the proceedings, if the decision is arrived at to delete the entry of 'Private Forest' or any other ancillary entry in relation thereto, we expect the State Government to issue specific directions to rectify the mutation entries forthwith.

2. We must note that though the Government Resolution state that the scrutiny of the proposals shall be based upon the decision of this Court dated 23rd July 2026, we clarify that the Scrutiny Committee shall also take into consideration the decisions of the Hon'ble Apex Court in case of ***Godrej and Boyce Manufacturing Company Limited and Another v/s State of Maharashtra and Others***[1] and ***Rohan Vijay Nahar and Others v/s State of Maharashtra and Others***[2]**,** since its reference has come in the decision delivered by us on 23rd July 2026.

All the proceedings shall be adjudicated by the Scrutiny Committee in expeditious manner.

1 (2014) 3 SCC 430
2 (2026) 2 SCC 182

With the aforesaid directions, the writ petition stands disposed of.

ASHISH S. CHAVAN, J. *BHARATI DANGRE, J.*