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BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL PRINCIPAL BENCH AT NEW DELHI

IN THE MATTER OF:

Original Application No. 1325/2024

WITH

Original Application No. 1326/2024

WITH

Original Application No. 1327/2024

Public Action Committee & Ors.

...Applicant(s)

Versus

Union of India & Ors.

...Respondent(s)

WITH

Appeal No. 48/2024

Bahadur Ke Textile & Knitwear Association

...Appellant

Versus

Punjab Pollution Control Board & Ors.

...Respondent(s)

WITH

Appeal No. 20/2025

Bahadur Ke Textile & Knitwear Association

...Appellant

Versus

Punjab Pollution Control Board & Ors.

...Respondent(s)

N.D.O.H. – 13.01.2026

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THROUGH



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Date: 12.01.2026

PROCEEDINGS

PERSONAL HEARING FOR THE PROJECT CONSTRUCTION OF COMMON EFFLUENT TREATMENT PLANT (CTEP) AT VILLAGE JAMALPUR AWANA, TALUK LUDHIANA BY M/S PUNJAB DYERS ASSOCIATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMON EFFLUENT TREATMENT PLANT (CETP) OF CAPACITY 15 MLD BY M/S BAHADUR KE TEXTILES AND KNITWEARS ASSOCIATION LTD. (BTKAL) LOCATED AT BAHADURKE ROAD, DYEING COMPLEX, LUDHIANA, PUNJAB” WAS HELD ON 05.12.2025 AT 15:00 HR

The personal hearing for the projects “Construction of Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) at Village Jamalpur Awana, Taluk Ludhiana by M/s Punjab Dyers Association” and “Establishment of a 15 MLD Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) by M/s Bahadur Ke Textiles and Knitwears Association Ltd. (BTKAL), Bahadurke Road, Dyeing Complex, Ludhiana, Punjab” was conducted on 05.12.2025 at 15:00 hrs in the Narmada Meeting Hall, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, under the Chairmanship of **Shri Rajat Agarwal, Joint Secretary, MoEFCC** in compliance with the directions of the Hon’ble NGT passed vide order dated 22.07.2025 in OA Nos. 1325/2024, 1326/2024 & 1327/2024, clubbed with Appeal Nos. 40/2024, 41/2024, 48/2024 & 20/2025 titled ‘*Public Action Committee & Ors. vs. UOI & Ors*’, wherein the Hon'ble Tribunal directed that the Ministry may consider affording an opportunity of hearing to the representatives of the residents as part of the decision-making process. The list of participants is provided at **Annexure-I**.

2. The Chronology of Events as Follows:-

Date	Event / Action
17.03.2025	Ministry has requested the Regional Office, Chandigarh to submit a factual report and the compliance status of all ECs issued to the project in relation to OA Nos. 1325/2024, 1326/2024, 1327/2024, clubbed with Appeal No. 48/2024, pending before the NGT, New Delhi
11.04.2025	Site inspection conducted regarding EC compliance of CETPs of M/s Punjab Dyers Association (EC dated 03.05.2013) and M/s Bahadur Ke Textile & Knitwear Association Ltd. (EC dated 08.12.2014) by RO-Chandigarh.
01.05.2025	Inspection report submitted to the Ministry by RO, Chandigarh
14.05.2025	Show Cause Notice (SCN) issued to M/s Punjab Dyers Association Limited and Bahadur Ke Textile & Knitwear Association.

04.06.2025	M/s Punjab Dyers Association Limited submitted response to SCN; however, reply was not point-wise and inadequate.
26.06.2025	A letter has been issued to M/s Punjab Dyers Association requesting a point-wise reply. A reminder letter has also been issued to Bahadur Ke Textile & Knitwear Association for non-submission of the SCN issued by the Ministry
01.07.2025	Bahadur Ke Textile & Knitwear Association submitted SCN response.
02.07.2025	Updated response from M/s Punjab Dyers Association Limited received.
22.07.2025	SCN review report was sought from RO-Chandigarh
22.09.2025	SCN Review report has been submitted by RO-Chandigarh
24.10.2025	Project proponent requested rescheduling due to unavailability.
5.12.2025	Personal hearing conducted

3. The Chair welcomed all participants and invited Shri Pankaj Verma, Scientist-F, MoEF&CC, to present the background of the matter.

i. The Ministry has accorded the following Environmental Clearances (ECs) to the above-mentioned project:

- EC for the project titled “Construction of Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CTEP) at Village Jamalpur Awana, Taluk Ludhiana by M/s Punjab Dyers Association vide letter no. 10-92/2010-IA.III dated 03.05.2013.
- EC for the project titled Establishment of Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) of capacity 15 MLD by M/s Bahadur Ke Textiles and Knitwears Association Ltd. (BTKAL) located at Bahadurke Road, Dyeing Complex, Ludhiana, Punjab vide letter no. 10-119/2011-IA.III dated 08.12.2014.

(ii) The Original Applications have been filed by the Public Action Committee (an unregistered conglomerate of local NGOs in Punjab), alleging that M/s Punjab Dyers Association and M/s Bahadur Ke Textiles & Knitwear Association Ltd. were continuously discharging untreated effluents into the Budha Dariya (Budha Nallah), in violation of the Consents to Operate (CTOs) and the Environmental Clearances (ECs) dated 03.05.2013 and 08.12.2014, respectively. To provide brief background, prior to initiation of the present proceedings, the Punjab SPCB, vide order dated 26.09.2024, had directed closure of the effluent discharge outlets into Budha Nallah for both entities and had revoked their CTOs. Subsequently, the industries filed Appeals seeking to set

aside the said order of the Punjab SPCB, while the OAs seek enforcement of the same directions against the industries.

(iii) Upon receipt of the court matter, as per the Sop dated 25.11.2022, the Ministry sought a monitoring report from RO Chandigarh vide letter dated 17.03.2025. The monitoring report was submitted by the RO Chandigarh vide letter dated 01.05.2025. This monitoring report was examined within the ministry which revealed the following non-compliance:

(a) With respect to EC dated 03.05.2013 granted to M/s Punjab Dyers Association

- EC was accorded for establishment of a 117 MLD CETP. However, during inspection, RO has observed that the project has been implemented in deviation from the approved configuration, as two separate CETPs of 40 MLD and 50 MLD capacities had been set up instead of a single 117 MLD CETP.
- None of the EC conditions are being complied with by the 40 MLD and 50 MLD units of M/s Punjab Dyers Association and both these 40 and 50 MLD units are discharging treated wastewater into Budha Nallah.
- CTO granted by PSPCB has been revoked.

(b) With respect to EC dated 08.12.2014 granted to M/s Bahadur Ke Textiles & Knitwear Association Ltd.

- EC was granted for setting up a 15 KLD CETP with a specific condition of maintaining "Zero Discharge". However, the PP is discharging 15 MLD of treated water into Budha Nallah.
- CTO granted by PSPCB has been revoked.

(iv) Based on the non-compliance observed in the monitoring report, the Ministry issued a Show Cause Notices (SCN) to both the industries vide respective letters dated 14.05.2025. Subsequently, M/s Bahadur Ke Textiles & Knitwear Association submitted its response vide letter dated 01.07.2025, and M/s Punjab Dyers Association submitted its response vide letter dated 02.07.2025.

(v) As per the SoP, the Ministry vide letter dated 22.07.2025 requested the RO Chandigarh to submit a SCN Review Report.

4. Subsequently, RO Chandigarh, vide letter dated 22.09.2025, submitted the SCN Review Report to the Ministry. Upon detailed examination, the Report confirmed continued non-compliance on the part of

the project proponent. The SCN review response and the compliance submitted by the project proponents (PP) are placed below:

SI No	EC Condition	Status of compliance reported by RO- Chandigarh dated 01.05.2025	Status of compliance reported by RO- Chandigarh dated 22.09.2025	Submission by the Project Proponent
EC No. 10-92/2010-IA.III dated 03.05.2013 to M/s Punjab Dyers Association				
1	There shall be no discharge into Budhanallah (Specific Condition: Construction phase. ii).	Not Complied. The Unit discharging approximately 40 & 50 MLD treated water to Buddha Nallah.	Not Complied At present the treated water is being discharged in the Budhanallah. The PP stated that PPCB allowed to discharge the treated water in to the Buddha nallah, however, the CTO was revoked in response to the communication from the CPCB to the Chairman PPCB. The CPCB pointed out the EC condition of there shall be	There are no condition specifically for construction phase in the EC dated 03.05.2013. The treated wastewater is discharged into Budhanallah in compliance to condition no. 4(iv) of the sanction order dated 16.12.2019 of the MoEFCC. Besides, PPCB has allowed to discharge the treated waste water into Budha Nallah as per 'Special Condition' No. V of the CTO granted under

			no discharge in to the Budhanallah. In response to the CPCB communicatio n, the PPCB revoked the CTO	the Water Act, 1974. A copy of the CTO granted under the Water Act, 1974 and Air Act, 1981 by the PPCB on 23.08.2022, which was valid upto 22.08.2023. CTE also allows temporary permission to discharge treated trade effluent in to Buddha Nala.
2	The farmers shall be made aware that the water supplied to them is treated effluent (Specific Condition: Construction phase. iii)..	Not Complied. At present treated water is being discharged to Buddha nalla.	Not Applicable The PP has informed that this condition is not applicable. At present the treated water is not being used for irrigation	There is no specific mention of construction phase conditions in the EC. This condition is not applicable to our CETP as PDA has been allowed to discharge treated wastewater into Budha Nallah as explained herein above.

				The compliance of said condition requires implementation of State Govt project for carrier system for treated effluents as condition precedent which still remains to be fulfilled.
3	A six-Monthly monitoring report shall need to be submitted by the project proponents to the Regional Office of this Ministry at Chandigarh regarding the implementation of the stipulated conditions (General Condition: ii).	Not Complied.	Not Complied So far the PP has not submitted the six monthly compliance report, however, the PP assured that they will submit it. The PP stated that they are exempted from the EC as per the EIA notification amendments 2018	Six monthly report is not required to be submitted as the EC granted by the MoEFCC on 03.05.2013 is not applicable to out CETP in view of MoEFCC notification dated 18.12.2018.
4	The project proponents shall inform the Regional Office as well as the Ministry, the date of financial closure and final approval of the	Not Complied.	Not Complied The Regional Office Chandigarh was not	The PDA constructed CETP as per project sanctioned by MoEFCC vide

	project by the concerned authorities and the date of start of land development work (General Condition: vii).		informed the date of financial closure and final approval of the project by the concerned authorities and the date of start of land development work	conditions as modified by NGT order dated 20.01.2020 and CTE granted by PPCB in Nov 2021. The project was inaugurated by Hon'ble CM, Punjab in June 2022 after its construction and commissioning as the sanction and consent from PPCB.
5.	A copy of the clearance letter shall be marked to concerned Panchayat/local NGO, if any, from whom any suggestion/representation has been made received while processing the proposal (General Condition: viii).	Not Complied.	Not Applicable The EC was given to set up CETP with capacity of 117 MLD. However, Punjab dyers association had set up 40 MLD and 50 MLD separately. However, separate EC was not taken for the projects	EC granted by the MoEFCC on 03.05.2013 is not applicable to our CETP. The copy of EC is available with PPCB.
6.	Safety provision such as bus bays, service roads	Not Complied.	The PP has assured to	All the safety measures as

	intersection improvement etc., will be carried out by the project proponent. The project proponent shall provide adequate facilities as per IRC norms/guidelines (General Condition: ix).		comply: The PP is directed to make proper bus bays, service roads intersection improvement etc., as per the EC conditions.	envisaged in the IRC, have been taken
7.	These stipulations would be enforced among others under the provisions of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1974, the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1981, the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, the Public Liability (Insurance) Act, 1991 and EIA Notification 2006, including the amendments and rules made thereafter (General Condition: 7).	Not Complied. The CTO has been revoked by the SPCB, Punjab	Not Complied The PP has applied for the CTO, however yet to receive the same from SPCB, Punjab.	CTO granted under the Water Act, 1974 and Air Act, 1981 by the PPCB are valid upto 22.08.2023. we have applied for renewal of CTO, which is pending with PPCB. A copy of the same is attached. The AA under water Act has relegated our Appeal against return of consent application and further directed PPCB to decide our consent application. Copy of AA order dated 03/06/2025/ 26.05.2025 is enclosed.

				Pertinently CETP falls under blue category as per latest CPCB categorization
8.	The project proponent shall advertise in at least two local Newspapers widely circulated in the region, one of which shall be in the vernacular language informing that the project has been accorded Environmental Clearance and copies of clearance letters are available with the State Pollution Control Board and may also be seen on the website of the Ministry of Environment and Forests at http://www.envfor.nic.in . The advertisement should be made within 10 days from the date of receipt of the Clearance letter and a copy of the same should be forwarded to the Regional office of this Ministry at Chandigarh (General Condition: 9).	Not Complied.	Not Complied The PP has argued that the EC was obtained from the MoEF & CC on 03.05.2013 is not applicable as the construction for the project started in the year of 2019. As per the PP, the amendment of EIA notification dated 19th December, 2018 excluded the CETP for taking EC. In this regard, the PP is directed to approach Ministry of Environment, Forest & climate Change, New Delhi for the	EC granted by the MoEFCC on 03.05.2013 is not applicable to our CETP. Copy of the EC is available in office of PPCB.

			clarification regarding EC applicability	
9.	The project proponent shall also submit six monthly reports on the status of compliance of the stipulated EC conditions including results of monitored data (both in hard copies as well as by e-mail) to the respective Regional Office of MoEF, the respective Zonal Office of CPCB and the SPCB (General Condition: 13).	Not Complied.	Not Complied PP may approach Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, New Delhi to get clarified for the applicability of EC for the plants	EC granted by the MoEFCC on 03.05.2013 is not applicable to out CETP in view of MoEFCC notification of 18.12.2018.

EC No. 10-119/2011-IA.III dated 08.12.2014 to M/s Bhadur Ke Textile & Knitwear Association Ltd

S. No	EC Conditions	Observation by RO Chandigarh dated 01.05.2025	Observations of RO vide SCN Review Report dated 22.09.2025	Submission by the Project Proponent
1	"Consent for Establishment" shall be obtained from State Pollution Control Board under Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and Water (Prevention and	Not Complied. The PP has not submitted the copy of the consent to establish	Not Complied The Consent obtained under the Water Act, 1974 from PPCB, had	The SPV had obtained CTE granted under the Water Act, 1974 and Air Act, 1981 from the PPCB on 22.12.2017, which was valid upto 31.05.2018, before construction activities of the CETP

	Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 (Specific Condition: Construction phase. i).	obtained from the State Pollution Control Board under Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974).	expired on 04.01.2023. PP submitted that they applied no. of times for obtaining renewal of consent under the said Act	
2	The proponent shall maintain Zero discharge (Specific Condition: Construction phase. iv).	Not Complied. The Unit discharging approximately 15 MLD treated water to Buddha nalla.	Not Complied Being a Zero liquid discharge unit, PP was supposed to provide the facilities accordingly, but in actual PP is being disposing-off the treated wastewater into Buddha	A meeting of the Appraisal Committee of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) for the installation of Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) was held on 3rd March 2016, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Manoranjan Gupta, Advisor (CP), MoEF&CC. In respect of the CETP of 15 MLD capacity, after considering the submissions of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), the Appraisal Committee allowed the installation of the CETP based on aerobic biological treatment in Phase-I. Thereafter, the Punjab Pollution Control Board

			<p>Nalla. Further, PP submitted they have applied for an amendment in EC, regarding disposal of treated wastewater into Buddha Nallah</p> <p>(PPCB), vide letter no. 2836 dated 21-04-2016, accorded permission for the discharge of treated wastewater (15 MLD capacity) of the CETP into Budha Nallah through a dedicated conveyance system, for using the treated wastewater for irrigation purposes and the PPCB also requested the SPV to obtain necessary permissions from the Municipal Corporation, Ludhiana, and the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) for the laying of the pipeline.</p> <p>After obtaining necessary permission from the concerned authorities, the SPV has laid down pipeline (dedicated conveyance system) for discharge of treated wastewater of the STP into Budha Nallah</p>	
3	<p>The permeate (purified accept) from each stage shall be collected for reuse (to be supplied back to the participating industries through piped network). The concentrated reject from final RO stage shall be subjected to destruction</p>	Not Complied.	<p>Not applicable</p> <p>As per the submission by PP there is no generation of permeate</p>	<p>M/s Bahadur Ke Textiles and Knitwear Association Ltd. has obtained Environmental Clearance (EC) under the EIA Notification from the Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests, vide letter dated 08-12-2014, for the installation of a 15 MLD capacity CETP at Bahadurke Road based on a Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) treatment system.</p>

<p>(through forced thermal evaporation) in multiple effect evaporators (MEE) (Specific Condition: Construction phase. v).</p>		<p>A meeting of the Appraisal Committee of the MoEF&CC for the installation of CETPs was held on 3rd March 2016 under the Chairmanship of Dr. Manoranjan Gupta, Advisor (CP), MoEF&CC. In respect of the CETP of 15 MLD capacity, after considering the submissions of the SPV, the Appraisal Committee allowed the installation of the CETP based on aerobic biological treatment in Phase-I.</p> <p>In order to get the above-mentioned condition of the EC amended, the SPV applied through the PARIVESH Portal for an amendment to the EC. The case was considered by the EAC-II of MoEF&CC in its meeting held on 17.12.2024. In that meeting, it was decided to defer the case and refer it to the Policy Section of the MoEF&CC for clarification regarding the amendment of the conditions of the earlier granted EC, as CETPs of textile/dyeing units are currently not covered under the ambit of the EIA Notification in light of the Notification dated 19.12.2018. A copy of the minutes of the EAC-II meeting has already been shared with the PPCB. Additionally, an ADS (Additional Details Sought)</p>
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				<p>was raised by the EAC of MoEF&CC. The SPV has submitted its response to the ADS, after which MoEF&CC has sought a report from CPCB. No further communication has been received from MoEF&CC regarding the amendment of the EC.</p> <p>In the application for EC amendment, the SPV has proposed two options for the disposal of treated wastewater:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To utilize the treated wastewater from all three CETPs of textile units in Ludhiana, after mixing it with treated sewage from Ludhiana City, for irrigation of agricultural land to help conserve groundwater. 2. To lay a pipeline to carry the treated CETP wastewater for mixing with treated sewage of Ludhiana City through the STP at Bhatian, and eventually discharge the mixed treated wastewater and sewage into the Sutlej River — a process that will not impact the river water quality.
4	Before accepting any effluent from member units, the same shall be as permitted by the	Not Complied.	Not Complied	Consent to operate granted by the PPCB under the Water Act, 1974 and Air Act, 1981 were valid upto 04.01.2023

	<p>SPCB in the consent order. No effluent from any unit shall be accepted without consent from SPCB under the Water Act, 1974 as amended (Specific Condition: Construction phase. ix).</p>		<p>At present the PP does not have the consent from the SPCB for accepting the effluent from member units. The PP has applied for the CTO, however yet to receive the same from SPCB, Punjab</p>	<p>and 31.03.2025 respectively. The SPV has applied for obtaining renewal of CTO under the said Acts, which is pending with PPCB</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>ESP shall be installed as air pollution control measure with the boiler as proposed (Specific Condition: Construction phase. xi).</p>	<p>Not Complied. ESP has not been installed to control air pollution.</p>	<p>PP has assured to comply, as and when the power plant has installed</p>	<p>As envisaged in the EC, power plant has not yet been installed, as such, the compliance of this condition is not called for at this point of time. However, the boiler of 1.0 TPH capacity has been installed to supply the steam to the steam pedal dryer, which is equipped with cyclone as APCD to contain the concentration of pollutant within the prescribed standards</p>

6	Hazardous wastes will be generated in the form of Primary treatment sludge (@ 15MT/Day), Solids from MEE concentrate drying and used oil will be handled and disposed as per HWM Rules, 2008 (Specific Condition: Construction phase. xii).	Not Complied. Authorization from the SPCB has not been submitted to handle Hazardous wastes.	Not Complied PP submitted that as soon as Consent to operate obtained. Hazardous waste authorization will be renewed	The SPV had obtained authorization under the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary) Rules, 2016, which had expired on 04.10.2022. Now, the SPV has again applied for obtaining authorization under the said Rules and the application is pending with PPCB
7	Transportation of Hazardous wastes shall be as per the section 129 to 137 of Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989 (Specific Condition: Construction phase. xiv).	Not Complied. Authorization from the SPCB has not been submitted to transport the Hazardous wastes	Not Complied PP submitted that as soon as Consent to operate obtained. Hazardous waste authorization will be renewed. Further, PP submitted that the norms as prescribed in the Central Motor	The SPV had obtained authorization under the Hazardous and other (Management and Transboundary) Rules, 2016, which had expired on 04.10.2022

			Vehicle Rules, 1989 are being followed in true spirit	
8	Safety provision such as bus bays, service roads intersection improvement etc., will be carried out by the project proponent. The project proponent shall provide adequate facilities as per IRC norms/guidelines (General Condition: xv).	Not Complied.	Not Complied PP submitted that there is no major vehicle movement as such no bus bays required. The PP may approach the MoEF & CC, New Delhi to modify this condition with amendment	There is no major vehicle movement per IRC norms has not been which is contributing traffic volume to the nearby approach roads as the wastewater is from member units transported through dedicated pipeline
9	The funds earmarked for environmental protection measures shall be kept in separate account and shall not be diverted for other purpose.	Not Complied.	Not Complied The PP is directed to submit separate account details for	The cost of the CETP at the time of obtaining the Environment Clearance under EIA Notification, was Rs. 34.17 crores, for installation of CETP, control of air Pollution from air

Year-wise expenditure shall be reported to this Ministry and its concerned Regional Office (General Condition: xvii).		funds earmarked for environmental protection measures	pollution resources and management of solid wastes. The SPV has incurred so far Rs. 38.67 crores for installation of CETP and taking other remedial measures
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5. Submission by M/s Bahadur Ke Textile & Knitwear Association Ltd:

During the meeting, the PP submitted that the SPV of textile units at Bahadurke Road, Ludhiana had established a 15 MLD CETP (commissioned on 13.12.2019) to improve the water quality of Budha Nallah through centralized treatment, as individual treatment systems were technoeconomically infeasible. The CETP was granted EC on 08.12.2014 with a ZLD condition; however, based on subsequent expert consultations and decisions of meetings held in 2016, the Appraisal Committee permitted installation of an aerobic biological system (SBR-based) in Phase-I, and PPCB allowed discharge of treated effluent into Budha Nallah for irrigation through a dedicated conveyance system.

The PP further submitted that the CETP currently receives 13 MLD wastewater from 34 member units and is operated through SCADA and OCEMS linked to CPCB/PPCB servers. To address operational challenges, including high fibre content in the influent, the SPV has implemented DAF, sludge handling systems, paddle dryer, and online monitoring. Performance analysis by SAIF, Patiala confirms compliance with prescribed standards, and a Technical Feasibility Report by Thapar Institute concludes that mixing CETP effluent with treated sewage from Bhattian STP (1:5 or 1:7 ratio) is technically and environmentally viable without altering Class-C water standards of river Sutlej.

The PP also submitted that, in view of the EIA Notification amendment dated 19.12.2018 exempting CETPs for units not requiring EC, the SPV has sought an amendment of the EC to annul the ZLD condition and to permit discharge after mixing with Bhattian STP treated sewage. Conversion to full ZLD would increase treatment cost nearly tenfold (from Rs. 30 to Rs. 250–300 per KL), threatening the economic viability and competitiveness of member units.

The SPV further informed that additional improvement measures are underway, including installation of a mist-cooling system (commissioned on 21.11.2025), floating oxy-aerators, a rotary fine screen (under installation),

and exploration of biodegradable chemicals for TDS reduction. The SPV assured continued proactive efforts to enhance CETP performance

6. Submission by M/s Punjab Dyers Association:

During the meeting, the PP submitted that the 50 MLD CETP at Tajpur Road, Ludhiana was established by the SPV of textile industries to manage industrial effluent and improve water quality as part of the State initiative to stop discharge into Budha Nallah. The CETP was sanctioned by MoEFCC in 2019–20 following the EIA Notification amendment dated 19.12.2018, which exempted CETPs from requiring EC unless member units required environmental clearance. The plant was commissioned in 2022 and is presently operating under CTE (2021) and CTO (2022) granted by PPCB, which permit temporary discharge of treated effluent into Budha Nallah due to non-implementation of the State's irrigation conveyance project required for reuse of treated water.

The PP further submitted that MoEFCC had issued a notice under Section 5 of the EP Act alleging EC violations, non-reporting, and non-compliance of conditions. The SPV clarified that EC conditions related to irrigation could not be complied with because the State project was not implemented, and that the current discharge is legally backed by PPCB consents and the modification authority permissible under general EC conditions. The PP also stated that reporting gaps occurred under the bona fide belief that EC was not applicable post the 2018 amendment; however, the environmental statement and other compliance documents have now been submitted.

The PP informed that the CETP is operated through SCADA, OCEMS connected to PPCB/CPCB servers, and has an established EMP and green belt. Performance data from accredited laboratories indicate that the treated effluent largely meets prescribed standards. In view of the above, the SPV has requested reconsideration of the notice, withdrawal of penal action, and facilitation for completion of the conveyance system for irrigation reuse.

7. Submission by the Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB)

During the hearing the Chief Engineer Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) informed that in Ludhiana City there are about 345 number of dyeing industries in District Ludhiana out of which 265 number industries falls in the catchment area of Buddha Dariya/ sewer network of Municipal Corporation Ludhiana and remaining 80 number units falls

outside the Municipal limits of Ludhiana city which are discharging their treated water either onto land for plantation or have adopted Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) Technology.

Out of 265 number industries located in the catchment area of Buddha Dariya, 211 number industries have been connected with 3 CETPs within the limits of Municipal Corporation, Ludhiana and remaining 54 are large and scattered units and have installed their captive treatment plants. These units are not discharging effluent directly into Buddha Dariya and are disposing their treated effluents into the municipal sewer. The Board is pursuing these industries either to shift to CETP catchment area or outside MC limits with reuse of treated effluent for plantation or to reuse their treated effluent through advance technologies so as to stop their discharge into municipal sewer.

(a) Dyeing units connected to CETPs

- For the treatment of wastewater of the dyeing Industries, 03 CETPs of total capacity 105 MLD have been installed at Ludhiana. The details regarding dyeing cluster, capacity of CETP, site of Installation, technology on which the CETP is based and existing member units are given herein below:

Textile Dyeing Cluster of Ludhiana City	Capacity of CETP	Site of Installation	Based on Technology	Existing Member Units	Disposal of treated Wastewater
Bahadurk e Road	15 MLD	Bahadurk e Road	SBR	36	Budha Dariya
Tajpur Road	50 MLD	Tajpur Road	SBR	108	Budha Dariya
Focal Point	40 MLD	Tajpur Road	SBR	67	Budha Dariya
Total capacity	105 MLD		Total units	211	

- In the first instance 117 MLD CETP was proposed to treat the wastewater of the dyeing and textile units of Ludhiana, for which Environmental Clearance was granted by MoEF & CC vide F. No. 10-92/2010-IA.III dated 03.05.2013 to the Punjab Dyers Association, Ludhiana for use of treated water for irrigation with the condition that there shall be no discharge into Buddha.

- Later on, due to some practical difficulties in the construction of dedicated conveyance system (sewage system) for one single CETP, the project was into split two modules of 50 MLD and 40 MLD.
- However, dyeing industries operating at Bahadurke Road had proposed one more CETP of 15 MLD capacity for Bhadurke Road cluster at different locations for which Separate Environmental Clearance was obtained with Zero Liquid Discharge proposal.
- The CETPs were designed for stringent standards (like BOD @10mg/1, TSS @20mg/1, COD @ 50mg/1, Sulphides @ 0.01 mg/1 & SAR@7, RSC@ 3) as proposed by the Committee chaired by CPCB, so as to utilize the treated effluent of the CETP for irrigation purpose after mixing with the STP treated water (copy enclosed as Annexure-A) and SPVs has been prepared their DPRs accordingly to achieve the stringent standards at the time of appraisal of their projects for financial assistance (grant-in-aid) by the MoEF&CC, Government of India.
- At the time of appraisal of the project for grant-in-aid by the MoEF&CC, due to financial / banker issues, the SPV, to initiate the CETP based on Conventional Treatment System in Phase-I was allowed subject to the adoption of ZLD in Phase-II for which the Project Proponent had to apply to the MoEF&CC at a later stage as an up-gradation case.

(b) Status with respect to irrigation scheme

- In response to the query about the status of the irrigation scheme for reusing treated effluents from CETPs and STPs, PPCB officers informed that the scheme was to be implemented by the Department of Irrigation (now known as the Department of Water Resources), Punjab.
- The Department of Water Resources, in its affidavit dated March 7, 2025, submitted to the Hon'ble NGT in OA No. 1325 of 2024 (Public Action Committee & Ors Vs Union of India & Ors), stated that the scheme was not sanctioned due to some technical and social reason. The relevant paragraphs (5, 6, and 7) are reproduced below:

That in view of above, the project report was prepared by the department of answering respondent, whereby the proposal of construction of distributary (by converting lower Budha Dariya into a distributary), off-taking at RD 150000 feet of Budha Dariya with design discharge of 220 cusecs to carry treated water (Effluent) discharge of 503 MLD (201 cusecs) of all STPS and CETPs was submitted to the Competent Authority for irrigating 33454 acres G.A/C.C.A. of 35 nos. villages falling under Ludhiana and Moga District. It was referred in the said proposal that the water for irrigation would be supplied through the treatment plants under the control of Sewerage Board/Municipal Corporation and the acceptability of the water by the farmers would entirely depend upon the treatment of water as per norms

set by the Pollution Control Department/any other relevant department for the same. It was further referred that if the farmers refuse to consume the said water, the onus of this would be entirely of the department responsible for carrying out operation/supervision of the treatment plants.

That after examining the said proposal, it came to notice that the Bed level/FSL of lower Budha Dariya which acts as drain, lies below the NSL. The bed level of proposed distributary is likely to be raised above the NSL to feed the adjoining area under gravity. With raising of Bed level/Full supply level of the proposed distributary, it would act as sheet flow barrier. The natural sheet flow on left side of the distributary would get obstructed after the construction of this new channel and would cause a huge loss of property and life to the area falling on the left side of lower Budha Dariya, thus disturbing the whole natural drainage system of the area. It is pertinent to mention here that lower Budha Dariya outfalls into Sutlej River near Sidhwan Bet catering to almost 25 Km long stretch of drainage requirements of the areas adjoining it. It is further submitted that the farmers of the villages opposed the construction of this new channel by giving representation as they did not want to use treated water (Effluent) for irrigation purpose.

That therefore, after considering the above facts/reasons, the proposal of construction of distributary (by converting lower Budha Dariya into a distributary) to carry treated water (Effluent) discharge of 503 MLD (201 cusecs) of all STPs and CETPs was not sanctioned by the Competent Authority and the same could never get notified. Further, it is pertinent to mention here that Director of Research, Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana has given its report regarding non suitability of treated water (Effluent) for irrigation purposes.

The affidavit from the Department of Water Resources outlines the reasons for not implementing the proposal to reuse treated effluents for irrigation. Additionally, CETPs are required to meet stringent standards for treated effluent reuse in irrigation, as detailed in the background note. The colored tinge of treated dyeing effluents poses another obstacle to their acceptance by end-users for irrigation, hindering their use as a substitute for freshwater, which is readily available to them.

(c) Reason for allowing treated effluent of CETPs into Buddha Dariya

With respect to specific query of the Chair for allowing treated effluent of CETPs into Buddha Dariya, the PPCB officers informed that the Board has already filed an affidavit in the Hon'ble NGT in appeal in appeal no. 48 of 2024 (IA no. 627 of 2024) titled Bahadur Ke Textiles Knitwear Association Vs

Punjab Pollution Control Board & Ors. mentioning reasons, thereto. The reasons are as below:

- The Government of Punjab, through Department of irrigation (Now Department of Water Resources) has earlier planned the project for providing conveyance system for carrying the treated effluents from the STPs and CETPs in Ludhiana for irrigation. However, due to some technical and administrative reasons, the project for providing conveyance system for carrying the treated effluents from the STPs and CETPs in Ludhiana for irrigation could not happen and implemented by the Government.
- The grant-in-aid for 15 MLD CETP by the MoEF&CC was given for Phase-I (conventional treatment) and for ZLD separate proposal for upgradation was to be submitted in Phase-II. Therefore, in first Phase i.e. after conventional treatment, the CETP has no alternative disposal arrangement.
- The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India vide judgment dated 22.02.2017 delivered in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 375 of 2012 titled as Paryavaran Suraksha Samiti and another v/s Union of India and Others had issued directions to the State Governments and State Pollution Control Boards for the setting up of CETPs which are yet to be setup to complete the same within a period of three years.
- Government of Punjab has issued directions dated 10.10.2019 for abatement of pollution in Buddha Dariya. The directions include that the industrial effluents whether treated / partially treated or untreated shall not be discharged into municipal sewer and all CETPs are to be made operational as per time schedule given in the action plans. PPCB was designated as the nodal agency for segregation of industrial effluent and for setting up of CETPs.
- At the time of establishment of the CETPs, the member units (dyeing and textile industrial units) were previously discharging the treated effluent into the sewer system after treatment through Captive Effluent Treatment Plants (ETPs) which were operated by non-technical personnel. The industrial and domestic effluent after treatment in the Sewage Treatment Plants was discharged into the Buddha Dariya. The CETPs were aimed to provide a technically efficient, single-point treatment solution for industrial effluent and were designed, installed and operated by the reputed companies like namely L&T Constructions Ltd, M/S Triveni Engineering and Industries Ltd and M/S Saurabh Construction Pvt. Ltd.
- Thus, the establishment of CETPs in Ludhiana for the treatment of wastewater of textile and dyeing industries thus lead to the achievement of twin objectives relating to the diversion and separation of industrial effluent from the Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), enhancing the functioning of the STPs coupled with better treatment of industrial effluent of Dyeing and Textile Units.

- Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change vide Notification no. S.O. 6250(E) dated 19.12.2018 has amended the EIA Notification dated 14.09.2006 wherein in the schedule for item 7(h) in the column of condition a note has been appended which is reproduced as under:

Note:- Environmental Clearance for CETPs set up for or within projects or activities which do not require Environmental Clearance are exempted and if any of the existing or proposed member units of the said CETP produce or proposes to produce any product requiring Environmental Clearance, then the CETP shall need Environmental Clearance.

It is relevant to mention here that since the issuance of the EIA notification dated 14.9.2006, the dyeing industries do not require the Environmental Clearance. However, all type of CETPs were covered under the EIA notification 2006. With the above amendment carried out in the EIA notification by the MoEF&CC, the setting up of CETP for dyeing industries is exempted from the purview of the EIA notification.

All the three CETPs were conceived before the above notification of 2018 but commissioned after the said notification.

- Considering the above reasons including the non-availability of alternate methods for the disposal of treated trade effluent of CETPs either for irrigation or for plantation, urgent need for segregation of industrial effluents from public sewer (for better operation of STPs) and also considering the urgent commissioning of the said CETPs, the Board has granted permission to the said CETPs for discharge of treated trade effluent into Buddha Dariya.

(d) CPCB directions and developments thereafter

- Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) visited CETPs of Ludhiana on 12.4.2024 had issued directions u/s 18 (1) (b) of the Water Act, 1974 to the PPCB to stop discharging of treated effluent into Buddha Dariya for all the CETPs so as to comply with EC conditions (for not to discharge into Buddha Dariya) and due to non-achievement of results in monitoring carried out by CPCB.
- In compliance to the directions of CPCB, the PPCB issued directions u/s 33-A of the Water Act, 1974 to the SPV of CETPs, Ludhiana that the SPVs shall immediately stop the discharge of effluent from the CETPs into Buddha Dariya or any other surface water body.
- The CETPs have approached the Hon'ble NGT and filed appeals against the above directions of the Board and the Tribunal has ordered that till the next date of hearing no coercive steps in pursuant to the impugned order will be taken subject to compliance of environmental norms and clearance conditions. The matter is under adjudication of the Hon'ble NGT and the next date is fixed for 13.01.2026.

(e) Action taken by the Board for the non-compliances by SPVs

Considering the non-compliance of the directions dated 26.09.2024 and the violations committed, the Punjab Pollution Control Board is taking action against the CETPs the from time to time by issuing directions u/s 33-A of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. The action taken by the Punjab Pollution Control Board is summarized herein below:

- i. The Board has launched prosecution against the SPVs of all the CETPs and its responsible persons under the provisions of the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.
- ii. The Board has imposed Environmental Compensation to all the three CETPs though various orders. The detail of the Environmental Compensation imposed by the Board on the CETPs and the status of EC imposed is tabulated as below:

Name of CETP	Date of commissioning of CETP	Total Period for which EC has been Imposed	Total Amount of EC imposed (in Rs.)
50 MLD	June, 2022	09.06.2022 to 06.05.2025	3,18,90,000/-
40 MLD	January, 2022	04.01.2022 to 06.05.2025	3,65,70,000/-
15 MLD	August, 2020	07.08.2020 to 06.05.2025	5,20,20,000/-

- iii. The Board has also written to the Deputy Commissioner, Ludhiana for recovery of Environmental compensation.
- iv. The Board has also issued directions that no new NOC or NOC for expansion or varied consent to operate for increase in the discharge of the trade effluent shall be granted to the member units connected with the CETPs except in the cases of scattered industrial units operating in non-CETP governed areas / non-designated areas of city to whom Board has issued directions for shifting to CETP areas. Further, in the case of member units of CETPs only short time consent to operate under water Act, 1974 are being granted by the Board, so as to access its effluent quantity and compliances time to time. Further, all the three CETPs were advised to curtail their operating capacities by twenty percent so as to improve their efficiencies.
- v. The Board has issued directions under the provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and had sealed the

machinery of the units which were operating beyond the capacity for which consent has been granted by the Board based on the share allotment of the respective SPVs of CETP.

- vi. The SPVs have been directed that respective CETP shall ensure no member unit discharges the effluent from its outlets into the CETPs capacity, which is not meeting with inlet design standards of the CETP. The SPV shall further prepare and place mechanism for identification of such member units.
- vii. Treatment status and present analysis results

All the three CETPs have conventional treatment processes involving physico-chemical treatment followed by biological (SBR). None of the CETPs have provided any tertiary treatment or advance treatment to reduce the TDS / FDS. The summary of the results of respective CETPs comparing to monitoring done by CPCB in the month of April 2024 (at the time of issuance of directions) and subsequent sampling done by CPCB or PPCB is placed below:

CETP 15 MLD Analysis Results Comparison						
Sr. no.	Parameters	22/04/2024	24/12/2024	17/06/2025	MoEFCC Standards	Proposed Standards for irrigation reuse
		CPCB Lab	CPCB Lab	CPCB Lab		
1	pH	8.3	7.1	7.8	6.0 to 9.0	6.5-8.5
2	TSS mg/l	21	318	34	100	20
3	TDS mg/l	5116	4264	2576	-	2100
4	FDS mg/l	-	-	2400	2100	-
5	COD mg/l	587	419	132	250	50
6	BOD mg/l	243	200	50	30	10
7	O & G mg/l	5.2	-	BDL	10	Nil
8	Sulphide mg/l	16	-	BDL	2.0	0.01
9	Phenolic Compound mg/l	0.2	-	BDL	1.0	Nil
10	Ammonical Nitrogen mg/l	15	-	3.0	50	-
11	SAR	-	-	-	-	7
12	Total Cr mg/l	0.006	-	0.014	2.0	Nil
13	RSC meq/l	-	-	-	-	3

14	Bio-Assay	-	-	-	90% survival	90% survival
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Considering the last samples collected by the CPCB in June 2025, there is improvement in the results comparing to the sample collected by CPCB in April 2024 and December 2024. All parameters except TDS / FDS (2576 / 2400 mg/l) and BOD (50 mg/l) were within the limits.

The CETP is in process of upgradation. It has recently provided Louver-Type Mist Cooling System, with trial runs commencing from 19.11.2025; this system is expected to reduce the wastewater temperature at the SBR inlet to below 35°C creating better conditions for bacterial activity and enhancing treatment efficiency. The CETP has further proposed to provide three floating CyclOxy Aspirators to supplement the existing diffuser-based aeration and promote healthier biomass growth. Additionally, to address fine floating matter, the CETP has proposed to provide a 0.2 mm rotary screen downstream of the existing fine mechanical screen.

Sr. No	Parameters	CPCB April 2024	CPCB Dec 2024	PPCB Sep. 2025	PPCB Nov 2025	MoEFCC Standards	Proposed Standards for irrigation reuse
1.	pH	8.2	8	7.5	7.4	6 to 9	6.5-8.5
2.	TSS mg/l	58	47	43	135	100	20
3.	TDS mg/l	3028	2852	2483	2610	2100	2100
4.	COD mg/l	382	125	170	220	250	50
5.	BOD mg/l	128	54	23	36	30	10
6.	O &G mg/l	BDL	BDL	6.2	BDL	10	Nil
7.	Phenolic compounds mg/l	0.15	3.62	BDL	BDL	1	Nil
8.	Sulphides mg/l	BDL	2.4	BDL	BDL	2	0.01
9.	Amm. N mg/l	9	4.8	1.2	BDL	50	-
10.	SAR	-	-	25.1	15.39	26	7
11.	T Cr. mg/l	0.01	-	BDL	<0.1	2	Nil
12.	Bio-assay	-	-	100% survival	100% survival	90% survival	-
13.	Colour	-	-	50	100	150	-
14.	FDS mg/l	-	2364	-	-	2100	-
15.	RSC meq/l	-	-	-	-	-	4

Considering the last samples collected by the PPCB in Sept & November 2025, there is improvement in the results comparing to the sample collected by CPCB in April 2024 and December 2024.

In CPCB sampling, April 2024, parameters TDS (3028 mg/l), COD (382 mg/l) & BOD (128 mg/l) were beyond limit whereas in September 2025, only one parameter namely TDS (2483 mg/l) and in November 2025, parameters namely TSS (135 mg/l), TDS (2610 mg/l) and BOD (36 mg/l) were beyond the prescribed limits.

(viii) Water quality of Buddha Dariya

Comparison of Buddha Dariya water quality with respect to samples collected in Jan 2025 and Oct 2025 with respect to critical parameters is given below:

Point of sample collection: 40 & 50 MLD CETP downstream and upstream of STP Jamalpur

Month of sampling	pH	TSS (mg/l)	TDS (mg/l)	BOD (mg/l)	COD (mg/l)	F.coli. (MPN)
Jan 2025	8.2	120	3210	140	458	14,00,000
Oct 2025	7.5	74	1797	23	100	3300

Point of sample collection: Downstream of STP Jamalpur

Month of sampling	pH	TSS (mg/l)	TDS (mg/l)	BOD (mg/l)	COD (mg/l)	F.coli. (MPN)
Jan 2025	7.6	28	1296	47	160	4900
Oct 2025	7.3	76	982	24	80	24,00,000

Point of sample collection: Downstream of Haibowal Dairy complex

Month of sampling	pH	TSS (mg/l)	TDS (mg/l)	BOD (mg/l)	COD (mg/l)	F.coli. (MPN)
Jan 2025	6.9	412	1588	285	757	7,90,000
Oct 2025	7.3	244	1155	90	280	13,00,000

Point of sample collection: Walipur (confluence point of Buddha Dariya with River Sutlej)

Month of sampling	pH	TSS	TDS	BOD	COD	F.coli.
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		(mg/l)	(mg/l)	(mg/l)	(mg/l)	(MPN)
Jan 2025	6.8	334	1540	155	438	21,00,000
Oct 2025	7.1	214	966	59	180	14,00,000

Comparing the above results, a considerable improvement with respect to parameters is observed at final outlet of Buddha Dariya merging with River Sutlej at Walipur.

Note: A scheme of releasing fresh water from Neelon canal has been implemented but the release of water depends upon the quantity of water available in the canal. The above results are with the dilution received from the canal water.

(ix) Other Efforts - Source Apportionment Study of Buddha Dariya (including performance study of CETPs)

1. The matter relating to the pollution in Buddha Dariya is also being considered by the Government and considering all the aspects of the matter, the Government of Punjab, Department of Science, Technology and Environment has constituted a High-Level Committee (HLC) under the Chairmanship of Minister of Industries and Commerce, Punjab vide notification no. 12/23/2025/538 dated 14.07.2025 to oversee and implement the comprehensive solutions for the rejuvenation and pollution control of Buddha Dariya. A copy of notification is enclosed.
2. The Government of Punjab through Punjab Development Commission and the Punjab Pollution Control Board has awarded the study of "Source Apportionment and Comprehensive Investigation of Pollution in Buddha Dariya" to IIT, Ropar at the cost of Rs. 1,44,38,600/- + GST which aims to provide Scientific foundation for River Rejuvenation efforts in the State and will enable regulators, Industries, and local bodies to implement targeted interventions, strengthen compliance monitoring, and restore the ecological and socio-economic value of Buddha Dariya and the downstream River Sutlej.
3. The valuation of treatment infrastructure of CETPs including technical performance review, inlet outlet quality, compliance gaps and bottlenecks are part of the above source apportionment study and is placed at priority-I. The preliminary report is yet to be received from the institution.
4. High Level Committee (HLC) is taking meeting with the CETPs as well as other stakeholders. With the help of Punjab Development Commission, expert agencies have also been involved to work out the strategy / measures, gap analysis and for improvement of infrastructure of CETPs so as to enhance their performance. Recently, Tamil Nadu Water Investment Company (TWIC) was roped in for the said purpose.

5. Further, the Department of Water Resources has been directed by HLC to make arrangements for consistent release of 200 cusec water in Buddha Nallah so as to provide sufficient dilution. The proposal is under finalization

8. Submission by the Representative of Local residents/Public Action Committee, Ludhiana, Punjab

During the meeting, the local residents, who are the petitioners in O.A. Nos. 1325, 1326, 1327 of 2024 and other connected matters pending before the Hon'ble NGT, submitted the following factual and ground-level concerns regarding the functioning of the Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) and the CETPs:

(i). The Committee submitted that the 40 MLD and 50 MLD CETPs have been continuously and illegally discharging treated effluent into Budha Dariya, despite taking the false plea of irrigation-based utilization—an option that never received approval and was abandoned long ago. It was further submitted that the 15 MLD CETP, mandated for Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD), has also been discharging into Budha Dariya in violation of its EC conditions.

(ii) That despite CPCB's binding directions under Section 18(1) (b) (August 2024) and the Hon'ble NGT's orders, PPCB has failed to enforce even the basic mandate of stopping discharge. All three CETPs continue to release effluents and are operating without valid CTO, in open violation of the Water Act, 1974. PPCB officials have, in effect, shielded the polluters, enabling on-going illegal discharge and exposing millions to toxic contamination. Such inaction amounts to abandonment of statutory duty and attracts liability for prosecution.

(iii) The Department of Science, Technology & Environment, Punjab, vide letter dated 10.10.2019 issued Directions under Section 5 of the EPA, 1986 for abatement of pollution in Budha Nallah after considering

- directions of the Hon'ble Punjab & Haryana High Court
- recommendations of the P. Ram Committee (2007-2010)
- NEERI Report of May 2009 recommending ZLD for dyeing units

(iv) Rejection of Irrigation-Based Disposal

The Committee submitted that the Deputy Commissioner, Ludhiana (in O.A. 225/2022) had confirmed:

- the irrigation proposal was rejected in 2019,
- expert bodies found the scheme technically infeasible and unsafe,
- farmers opposed the use of CETP effluent,
- CWC required certification on food-chain safety.

(v) They also stated that CETP operators themselves have acknowledged responsibility if farmers refuse the effluent. Given that agriculture requires water only for five months, irrigation-based disposal is unworkable

(vi). Violation Of Article 21 Contamination Of Drinking Water In Punjab And Rajasthan

The untreated/partially treated effluent discharged into Budha Dariya eventually mixes with canals that supply drinking water to large populations across South Punjab and Rajasthan.

This unlawful act directly violates the fundamental right to life under Article 21, which includes the right to clean and safe drinking water. The continuous pollution of the Budha Dariya, as well as groundwater contamination due to seepage, constitutes a grave breach of constitutional rights and environmental statutes. Millions of citizens are being forced to consume contaminated water because of the actions of CETPS, PPCB, and the State authorities acting in collusion.

CEPTS and Member Dyeing units-Rogue Industries Operating Cetps And Member Dyeing Units Against Law & Root Cause Problem For Causing Serious Health Issues To Public At Large

That even after commissioning of CETPs, member dyeing units

- 27 units of the 50 MLD CETP were caught discharging untreated effluent into Municipal Corporation sewer lines
- 50 MLD CETP itself was caught discharging untreated industrial waste into the STP sewer
- On 08-06-2023, the 40MLD CETP was also caught red handed dumping the even untreated-effluent into Budha Dariya directly.
- PPCB imposed Environmental Compensation, but has not be deposited by these CETPs
- Several units of the 40 MLD CETP, including Ramal Dyeing Industries and other unidentified units in Focal Point, were repeatedly caught dumping untreated effluent into the sewer.

- Despite No Consent to Operate and no stay granted against orders of PPCB, the CETPs are still operational as on date by going against provisions of Water Act 1974

This demonstrates a complete disregard by the CETPs and dyeing industries for public health, for citizens dependent on River Satluj for drinking, damage to STPs and for the laws and binding directions of the Judiciary and regulatory authorities.

(vii). False Compliance Claims By State; Continued Illegal Discharge

On 20.02.2025, the State of Punjab claimed full compliance and assured an updated report by 20.03.2025. Yet, all CETPS continue to discharge effluent into Budha Dariya in blatant violation of their EC conditions. PPCB has remained silent and complicit. The conduct of the State and PPCB shows a complete disregard for environmental protection, public health, and sustainable development, while consistently shielding these Rogue polluting CETPs and dyeing industries. Shockingly, even the State-appointed committee includes members from the very dyeing industries previously caught illegally discharging effluent, further undermining the integrity of the process.

(viii). Construction of CETPs Started way back In 2015 Project Proponent's Claim Of Construction Started In 2019 Is Misleading:

PPCB, through Letter No. 7726 dated 19.11.2015, recommended CTE and Grant-in-Aid for the 40 MLD CETP solely on the basis of the 2013 EC for 117 MLD, and the CTE itself records this reliance. Under the EIA Notification 2006, any dyeing unit or CETP within 5 km of a critically polluted area like Ludhiana is a Category-A project requiring a prior EC before CTE. Yet, the Project Proponents falsely portrayed the CETP as a "new proposal" to misuse Notification S.O. 6250(E)-which is entirely inapplicable. The River Satluj Action Plan (O.A. 673/2018) further shows that 70% of the 40 MLD CETP was already constructed by 31.01.2019. Exposing the Respondent's false affidavit that construction began only in 2019-filed with malafide intent while illegal discharge into Budha Dariya continued.

(ix). Imposition of Environment Compensation on Impugned Polluting CETPs

For computation of Environmental Compensation, the Petitioners rely upon the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Tirupur Dyeing Factory Owners Assn. v. Noyyal River Ayacutdars (06.10.2009), wherein the Hon'ble Apex Court upheld imposition of exemplary environmental compensation on defaulting dyeing units.

(x) . Directions of Hon'ble High Court for Mandatory ZLD Condition

The Hon'ble Punjab & Haryana High Court, in CWP 7036/2005 and CWP 4472/2009 (Tajpur Road Dyeing Association v. Union of India), categorically prohibited textile, dyeing, and electroplating units from discharging any effluent into the Buddha Nallah and mandated Zero Liquid Discharge by 31.08.2008. The Hon'ble Court rejected the plea of using so-called treated effluent for irrigation, noting decades of unreliable operation and the inherent environmental risk. The present CETP discharges whether by the 40 MLD, 50 MLD or 15 MLD units directly violate this binding judicial mandate.. Consequently, the High Court fixed 31.08.2008 as the final deadline for the textile, dyeing, and electroplating industries to achieve Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD). This long-standing prohibition renders the continued operation of the CETPs legally untenable and further warrants immediate intervention by the Ministry.

(xi). Findings of Ro, MoEF&CC - Report Submitted before Hon'ble NGT

The Ministry's own inspection (11.04.2025) and Factual Status Report (01.05.2025) conclusively establish continuous, complete, and wilful violations by all three CETPs. The 40 MLD and 50 MLD CETPs are operating without Consent to Operate, have been constructed in unauthorised deviation from the approved 117 MLD CETP, and continue to illegally discharge effluent into Buddha Nallah despite an explicit EC prohibition. The 15 MLD CETP, mandated to operate on Zero Liquid Discharge, is also releasing its entire effluent into the drain. The Ministry has recorded blanket "Not Complied" findings for core EC conditions, including monitoring, reporting, hazardous waste management, and operational safeguards clearly establishing that all CETPs are operating illegally.

(xii) The inspection further confirms that the EC dated 03.05.2013 for a single 117 MLD CETP has been unlawfully split into 40 MLD and 50 MLD CETPs without any fresh appraisal or EC, in clear violation of the EIA Notification, 2006. This constitutes misrepresentation and renders both CETPs void of any valid EC. Attracting immediate action under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the Post-EC Monitoring SOP (25.11.2022).

The Ministry's compliance review shows a complete collapse of post-EC monitoring: no six-monthly compliance reports, no online monitoring data, no EMP implementation, no hazardous-waste authorisations, and total non-compliance with Conditions 10-14 of the EC and the Post-EC Monitoring SOP. Such systemic violations render the EC non-operative in practice and warrant urgent enforcement action by the Ministry under its statutory mandate.

(xiii) Relief & Intervention Sought by local residents:

Keeping in view the foregoing facts, it stands conclusively established that the dyeing industries operating in Ludhiana have, for decades, functioned as rogue and persistently non-compliant polluters, poisoning the environment and endangering the lives of millions in flagrant violation of Article 21 of the Constitution. Their continued operation amounts to an ongoing assault on public health and ecological integrity. Accordingly, the Public Action Committee along with its members humbly request you to kindly:

- a. Issue directions u/s 5 of EP Act 1986 to the Member Secretary PPCB and SPVs of all three impugned CETPs to comply with binding condition of EC and stop discharging the effluent in Budha Dariya with immediate effects.
- b. Take action against the concerned officials of PPCB and directors of SPVs of CETPs u/s 5 of EP Act 1986 for operating the CETPs without Consent to Operate.
- c. Declare such industries as Rogue Industries and stringent environmental compensation at the rate of 10 paise per litre please be imposed on all three CETPs from the deadline fixed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court for commencement of CETP operations, so that deliberate law-breaking does not go unpunished.

9. Submission by Member Secretary, Infra-II (MoEF&CC)

During the meeting, it was submitted that the M/s Punjab Dyers Association, the proponent of the 117 MLD CETP at Jamalpur Awana, had obtained Environmental Clearance on 03.05.2013, which explicitly stipulates that there shall be no discharge into Budha Nallah and that farmers must be informed that only treated water would be supplied for irrigation. The Committee noted that the proponent subsequently split the 117 MLD project into two CETPs of 50 MLD and 40 MLD capacity at Tajpur Road. The proponent later applied through PARIVESH on 31.07.2023 for extension of validity for the remaining 27 MLD, citing lack of funds for completing construction; however, the Ministry issued an query on 02.08.2023 stating that the EC validity had lapsed before 22.04.2023 and thus was not eligible for extension under the OM dated 22.04.2022 requiring the proponent to obtain a fresh EC. Consequently, the application was withdrawn on 03.01.2024. Further, Ministry has received a representation dated 27.05.2025 from M/s Punjab Dyers Association requesting issuance of appropriate directions to the Government of Punjab for implementation of the state project proposed to carry treated effluent from STPs/CETPs—sanctioned under a Central Government subsidy scheme for reuse in compliance with

Condition (vi) of the EC issued for the 40 MLD CETP. The Association has further sought permission for discharge of treated effluent from the CETPs into Budha Nallah in accordance with the consents granted by the Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB).

Similarly, submissions were made regarding the 15 MLD CETP operated by M/s Bahadur Ke Textile & Knitwear Association Ltd., which had received EC on 08.12.2014 with specific conditions requiring Zero Liquid Discharge and reuse of permeate through a piped network back to member industries. The proponent later sought an amendment to relax the ZLD condition and permit discharge of treated effluent into Budha Nallah. The proposal was considered in the 135th meeting of the EAC (Infra-2) on 17.12.2024, wherein the Committee deferred the amendment after noting that, under the Ministry's notification dated 19.12.2018, CETPs treating effluent from textile industries do not require EC under the EIA Notification, 2006. It was further recorded that the CETP is located in the Critically Polluted Area (CPA) of Ludhiana with a CEPI score of 73.48, where the water component score is critically high (71). Accordingly, the Committee advised that technical justification for any relaxation in discharge norms should be obtained by the project proponent from CPCB as per CPCB's advisory dated 10.04.2025.

10. Based on the submissions and deliberations of all parties, the following was concluded:

- I. During the meeting, representatives of the local residents raised concerns regarding deterioration of water quality downstream of the CETP discharge point. In response, the Project Proponent submitted that the treated effluent discharged from the CETP into Buddha Nallah complies with the prescribed standards and that the water quality at the discharge point is within permissible limits, which was allegedly demonstrated through video evidence presented during the personal hearing. The Project Proponent further submitted that, as per its assessment, the deterioration in water quality occurs beyond the discharge point and is attributable to discharges from other activities in the area, including dairy-related waste, and not to the CETP outfall. PPCB was asked to respond on the counter claims by the PP and representatives of the local residents. Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) submitted that monitoring indicators were non-compliant in three parameters. Punjab Pollution Control Board further informed that though there was some improvement in the water quality of Buddha Dariya, fecal contamination continues to remain a concern downstream, particularly in stretches influenced by non-CETP activities such as dairy clusters. However, PPCB did not give scientific

analysis of the claims of the PP and objections of the local residents. A generalised observation cannot form the basis of decision in such sensitive matter.

- II. It was thus decided that CPCB and PPCB shall collect fresh water samples from the CETP discharge points as well as identified downstream locations and submit an analytical report alongwith geotag photographs to the Ministry. The samples should be such drawn that the claim of the PP regarding treated water in the stretch between the discharge of CETP and the point where other discharges (especially the diary waste) meet the Budhha dariya so as to determine the contribution of pollutants by the discharges of CETP and other sources can be established.
- III. The Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) shall also submit its response to the proposed irrigation and reuse schemes for utilization of treated effluents from CETPs and STPs, along with the present status of implementation and future Action plan by the PPCB/Govt.of Punjab, to the Ministry.

Annexure

List of participants for the personal hearing for the project “Construction of Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CTEP) at Village Jamalpur Awana, Taluk Ludhiana by M/s Punjab Dyers Association and Establishment of Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) of capacity 15 MLD by M/s Bahadur Ke Textiles and Knitwears Association Ltd. (BTKAL) located at Bahadurke Road, Dyeing Complex, Ludhiana, Punjab”

S.no.	Name	Designation
MoEF&CC		
1.	Shri Rajat Agarwal	Joint Secretary
2.	Shri Pankaj Verma	Scientist F, IA-CMD
3.	Shri Munna Kumar Shah	Scientist-E, Member Secretary (Infra-II)
4.	Dr. K M Selvan	Scientist-E, RO-Chandigarh
5.	Dr. Bhardwaj Adiraju	Scientist D, IA-CMD
6.	Shri Paranjay Kumar Singh	Consultant, IA-CMD
7.	Shri Vinay Rana	ASO, IA-CMD
8.	Ms. Aanya Aggarwal	Legal Associate, IA-CMD
Project Proponent		
M/s Punjab Dyers Association		
1.	Shri A R Takkar (Team)	Sr. Advocate
2.	Shri Vivek Jindal	Secretary
3.	Shri Kamal Dev Chahuan	Director
4.	Shri I K Kapila	
M/s Bahadur Ke Textile & Knitwear Association Ltd		
1.	Shri Subhash Saini	Director
2.	Shri Rajveer Gupta	Member
3.	Shri Surinder Singh	Environment Consultant
Punjab Pollution Control Board		
1.	Er. R K Ratra	Chief Engineer
2.	Er. Gulshan Kumar	Executive Engineer
Public Action Committee/Local Residents		
1.	Er. Kapil Dev 186-E, B.R.S Nagar, Ludhiana	Resident Ludhiana
2.	Er. Jaskirat Singh 561-L, Model Town, Ludhiana	Resident Ludhiana

3.	Dr. Amandeep Singh Bains 1120 Framers Abode, Basant Avenue,Ludhiana	Resident Ludhiana
4.	Sh. Kuldeep Singh Khaira 125, Ishar Nagar, Ludhiana	Resident Ludhiana