



NGT Seeks Presence of Uttarakhand Officials

Why in News?

[The National Green Tribunal \(NGT\)](#) has directed the Member Secretary of [the Uttarakhand Pollution Control Board \(UKPCB\)](#) and the State's Principal Chief Conservator of Forests to appear before it in a **case involving the illegal felling of 176 trees** in Udham Singh Nagar district of Uttarakhand.

Key Points

- **About the Hearing:**
 - The NGT is **reviewing a petition regarding the unauthorized felling of trees** for the development of a residential colony by private individuals in Chandpur village, Udham Singh Nagar district.
- **Findings of the Joint Committee:**
 - In its order, an NGT Bench referred to a joint committee report confirming the illegal felling of 176 trees.
 - The tribunal stated that **environmental compensation must be recovered** for the unauthorized deforestation.
 - The **joint committee investigating the matter includes:**
 - The District Magistrate
 - The Dehradun regional office of the [Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change](#)
 - The Uttarakhand Pollution Control Board (UKPCB)
- **Tribunal's Directives:**
 - After reviewing the report, the **NGT sought a response** from the Uttarakhand Chief Secretary and other concerned officials.
 - The tribunal stressed the importance of personal appearances by:
 - The Member Secretary of UKPCB
 - The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF)
 - It directed them to attend the next hearing physically or via video conferencing to assist in the case.
 - The tribunal emphasized that their presence is crucial for a just and proper adjudication.

Uttarakhand Pollution Control Board (UKPCB)

- It is a **statutory organisation** established under the provisions of **the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974**, and the **Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981**.
- The UKPCB is responsible for the prevention, control, and abatement of pollution in the state of Uttarakhand, India.
- It is **headquartered in Dehradun**, Uttarakhand.

NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) is a specialised body for swift resolution of environmental and natural resource cases.

About

- ⊖ **Establishment:** By National Green Tribunal Act 2010
- ⊖ **Objective:** Quick resolution of environmental & natural resource cases
- ⊖ **Case Resolution:** Within 6 months
- ⊖ **Places of Sitting:** New Delhi (Principal), Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata, and Chennai

Structure

- ⊖ **Composition:** Chairperson, Judicial Members, and Expert Members
- ⊖ **Tenure:** Up to 5 years/until age 65 (no reappointment)
- ⊖ **Appointments:** Chairperson - Central Government (with the CJI's consultation)
 - 10-20 judicial members & 10-20 expert members - Selection Committee

India is the third country globally (after Australia and New Zealand) and the first developing nation to establish a specialised environmental tribunal like NGT.

Powers & Jurisdiction

- ⊖ **Jurisdiction:** Civil cases on environmental issues and rights
- ⊖ **Suo Motu Powers:** Granted since 2021
- ⊖ **Roles:** Adjudicatory, preventative, and remedial
- ⊖ **Procedures:** Follows Principles of natural justice
 - Not bound by the CPC, 1908 or Indian Evidence Act, 1872
- ⊖ **Principles:** Sustainable Development; Precautionary; Polluter pays
- ⊖ **Orders:** Executable as civil court decrees; offers relief and compensation (**decisions are binding**)
- ⊖ **Appeals:** Tribunal can review its decisions.
 - If decision fails - Appeal to the SC to be filed within 90 days

NGT deals with Civil Cases under

- ⊖ Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974
- ⊖ Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977
- ⊖ Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980
- ⊖ Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981
- ⊖ Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
- ⊖ Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991
- ⊖ Biological Diversity Act, 2002



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