

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL, NEW DELHI  
ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 265 OF 2026**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

Jatinder Singh Aulakh

...Applicants

VERSUS

State of Punjab & Ors.

... Respondents

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**Through**

Place: New Delhi

Date: 02.07.2026



**Naman Kumar**

**Advocate (D/6574/2023)**

**Law Office of Apar Gupta**

*Advocate for Respondent No. 4*

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## **REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE**

**In compliance of order dated 05.05.2026 passed by the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal in OA No. 265/2026 titled as Jatinder Singh Aulakh V/s State of Punjab and Others.**

### **1.0 Background of the case**

1.1 Mr. Jatinder Singh Aulak has made a complaint dated 31.12.2025 on the Public Grievances Portal of the National Green Tribunal raising the grievances regarding large scale river sand/gravel mining, construction of kutchra roads, and ecological damage to River Ravi at Village Marara Adatgarh, District Pathankot, Punjab which includes the following.

**Illegal Infrastructural Blockages:** Construction of multiple illegal kutchra (temporary) roads inside the riverbed, blocking the natural flow of the river with depths reaching 10-20 feet.

**Mechanical Encroachment:** Unauthorized deployment of heavy machinery (Poclain machines, JCBs, and dumpers) within the active water channel, which is strictly prohibited under the Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines (2016).

**Geomorphological Damage:** Destruction of natural riverbanks and forced alteration of the river's course, significantly increasing the risk of flash floods in the surrounding villages.

**Illegal Mining Operations:** Continuous extraction of sand/gravel under the guise of private "numbered land," disregarding the settled law that riverbeds and floodplains constitute public trust land.

1.2 The complainant has alleged that these activities have led to ecological damage, threat to Human Life as the general public is using these illegal, structurally unstable roads to cross the river, posing an imminent threat of accidents or drowning and administrative failure as numerous complaints and photographic evidence has been submitted to the Mining Department but no effective action has been taken which allows the mining mafia to continue unabated.

## **2.0 Orders dated 05.05.2026 passed by the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal**

- 2.1 In exercise of Suo-Moto powers, the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal has treated and registered the complaint dated 31.12.2025 of Sh. Jatinder Singh Aulakh as Original Application no. 265 of 2026.
- 2.2 After consideration of the matter, the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal was pleased to pass an order dated 05.05.2026 in Original Application no. 265 of 2026 thereby impleading (1) State of Punjab through the Secretary, Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of Punjab (2) the Director, Mining and Geology, Government of Punjab (3) the District Magistrate, Pathankot (4) Punjab State Pollution Control Board (PSPCB) through Member Secretary as respondents No. 1 to 4 and sought their response.
- 2.3 In view the averments made in the application, the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal deems appropriate to constitute a Joint Committee vide the said order dated 05.05.2026 to verify the factual position and take appropriate remedial action comprising of representatives of Deputy Director General of Forests (C), MoEF&CC, Integrated Regional Office at Chandigarh and Member Secretary, PSPCB and the District Magistrate, Pathankot and directed the same to look into the grievances of the applicant, associate the applicant and representative of the concerned project proponents, verify the factual position and suggest appropriate remedial action and submit its report within two months. The PSPCB was designated as nodal agency for coordination and compliance. A copy of order dated 05.05.2026 passed by the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal in Original Application no. 265 of 2026 is enclosed as **Annexure-A.**

## **3. Compliance of the orders of Hon'ble National Green Tribunal:**

### **3.1. Constitution of the Joint Committee:**

In compliance to the order dated 05.05.2026 of Hon'ble National Green Tribunal passed in Original Application no. 265 of 2026, the office of Deputy Director General of Forests (C), MoEF&CC, Chandigarh has nominated Dr. K Muthamizh Selvan, Additional Director/Scientist 'E', vide letter no. 19-CC-083/2026-ROC-ENV dated 18.05.2026. The District Magistrate, Pathankot has nominated Executive Engineer-Cum- District Mining Officer,

Water Resources Cum Mining & Geology Division, Pathankot vide office letter no. 628 dated 10.06.2026 to join the Joint Committee in compliance of Hon'ble NGT orders dated 05.05.2026 in O.A. no. 265 of 2026. The Assistant Environmental Engineers, Punjab Pollution Control Board, Regional Office, Batala has joined the Joint Committee on behalf of the Member Secretary, Punjab Pollution Control Board, Patiala.

### **3.2 Site Visits:**

The site in question was visited and inspected by the Joint Committee on 15.06.2026. The Executive Engineer-Cum- District Mining Officer, Water Resources Cum Mining & Geology Division, Gurdaspur has also joined the Joint Committee for site visit as certain contents of the complaint relates to District Gurdaspur. The attendance sheet of the visit of Joint Committee members is enclosed as **Annexure-B**.

## **4.0 Report of the Joint Committee**

### **4.1. Observations and Findings of the Joint Committee:**

**4.1.1** The site under complaint falls in revenue estate of Village Marara, District Gurdaspur and Village Adalatgarh, District Pathankot and is situated about 5 KM from the Indo-Pak International Border. The Executive Engineer-Cum- District Mining Officer, Water Resources Cum Mining & Geology Division, Pathankot and Gurdaspur informed that due to last year floods in River Ravi lot of silt/sand & river borne material has deposited on agriculture fields located on banks of River Ravi. The Government of Punjab, Department of Mines and Geology in exercise of powers conferred by Rule 90 of the Punjab Minor Mineral Rules, 2013 made under Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (Central Act no. 67 of 1957) has relaxed the provisions of the said rules to allow the farmers to remove and lift silt / sand and river borne material deposited on their agricultural fields as a one time measure upto 31.12.2025 vide notification no. E977900/PJB/320 dated 12/09/2025 so as to enable the farmers to

clear their agriculture fields and prepare the same for next sowing season. A copy of the notification no. E977900/PJB/320 dated 12.09.2025 is enclosed as **Annexure-C**.

#### 4.1.2

The Executive Engineer-Cum- District Mining Officer further informed that in compliance of above said notification, the farmers/land owners of Village Marara and Village Adalatgarh had cleared their fields and for movement of vehicles, which carried river borne material temporary roads were made in River Bed as there was no permanent connecting bridge on the river at the said site. The banks/embankment of River Ravi got damaged due to heavy floods.

#### 4.1.3

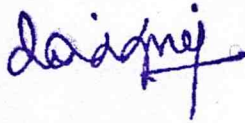
The Joint Committee observed that siltation on agriculture fields of village Marara and Adalatgarh, located on the banks of River Ravi is still present. The photographs posted by the complainant is of dated 29.12.2025 i.e. before the date upto which farmers were allowed by the Government to clear their agriculture fields vide the above said notification dated 12.09.2025. The Joint Committee also observed that the temporary roads which were mentioned in complaint have been removed and there is no obstacles in the River flow. The damaged embankment has also been repaired. The Joint Committee has also enquired from the local residents and BSF officials posted at the said site regarding illegal mining occurring at the site, but they informed that there is no mining activity/vehicle carrying mined material as observed by them at the site as of now. The photographs taken during the visit are enclosed as **Annexure-D**.

## 4.2 Conclusion and Recommendations

The Joint Committee concluded that no mining activity is occurring at village Marara & Adalatgarh. The mining activity which has been alleged by the complainant is before the date (31.12.2025) upto which the farmers were permitted by the Government vide notification dated 12.09.2025 to clear the river borne material deposited in the agricultural fields due to last year floods in River Ravi.

**4.3 Prayer**

The Joint Committee report is hereby submitted for kind perusal and appropriate orders of the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal in compliance to order dated 05.05.2026 passed in Original Application no. 265 of 2026.



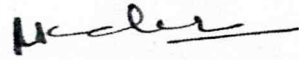
**Dr. K Muthamizh Selvan, Additional Director/Scientist 'E', MoEF & CC, Chandigarh**



**Er. Gurbir Singh, Executive Engineer Cum District Mining Officer, Gurdaspur.**



**Er. Preetsimar Sandhu, Executive Engineer Cum District Mining Officer, Pathankot.**



**Er. Maninderjit Singh, AEE PPCB, RO, Batala.**

Item No. 01

Court No. 2

**BEFORE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI**

Original Application No. 265/2026

Jatinder Singh Aulukh

Applicant

Versus

State of Punjab &amp; Ors.

Respondents

Date of hearing: 05.05.2026

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ARUN KUMAR TYAGI, JUDICIAL MEMBER  
HON'BLE DR. A. SENTHIL VEL, EXPERT MEMBER  
HON'BLE DR. AFROZ AHMAD, EXPERT MEMBER**

Applicant: Mr. Jatinder Singh Aulukh- Applicant in person through V.C.

**ORDER**

1. Mr. Jatinder Singh Aulukh made complaint dated 31.12.2025 on Public Grievances Portal of this Tribunal, which has been treated and registered as Original Application (O.A.) No. 265/2026 for exercise of suo moto jurisdiction in view of law laid down by Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai vs. Ankita Sinha, (2022) 13 SCC 401.***

2. The Applicant has raised grievances regarding large scale river sand/gravel mining, construction of kutchra roads, and ecological damage to River Ravi at Village Marara Adatgarh, District Pathankot, Punjab. The relevant part of the O.A. enumerating grievances of the applicant is reproduced as follows:-

“xxx.....xxx.....xxx

*1, the undersigned, a public-spirited citizen and resident of District Gurdaspur, Punjab, submit this complaint in the interest of environmental protection and public safety.*

*1. Nature of the Grievance*

*It is respectfully submitted that in the riverbed and floodplain areas of River Ravi, specifically at Village Marara Adalatgarh (District Pathankot) and various locations in District Gurdaspur, large-scale illegal activities are being carried out in blatant violation of environmental norms. These include:*

*Illegal Infrastructural Blockages: Construction of multiple illegal kutcha (temporary) roads inside the riverbed, blocking the natural flow of the river with depths reaching 10-20 feet.*

*Mechanical Encroachment: Unauthorized deployment of heavy machinery (Poclain machines, JCBs, and dumpers) within the active water channel, which is strictly prohibited under the Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines (2016).*

*Geomorphological Damage: Destruction of natural riverbanks and forced alteration of the river's course, significantly increasing the risk of flash floods in the surrounding villages.*

*\* Illegal Mining Operations: Continuous extraction of sand/gravel under the guise of private "numbered land," disregarding the settled law that riverbeds and floodplains constitute public trust land.*

## *2. Impact on Environment & Public Safety*

*These activities have led to:*

*1. Ecological Damage: Destruction of aquatic habitats and severe disruption of the groundwater recharge cycle.*

*2. Threat to Human Life: The general public is using these illegal, structurally unstable roads to cross the river, posing an imminent threat of accidents or drowning.*

*3. Administrative Fallure: Despite numerous complaints and photographic evidence submitted to the Mining Department, no effective action has been taken, allowing the mining mafia to continue unabated.*

## *3. Violations of Law*

*The aforementioned acts are in direct contravention of:*

*The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986*

*The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974*

*\* Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines, 2016 and Enforcement & Monitoring Guidelines, 2020*

*Article 21 and 48-A of the Constitution of India.*

## *Prayer*

*In view of this ecological emergency, it is most respectfully prayed that this Hon'ble Tribunal may:*

*1. Take Cognizance of this matter and treat this letter-complaint as an Original Application.*

*2. Constitute an Independent Committee (including experts from CPCB and MoEFCC) to conduct a spot inspection of Village Marara Adatgarh and the affected sites in Gurdaspur.*

*3. Issue Interim Directions to immediately stop all mining activities and dismantle illegal roads inside the riverbed.*

*4. Order Restoration of the riverbed and fix accountability of the erring officials and operators under the "Polluter Pays" principle."*

3. We have heard submissions made by the Applicant and gone through the application and material attached with the same.

4. *Prima facie* the averments made in the application raise substantial questions relating to environment arising out of the implementation of the enactments specified in Schedule-I to the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010.

5. In view of the averments in the application, we consider it appropriate to have response of (1) State of Punjab through the Secretary, Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of Punjab (2) the Director, Mining and Geology, Government of Punjab (3) the District Magistrate, Pathankot (4) Punjab State Pollution Control Board (PSPCB) through Member Secretary who are impleaded as respondents No. 1 to 4.

6. The Registry is directed to prepare and attach memo of parties to the application and issue notices to respondents No. 1 to 4 requiring them to file their responses within **two months**.

7. In view of the averments made in the application, we also consider it appropriate that a Joint Committee be constituted to verify the factual position and take appropriate remedial action. Accordingly, we constitute a Joint Committee comprising of representatives of Deputy Director General of Forests (C), MoEF&CC, Integrated Regional Office at Chandigarh and Member Secretary, PSPCB and the District Magistrate, Pathankot and direct the same to look into the grievances of the applicant, associate the applicant and representative of the concerned project proponents, verify the factual position and suggest appropriate remedial action and submit its report within **two months**. The PSPCB will be the nodal agency for coordination and compliance.

8. List on 09.07.2026 for further consideration.

9. A copy of this order may be sent to the Deputy Director General of Forests (C), MoEF&CC, Integrated Regional Office at Chandigarh and Member Secretary, PSPCB and the District Magistrate, Pathankot by email for requisite compliance.






Arun Kumar Tyagi, JM

Dr. A. Senthil Vel, EM

Dr. Afroz Ahmad, EM

May 05<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
Original Application No. 265/2026  
AB

Attendance Sheet for Vol 39 of Joint Committee 10 Compliance  
 of Hon'ble NAT order dated 05.05.2021 in O.A No 265/2021

NAME	DEPARTMENT & DESIGNATION	CONTACT NO.	SIGNATURE
Gurbir Singh.	Drainage-cum-Ministry Executive Engineer-cum District Mining Officer.	7888512516.	
Preet Simar Sandhu	Executive Engineer cum DMO Pathankot	8591061386	
Dr. K.M. SELVAN	Scientist E MOEFRC, RO Chandigarh.	8610032753 Kmr. Selvan @ gov.in	
Maninderjit Singh Kaler	Asstt. Environmental Engineer, PPCB, RO Batala	70573-00302	
Jasmeet Singh	Asstt. Environmental Engineer, PPCB, RO Batala.	82890-81269	

## NOTIFICATION

**The September 12<sup>th</sup> 2025**

No. E977900/P50/320 In view of the devastating floods affecting the State of Punjab and in exercise of the powers conferred by rule 90 of Punjab Minor Mineral Rules, 2013 made under Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (Central Act No. 67 of 1957), and all other powers enabling him in this behalf, the Governor of Punjab is pleased to relax the provisions of the said rules, whichever applicable, with a view to allow the farmers to remove and lift silt/sand and river borne material deposited on their agricultural fields, as a one-time measure, upto the 31<sup>st</sup> day of December, 2025 enabling the farmers to clear their fields and prepare it for the next sowing season. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) given below shall be followed to achieve the said purpose:-

1. The Deputy Commissioners shall ensure that all farm owners/cultivators are informed through various modes of communication (through DPROs, DROs, announcements through religious places, social media, etc) of this time-bound, one time measure 'Jehda Khet, Ohdi Ret', announced by the Government for allowing farmers to remove and lift the silt/sand/river borne material deposited on their fields due to submergence under flood waters, at their own level without seeking any permit/NOC from the Department of Mines and Geology.
2. The removal of silt/sand/river borne material from agricultural land by way of this "one time measure" shall not be considered mining of mineral.
3. The concerned Deputy Commissioner shall declare the list of affected villages in a district where the operation of removal and lifting of deposited silt/sand/river borne material may be done by the affected farmers/cultivators/group of farmers affected by flood material deposition.

4. To mitigate the impact of the recent floods, all District Mining Officers as well as District Level and Sub-Divisional Level Monitoring Committees to prevent illegal mining, notified by Office Order No-5466/4M dated 10<sup>th</sup> August 2023, shall facilitate the removal and lifting of such silt/sand/river borne material deposits on the affected cultivable lands, without disturbance of the original ground surface by way of pits, trenches or otherwise.
5. The office of the District Mining Officer shall ensure that no such removal takes place from any approved regular river bed mines or out of river bed mines, i.e., Commercial Mining Site (CMS) or Public Mining Site (PMS).
6. The District Level and Sub-Divisional Level Monitoring Committees to prevent illegal mining, shall further ensure that no illegal mining of minor minerals takes place in the garb of the above notification.
7. Any dispute arising in the process of implementation of this notification shall be settled at the level of concerned Deputy Commissioner and his/her decision shall be binding on all the parties.
8. Any violation of the above directions shall be considered as unlawful activity and shall be dealt as per the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and Rules framed there under.



**JASPREET TALWAR, IAS**  
**Additional Chief Secretary to Government of Punjab**  
**Department of Mines and Geology**

**Endst No.** E 977900/PJG/321

**Dated, Chandigarh** 12/9/2025

A copy of above is forwarded to the Controller, Printing and Stationary, Punjab, SAS Nagar with the request to publish this notification in official Gazette (Extra Ordinary) and supply 50 copies thereof to this Department for official use.

  
**Under Secretary**

**Endst No.** E977900/RJ6/322

**Dated, Chandigarh** 12/9/2025

All Deputy Commissioners, Punjab, shall ensure that above notification is implemented and followed without any delay, for giving maximum benefit to the affected persons within the prescribed time period.

*Ajay Kumar*  
**Under Secretary**

**Endst No.** E977900/RJ6/323

**Dated, Chandigarh** 12/9/2025

A copy of above is forwarded to the following for information and necessary action:

1. Additional Chief Secretary/Financial Commissioner to Government of Punjab, Department of Revenue, Rehabilitation & Disaster Management.
2. Additional Chief Secretary to Government of Punjab, Department of Finance.
3. Additional Chief Secretary to Government of Punjab, Department of Home Affairs.
4. Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister of Punjab, for information of Hon'ble Chief Minister, Punjab.
5. OSD to the Chief Secretary of Punjab, for information of Chief Secretary, Punjab.
6. Administrative Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayats.
7. Administrative Secretary, Department of Forest and Wild Life Preservation.
8. All Administrative Secretaries to Government of Punjab.
9. Director, Department of Mines & Geology, Punjab.
10. All Senior Superintendent of Police, Punjab.
11. Chief Engineer, Drainage-cum-Mines & Geology, Punjab.
12. All Superintending Engineers, Drainage-cum-Mines & Geology Circles, Punjab.
13. All Executive Engineers-cum-District Mining Officers, Drainage-cum-Mines & Geology Divisions, Punjab.
14. All Sub Divisional Magistrates, Punjab.

*Ajay Kumar*  
**Under Secretary**



Visit of Joint Committee at the site



Repair of embankment and removal of temporary roads.



Deposition of Silt at Village Marara Side



**Deposition of Silt at Village Adalatgarh Side**



**Removal of obstacles from River flow**



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16

Rahul Clerk &lt;courtclerk@aparlaw.in&gt;

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**Advance Service of Reply and Report of the Joint Committee in O.A. No. 265 of 2024 (Jatinder Singh Aulakh v. State of Punjab & Others)**

1 message

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**Rahul Clerk** <courtclerk@aparlaw.in>  
To: "rightway.gsp@gmail.com" <rightway.gsp@gmail.com>

Thu, Jul 2, 2026 at 1:34 PM

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find attached the Advance Service of Reply and the Report of the Joint Committee in O.A. No. 265 of 2024, titled *Jatinder Singh Aulakh v. State of Punjab & Others*.

Kindly treat this email as advance service of the said reply upon the Respondents.

Thank you.

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Kind regards

**Rahul**

Court Clerk  
Law Office of Apar Gupta

@ [courtclerk@aparlaw.in](mailto:courtclerk@aparlaw.in)

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**2 attachments**

 **Report of Joint Committee OA 265 of 2026.pdf**  
3790K

 **Reply of Respondent No 4 OA 265 of 2026.pdf**  
7269K