

Call to Declare Saranda Forest as Sanctuary: MLA Saryu Roy Urges Jharkhand Government

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Ranchi: West Jamshedpur MLA Saryu Roy has appealed the state govt to notify Saranda forest as a sanctuary as directed by the Supreme Court by next month, in order to conserve the largest Sal forest in Asia, located 122 km from Jamshedpur.

Addressing the media on Tuesday, Roy said that the state govt is adopting a lackadaisical attitude in notifying the sanctuary, despite reports of several high-level committees recommending it.

The SC on September 17 issued a stern order regarding the declaration of Saranda Sanctuary and directed the Jharkhand government to notify it as a wildlife sanctuary by October 7, 2025, failing which the state's chief secretary would go to jail.

"Prior to the SC's order, Jharkhand's forest secretary in April gave an undertaking before the court that it would notify 576 sq km of forest as sanctuary and an additional 136 sq km as conservation reserve within two months. However, the state govt missed the deadline. In order to protect Saranda, notifying it as a sanctuary is a crucial step as decades-long mining activities in the area has threatened its ecology," Roy said.

He alleged that subsequent state govts kept on leasing out the mine sites inside the forest, both to private and public sector companies without considering the harm that may cause to the rich forest area.

"The govt is linking mining with development. However, despite mining operations going on in the region for over a century, the status of the people residing in the region have not yet elevated. But the notification of the region as a sanctuary can bring change to the lives of people, promoting tourism in the area. The state govt must think about it," the MLA said.

On Tuesday, a five member ministerial committee of the Jharkhand government visited Saranda to study various aspects of declaring it a wildlife sanctuary. The government will present its stand before the Supreme Court on October 8, based on the recommendations provided by the sub-committee to the council of ministers.