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To

The Registrar,
Principal Bench, National Green Tribunal,
New Delhi.

No.:

571/MA

Dated:

28.03.2024

Subject:

Notice of hearing in Suo Motu matter in re: News item appearing in Hindustan Times dated: 31.01.2024 entitled " Punjab has no tech mechanism to check illegal mining, says CAG."

Whereas, the hon'ble Principle Bench, National Green Tribunal, New no. 222/2024 titled as Delhi, vide order dated 31.01.2024 in the matter of original application " Punjab has no tech mechanism to check illegal mining, says CAG." has directed the undersigned to file reply. In this regard detailed report from Executive Engineer-cum-District Mining Officer, Faridkot has been received in this office vide letter no. 771 dated 12.03.2024, the detail of which is as under:-

- 1) In the news report it is written that "the test checks of records in Amritsar, Phagwara and Golewala Division, which had jurisdiction over sand mining sites, revealed that they were not using Geo-tagging, Geo-fencing and UAVs to detect and check illegal Mining".

It is pertinent to clarify that the Golewala Division (Now Drainage-cum-Mining & Geology Division, Ferozpur) has the jurisdiction of Mining in district Ferozpur not in District Faridkot.

- 2) It is pertinent to mention here that there is no river that flows in the jurisdiction of district Faridkot and That There are no approved sand mining sites i.e. PMS (Public Mining Sites) or CMS (Commercial Mining Sites) in district Faridkot. For Carrying out mining in any district of Punjab DSR (District Survey Report) of the concerned district is prepared. The mining sites selected in the respective DSR of District are detailed further by the hired consultant of Mining & Geology Department. Then, hired consultants makes the detailed study in which proper mining plans are prepared. Mining plan includes all the required information i.e kml files of site, Environmental Clearance, Path approved etc. The kml file prepared act as Geo-fencing and Geo tagging.

- 3) during the preparation of DSR (District Survey Report) for FY-(2022-23), the consultant hired for preparation of DSR submitted that the sand deposits in district Faridkot are present below 3m (8-10 feet). However, ground water is found to be present at approximately 3.5-4m (11-13 feet). Thus, according to *Enforcement & Monitoring Guidelines for Sand Mining 2020*, the land in the district faridkot is not fit for sand mining Here since the lithology indicates proximity of ground water table at around 3.5-4 meter, hence to keep safe zone of 2 meter from ground water table is not feasible as per *Enforcement & Monitoring Guidelines for Sand Mining 2020*.

NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
Principal Bench, New Delhi
Receipt & Issue Branch
Received
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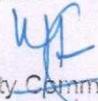
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- 4) That Punjab water resources department has online website for regular monitoring of mining activities and issuing permissions (K1, K2 permits) in the state.
- 5) That mining department issue K1 permit for excavation of ordinary earth in which KML file of borrow area is attached in the online application. Other than this, a layout plan is prepared by the applicant which also shows the co-ordinates of the boundary pillar. Any illegal mining is checked with the help of KML file and co-ordinates given in layout plan.
- 6) It is pertinent to mention here that Mining team of district Faridkot keep the regular check on the transportation of illegal sand entering the district from other districts and Total Rs. 1459126/- in FY 2022-23 and Rs. 2740369/- in FY 2023-24 have been recovered from the illegal sand transporters through challans and deposited the amount recovered in the district Treasury.
- 7) That this office has no Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) electronic surveillance to check illegal mining. But this office is going to float tenders to buy the drones and to impart training to the field office for drone operation to have better monitoring and check on illegal mining.

Report is submitted for your information and kind perusal please.


Deputy Commissioner,
Faridkot.