

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
PRINCIPAL BENCH AT NEW DELHI  
ORIGINAL APPLICATION (O.A) NO. 1124 OF 2024**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

Ved Prakash & Anr.

...APPLICANTS

VERSUS

State of Haryana & ORS.

...RESPONDENTS

**PAPERBOOK**

(FOR INDEX PLEASE SEE INSIDE)

Date: 5<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2025

Place: NEW DELHI

Applicant

Through counsel



**Tarun Cummra**

ADVOCATE

Enrolment No. D/13653/2022

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**INDEX**

SR. NO.	PARTICULARS	PAGE NO.
1	Objections to the Joint Committee Inspection Report regarding illegal tree felling in Village Rambas, Tehsil Kanina, District Mahendragarh, Haryana False claim of complainant's presence, outdated satellite imagery, DFO's absence, false plantation claims, misrepresentation of facts at school, temple, and SC Chaupal, and procedural improprieties.	<b>1-5</b>
2.	Affidavit.	<b>6-9</b>
3.	<b><u>ANNEXURE A/1:</u></b> Pendrive.	<b>10</b>
4.	<b><u>ANNEXURE A/2:</u></b> Newspaper Article.	<b>11-12</b>

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**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL****PRINCIPAL BENCH AT NEW DELHI****ORIGINAL APPLICATION (O.A) NO. 1124 OF 2024****OBJECTIONS TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE INSPECTION REPORT****IN THE MATTER OF:**

Ved Prakash &amp; Anr.

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**MOST RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH:**

The Applicants, with the utmost respect to this Hon'ble Tribunal, submit the present objections to the Joint Committee Report filed purportedly in compliance with the order dated 05.09.2024 passed by this Hon'ble Tribunal. At the very outset, it is humbly submitted that the said report is fundamentally flawed, riddled with factual inaccuracies, procedurally defective, and entirely devoid of the transparency and objectivity that this Hon'ble Tribunal has consistently emphasised in matters concerning large-scale environmental destruction.

The background of the present matter is a deeply disturbing one. The Applicants have approached this Hon'ble Tribunal invoking its jurisdiction under Sections 14 and 15 of the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010, seeking urgent intervention to prevent and redress the rampant, illegal, and ecologically devastating cutting of fully grown, green trees in Village Rambas, Tehsil Kanina, District Mahendragarh, Haryana. These trees, many decades old, were located not only on Gram Panchayat lands but also in sensitive and socially significant areas such as government school premises, public roads, temple lands, and Scheduled Caste Chaupals. The felling was carried out with complete disregard for the law, without any prior permission from the competent forest authorities, and in blatant violation of the principles of sustainable development, the precautionary principle, and the directions of this Hon'ble Tribunal in numerous past cases.

Despite the gravity of the allegations and the clear and specific evidence placed on record, the Joint Committee has failed to conduct a fair, transparent, and comprehensive inquiry. Instead, the report appears to be an exercise in exonerating the principal wrongdoers — most notably Respondent No. 9, the elected Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat — and her husband, whose active involvement in the illegal tree cutting has been well documented in the Applicants' complaints. The report's language, omissions, and reliance on outdated material demonstrate a deliberate attempt to minimise the scale of the offence, shift blame onto inconsequential individuals, and present a misleading picture before this Hon'ble Tribunal.

The first and most glaring defect in the report is the entirely false claim that the inspection was carried out in the presence of the complainant. The Applicants categorically state that no prior intimation of any inspection, whether oral or in writing, was ever given to them. There was no phone call, message, notice, or any other form of communication from any member of the Committee or any government official informing the Applicants about the date, time, or scope of the site visit. This falsehood is not a trivial matter; it strikes at the very heart of procedural fairness.

It is equally troubling that the Committee's first inspection on 08.11.2024 was carried out without the participation of any representative from the Divisional Forest Office, Mahendragarh. This is not a minor oversight. The DFO is the statutory authority responsible for determining the legality of tree felling, assessing species and age of trees cut, and calculating environmental compensation. An inspection without the DFO's presence is fundamentally incapable of fulfilling the Tribunal's mandate. The Committee's own admission of this absence underscores the report's lack of credibility. Even during the alleged second visit on 09.12.2024, the complainant was again excluded, ensuring that no direct oversight by the whistleblower took place at any stage.

Another deeply problematic aspect of the report is its reliance on outdated satellite imagery from November 2022 and April 2023. The illegal felling that forms the subject matter of this application took place between April 2024 and July 2024. By using imagery predating the violations by over a year, the Committee has rendered its analysis not only irrelevant but positively misleading.

In the age of easily accessible high-resolution imagery from ISRO's Bhuvan platform, Sentinel-2 satellites, and other government-approved sources, there can be no justification for such a selective and outdated choice of data — unless, of course, the intention was to suppress evidence of the violations.

The report further makes patently false claims, such as the assertion that 150 trees have been planted in the Government Senior Secondary School premises. The Applicants state unequivocally that no such plantation has occurred. The land remains barren; no pits for planting have even been dug. The Committee has not furnished any geo-tagged photographs or videos to substantiate this claim, relying instead on hearsay statements. This not only misleads the Tribunal but also attempts to present a cosmetic compliance with compensatory afforestation obligations, which in reality have been entirely ignored.

The situation at the temple premises has been misrepresented in a similar fashion. The Committee has concluded that no tree felling took place there, once again relying on April 2023 imagery. By refusing to gather 2024 data or physically inspect for stumps and site disturbance, the Committee has failed in its core responsibility to verify the truth of the Applicants' allegations.

Perhaps most egregiously, the report records that in relation to the Scheduled Caste Chaupal, a case was registered against one Shri Prakash, a carpenter, under the Punjab Land Preservation Act, 1900. This is an obvious scapegoating manoeuvre — targeting a powerless individual while leaving untouched the principal wrongdoers who ordered and executed the felling. There is no mention in the report of any investigation into the role of the Sarpanch and her husband, despite multiple written complaints naming them as the perpetrators. No statement from them appears to have been recorded; no attempt has been made to match timelines, witness accounts, or photographic proof to their denials. This is nothing less than an abdication of the Committee's duty.

The cumulative effect of these defects is to produce a report that cannot be relied upon by this Hon'ble Tribunal. It is neither a truthful reflection of the facts on the ground, nor a procedurally sound investigation into environmental violations. It serves only to shield those in positions of local political power from

accountability, while rendering the Tribunal's earlier order of 05.09.2024 ineffective.

In these circumstances, the Applicants submit that the only just course is for this Hon'ble Tribunal to reject the present Joint Committee Report in its entirety, direct the constitution of a fresh Committee with explicit directions to involve the complainant at every stage, mandate the presence and active participation of the DFO, use up-to-date 2024 satellite imagery, conduct physical verification with geo-tagged evidence, and prepare a species-wise and number-wise assessment of all trees illegally cut. Only such a process can restore public confidence in the implementation of the Tribunal's orders and uphold the principles of environmental justice.

### **PRAYER**

In light of the above, it is most respectfully prayed that this Hon'ble Tribunal may be pleased to:

1. Reject the Joint Committee Report as being factually incorrect, procedurally flawed, biased, and contrary to the principles of natural justice;
2. Direct the constitution of a fresh Joint Committee to carry out a fair, transparent, and comprehensive re-inspection, ensuring the participation of the complainant and the Divisional Forest Officer, and using up-to-date 2024 satellite data along with geo-tagged ground photographs;
3. Ensure that the inquiry specifically examines and fixes responsibility upon Respondent No. 9 (Sarpanch) and her husband for their role in the illegal felling, and imposes appropriate environmental compensation in accordance with the "polluter pays" principle under Section 20 of the NGT Act; and
4. Pass such other and further orders as this Hon'ble Tribunal may deem just and proper in the facts and circumstances of the case.

AND FOR THIS ACT OF KINDNESS, THE APPLICANT AS IN DUTY BOUND SHALL EVER PRAY.

Applicant

Date: 5<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2025

Place: NEW DELHI

Through counsel



**Tarun Cummra**

ADVOCATE

Enrolment No. D/13653/2022

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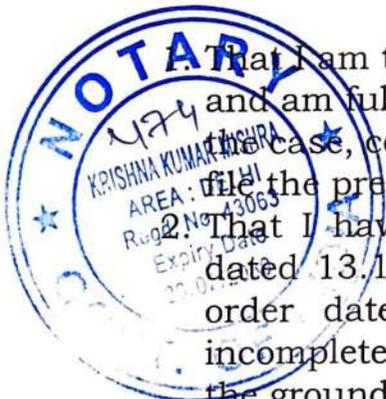
**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF OBJECTION TO JOINT****COMMITTEE REPORT**

I, **Ved Prakash**, aged about 73 years, resident of Village Rambas (19), Tehsil Kanina, District Mahendragarh, Haryana – 123027, presently at New Delhi, do hereby solemnly affirm and state as under:

1. That I am the Applicant in the aforesaid Original Application and am fully conversant with the facts and circumstances of the case, competent to swear this affidavit, and authorized to file the present objections.

2. That I have carefully perused the Joint Committee report dated 13.12.2024 filed in compliance of Hon'ble Tribunal's order dated 05.09.2024. I find the said report to be incomplete, incorrect, and contrary to the factual position on the ground, and therefore object to its findings.

3. That the objections to the said report are being filed separately and may be treated as part and parcel of this affidavit. The facts stated therein are true and correct to my knowledge and belief, based on my own observations and reliable information.

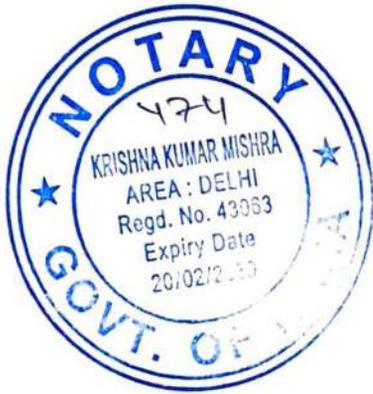


*Vijay Kumar*  
Deponent

**VERIFICATION**

13 AUG 2025

Verified at New Delhi on this \_\_\_ day of August, 2024 that the contents of the above affidavit are true and correct to my knowledge and belief. Nothing material has been concealed therefrom.



*Vijay Kumar*  
Deponent

I Identify the deponent who has Signed / put T.I. In my presence

VERIFIED THAT THE DEPONENT  
 M./Smt./Km. *Ved Prakash*  
 No. W/o, D/o Sh. *Rajiv Kumar*  
*(19) Delhi*  
 Identified by Shri/Smt. *Kamlesh Kumar, Adm.*  
 has solemnly Attested before me at Delhi  
 on *13 AUG 2025* In Sr. No. *474*  
 That the contents of the affidavit which  
 have been read Over & explained to Him/her  
 are true & correct to his/her knowledge  
*KK Mishra*  
 NOTARY PUBLIC DELHI, GOVT OF INDIA

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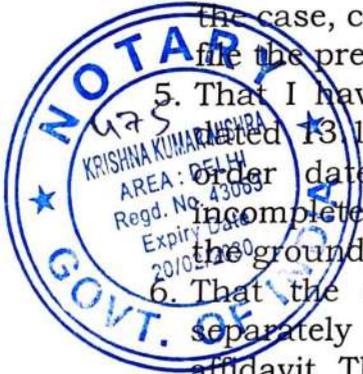
**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF OBJECTION TO JOINT  
COMMITTEE REPORT**

I, Vijay Kumar, aged about 56 years, resident of Village Rambas (153), Tehsil Kanina, District Mahendragarh, Haryana – 123027, presently at New Delhi, do hereby solemnly affirm and state as under:

4. That I am the Applicant in the aforesaid Original Application and am fully conversant with the facts and circumstances of the case, competent to swear this affidavit, and authorized to file the present objections.

5. That I have carefully perused the Joint Committee report dated 13.12.2024 filed in compliance of Hon'ble Tribunal's order dated 05.09.2024. I find the said report to be incomplete, incorrect, and contrary to the factual position on the ground, and therefore object to its findings.

6. That the objections to the said report are being filed separately and may be treated as part and parcel of this affidavit. The facts stated therein are true and correct to my knowledge and belief, based on my own observations and reliable information.



*Vijay Kumar*  
Deponent

**VERIFICATION**

13 AUG 2024

Verified at New Delhi on this \_\_\_ day of August, 2024 that the contents of the above affidavit are true and correct to my knowledge and belief. Nothing material has been concealed therefrom.



*Vijay Kumar*  
Deponent

I Identify the deponent who has Signed / put T.I. In my presence

VERIFIED THAT THE DEPONENT  
 Shri/Smt./Km..... *Vijay Kumar*  
 S/o, W/o, D/o Sh..... *Vijay Kumar*  
 (P.S.) *Tejpal Kapur*  
 Identified by Shri/Smt..... *Pragati Chandra, Adv*  
 has solemnly Attested before me at Delhi  
 on *13 AUG 2024*.....In Sr. No. *475*.....  
 That the contents of the affidavit which  
 have been read Over & explained to Him/her  
 are true & correct to his/her knowledge  
*K. Krishna*  
 NOTARY PUBLIC DELHI, GOVT OF INDIA



*Stawin*

**TRUE COPY**

# Cutting large number of trees worse than killing human beings: Supreme Court

“It will take at least 100 years minimum to again regenerate or recreate the green cover created by 454 trees which were cut without permission,” the Supreme Court said.

Updated - March 26, 2025 11:10 am IST - New Delhi

PTI



Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Shiv Shankar Agarwal, submitted that he has admitted the mistake. File | Photo Credit: The Hindu

“Cutting a large number of trees is worse than killing human beings,” the Supreme Court has said while fining a man ₹1 lakh for cutting a tree.

**TRUE COPY**

A bench of Justices Abhay S. Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan made the observation while rejecting the plea of a man who had chopped down 454 trees in the protected Taj Trapezium Zone.

"There should be no mercy in environmental cases. Felling a large number of trees is worse than killing a human," the bench said.

The top court said it will take at least 100 years minimum to again regenerate or recreate the green cover created by 454 trees which were blatantly cut without permission.

The apex court accepted the report of the central empowered committee (CEC), which recommended a fine of ₹1 lakh per tree for cutting 454 trees in Dalmia Farms in Mathura-Vrindavan by one Shiv Shankar Agarwal.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Mr. Agarwal, submitted that he has admitted the mistake, but the court refused to reduce the fine amount.

The court said Mr. Agarwal should be allowed to do plantations at a nearby site and said the contempt plea filed against him would be disposed only after compliance.

The top court also recalled its 2019 order, which had removed the requirement of obtaining prior permission to cut trees on non-forest and private lands within the Taj Trapezium Zone.

Published - March 26, 2025 10:55 am IST



**TRUE COPY**