

Supreme Court to hear NRI doctor's plea against lawyers' boycott of court

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The Supreme Court on Thursday agreed to hear a plea of a US-based NRI doctor alleging that he has not been able to pursue his case in the Calcutta High Court as lawyers were boycotting a particular bench there.

A three-judge bench of Justices T S Thakur and V Gopala Gowda and R Banumathi said it would hear the petition filed by US resident Kunal Saha, who claimed that he came to India to argue an appeal in person in the High Court but due to the "ongoing strike it was difficult for him to continue to stay here for an indefinite period."

Saha, in his plea, has asked the apex court to clarify "whether some advocates can frustrate the course of delivery of timely justice by boycotting the proceedings before a court in order to settle their grievances against a particular judge."

The plea also added that the ongoing strike had brought endless miseries to numerous other litigants by causing needless delay in justice. In the petition, Saha claimed that advocates have no right to strike or boycott court proceedings to settle their personal grievances. It said Saha's wife had died due to gross medical negligence of a senior doctor and the Supreme Court had awarded a compensation around Rs 11.5 crore, to be paid by the doctor and some others.

However, despite conviction and scathing criticism by the Supreme Court, the doctor was selected by the West Bengal government for its highest award 'Bangabibhusan' in medicine, it said. Saha then moved the Calcutta High Court seeking directions against the state government against the doctor's selection for the award.

The High Court bench of Justices Girish Chandra Gupta and Shib Sadhan Sadhu, however, has not been able to hear his petition, which was listed on July 22, due to lawyers' boycott of their court.