

BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL, PRINCIPAL BENCH  
AT NEW DELHI

Subject : Notice of hearing in Suo Moto matter in

Re : News item appearing in Babushahi dated 07.02.2024 entitled "Gurdaspur Video of Illegal sand mining goes viral prob on". Email of Hon'ble Green Tribunal dated 02.03.2024

Reply in Shape of Affidavit of Sh. Himanshu Aggarwal, Deputy Commissioner, Gurdaspur.

I, the above named deponent, do hereby solemnly affirms and declare as under :-

**Respectfully Showeth ;**

1. That, to examine the matter, reports from concerned XEN, Gurdaspur Canal and Groundwater Division WRD, Punjab, Gurdaspur and Senior Superintendent of Police, Gurdaspur were taken.
2. That, in reply to above cited subject, XEN, Gurdaspur Canal and Groundwater Division WRD, Punjab, Gurdaspur submitted report via letter no. 1654/900-E dated 14.03.2024 that the UBDC Canal was stopped up to 24.02.2024 for necessary repairs at different places.
3. That, the alleged Video which is being viral on social media regarding the alleged mining of sand from the canal is wrong and is not actual and factual position as per spot. It is further submitted that on aforesaid news date, main line UBDC canal was under closure and necessary repair on banks (Dhussi) of canal was being carried out in area of village Dhariwal Khichian, Tehsil and Distt. Gurdaspur, where major portion of the banks (Dhussi) had eroded due to high discharges in the canal during current season. The repair work was being carried out by the department through the MGNREGA labour by placing EC bags filled with soil along

with the bank of the canal to protect the further erosion. So far the question of JCB Machine which is being shown in the news, the same was working under the authority of department and this machine was being used for facilitating the soil to be filled by MGNREGA workers in EC bags for fast completion of works and now the work has been completed and water is flowing in the canal.

4. That, it is respectfully submitted that the Gram panchayats of the above said villages have also moved applications in writing for the repair of the eroded banks of the UBDC main line canal apprehending danger of breach during floods in rainy season. Applications moved by the Gram Panchayats are annexed herewith for kind perusal of Hon'ble Tribunal please.
5. That, no illegal mining of any sort was being carried out by any person in the aforesaid Canal. The above said channel of social media has given/uploaded incomplete news without going through the true facts and even without consulting the concerned department under which the above said MGNREGA labour was doing work for the repair of the banks of Canal.
6. That, the aforesaid news headline dated 07.02.2024 given by Babushahi is not according to actual and factual facts, the same is incomplete and fabricated.
7. That, as per the report received from Senior Superintendent of Police, Gurdaspur vide letter no. 12164/ACC dated 12.03.2024 the enquiry of the above matter has been conducted by Superintendent of Police, Investigation, Gurdaspur.
8. That, Station Head Officer, Police Station Purana Shalla reached on the spot and seized the JCB shown in the viral video and videography of the same had been kept in police record. After this the SDO, UBDC Gurdaspur informed to concerned SHO via office letter no. 04/special dated 06.02.2024 that on the continuous demand from the native

villagers regarding the erosion on the banks of the UBD canal passing through the village to prevent the unprecedented situation in upcoming rainy season. To cater the demand of native villagers, a repair work was going on embankment of the river dated 06-03-2024 at 02.00 PM. It is further stated that some mischievous elements had given wrong information about the mining but no mining related activities were carried out there. After perusal of the facts, SHO, Purana Shalla, Gurdaspur registered the matter in Roznamcha (an official record of office) vide report number 24 dated 07-02-2024 and thereafter, police released the seized JCB machine to Sh. Baljit Singh s/o Sukhdev singh resident of vill. Got Pokhar.

Considering the information/facts provided above, it is respectfully asserted that the aforementioned news item dated 07.02.2024 as reported by Babushahi does not accurately represent the factual circumstances. Therefore, it is requested that Hon'ble National Green Tribunal does not consider the aforementioned news article. Any instructions issued by Hon'ble Tribunal will be duly complied with.

Place : Gurdaspur

Date : 15-3-2024

VERIFICATION :-

Verified that the contents of paras of the reply are true and correct to my knowledge and information as derived from the official record. No part of it is false and nothing has been kept therein.

Place : Gurdaspur

Date : 15-3-2024

*Himanshu*

Deponent

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Deponent