



USTM and Illegal Mining in Meghalaya: CEC Report

Environment and Governance

The Central Empowered Committee of the Supreme Court has held the University of Science and Technology Meghalaya (USTM) accountable for violations of forest laws, recommending restoration of its occupied land and surrounding areas, along with a minimum fine of ₹150 crore.

In its broader findings on illegal mining and hill cutting in Ri Bhoi and East Khasi Hills, the committee called for suspension of all mining, quarrying, and crushing in Ri Bhoi until a multidisciplinary MoEFCC-led team conducts a detailed review of land-use permissions, encroachment, muck disposal, and environmental safeguards. It also directed the state government to constitute an expert committee within a month to align the definition of 'forests' under district council and state regulations with principles laid down by the Supreme Court