



File No. WII/DWII/MISC/2024

Dated: 16.08.2024

To,

The Registrar General,  
Principal Bench  
Hon'ble National Green Tribunal,  
Copernicus Marg,  
New Delhi-110001  
Email: [judicial-ngt@gov.in](mailto:judicial-ngt@gov.in)

Subject: Submission of Report in O.A. 780/2024, in the matter of Sh. Paramjeet Singh & Others Vs Union of India & Others. Before the Hon'ble NGT (PB) New Delhi – reg.

Sir,

In compliance of the direction dated 12.07.2024 passed by the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal in O.A. 780 of 2024 in the matter of Sh. Paramjeet Singh & Others Vs Union of India & Others, a report has been prepared which is enclosed with this letter with a request to put up before Hon'ble Tribunal for kind perusal and consideration.

Encl: As above

Yours Sincerely

  
(Virendra R. Tiwari)  
Director  
16/8/24

**Report of Wildlife Institute of India in Compliance to the Hon'ble NGT order dated 22.05.2024 in Original Application No. 780/2024 (IA No 294/2024) in the matter of Shri Paramjeet Singh & Others Vs Union of India & Others**

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**A. Preamble:** Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, principal bench passed a direction dated July 12, 2024 to the applicants to serve notice to the respondents: The related para of said order is reproduced here as under:

*Issue notice to the respondents. The Applicant is directed to serve the respondents and file affidavit of service at least one week before the next date of hearing.*

The applicants have included the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), through Director, Chandrabani, Dehradun 248 001 as Respondent No 2.

**B. Proceedings:** In compliance to the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal's order, the Director of the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) has constituted a team to prepare a response to the issue of the proposed 100 TPH Stone Crusher Plant and 500 KVA DG set by M/S Balaji Associates. The team comprises: Dr. Parag Nigam, Nodal Officer, Elephant Cell, Dr. Gopi.G.V, Nodal Officer, Conservation Advisory and Policy Cell, Dr. Lakshminarayanan, Consultant, Elephant Cell and Mr. Rohit Jha, Senior Project Associate, Conservation Advisory and Policy Cell. This team has been tasked with preparing a comprehensive response and the WII has gathered and analyzed all relevant information regarding the project's implications for the wildlife and their habitats.

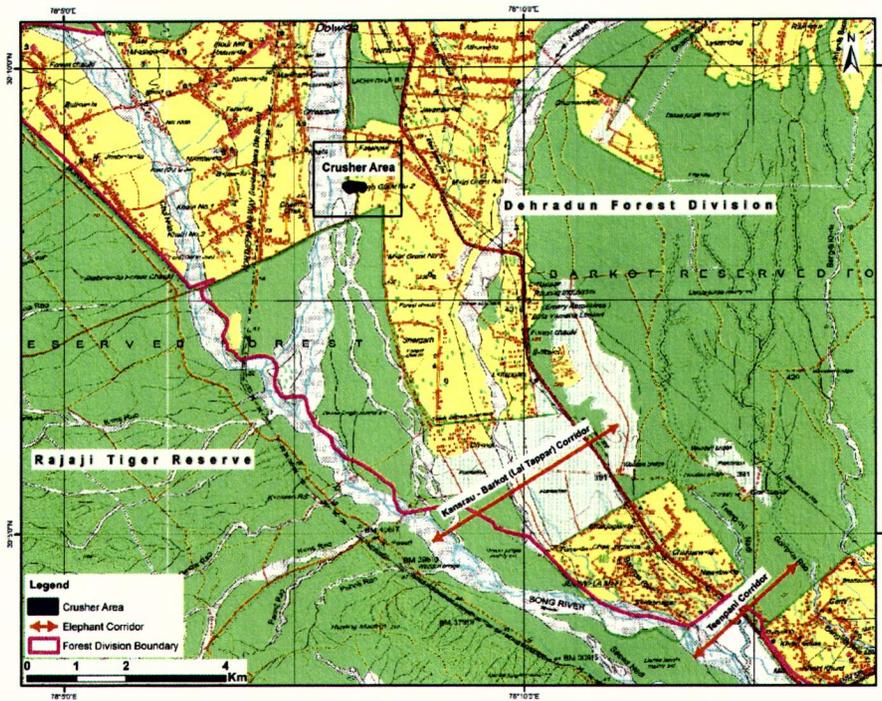
**C. Observations and findings:**

A stretch of the River Song flows through Thano, Lachhiwala, Barkot, Kansrao and Motichur Reserved Forests falling under Dehradun Forest Division and Rajaji National Park before emptying into River Ganga (Fig-1). Elephants and other wildlife intensively use these river stretches. The habitat connectivity between Badkot Range of Dehradun Forest Division and the Kansrao and Motichur Ranges of the Rajaji National Park is primarily facilitated by two identified elephant corridors – Lal Thappar (alternatively Kansrau–Barkot corridor) and Teen Pani (Fig-2). To use either of these two corridors, elephants have to cross River Song. Both of these corridors are crucial to facilitate elephant movement in an otherwise disjunct forest mosaic in the western portion of Rajaji National Park and the adjoining Dehradun Forest Division.

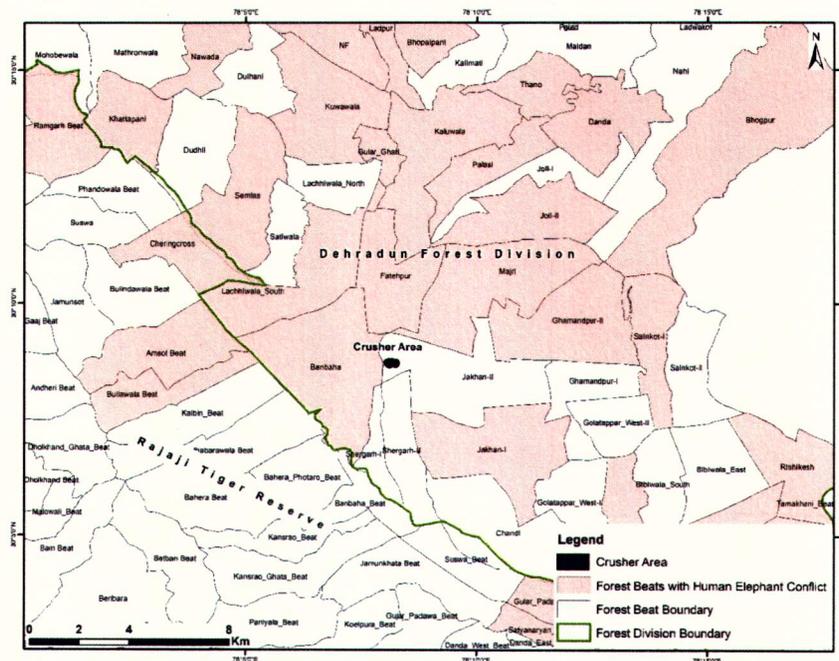
Besides regular elephant movement in the identified Lal Thappar and Teen Pani wildlife corridors, elephants are also known to occasionally use the entire riverfront (including floodplain areas/dry riverbeds) for movement, as some of the stretches of River Song and its tributaries (Suswa, Jakhan *Rau* etc.) support dense riparian cover with a predominance of *Dalbergia sissoo* and other vegetation such as shrubs and grasses.

Based on the Forest Department data collated for the period 2015 to 2020, it is evident that human-elephant conflict is widespread in the vicinity of M/S Balaji Associates' proposed stone crusher plant (Fig-2).





**Fig-1:** Location of Lal Thappar (Kansrau-Barkot) and Teen Pani elephant corridors with respect to M/S Balaji Associates proposed stone crusher plant



**Fig-2:** Human-Elephant Conflict (crop losses and incidences of property damage) in the vicinity of the proposed stone crusher plant during 2015-2020 (data courtesy Uttarakhand Forest Department)

During the abovementioned period, human-elephant conflict in the form of crop damage and occasional property damage due to elephants was reported from

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Banwaha, Fatehpur, Majri, Ghamandpur, Jakhan-1, Lachhiwala South, Sainkot-1, Gola, Amsot, Bullawala, Gular Padwa East beats located in Lachhiwala, Badkot, Rishikesh, Kansrao and Motichur Forest Ranges of Dehradun Forest Division and Rajaji Tiger Reserve (Table-1).

Further, a total of 36 human casualties (15 deaths and 21 injury cases) attributed to elephants were reported from Badkot and Lachhiwala administrative ranges (Dehradun Forest Division) during 2000 to 2018.

**Table-1:** Incidences of Human-Elephant Conflict (crop losses and incidences of property damage) reported from select forest beats surrounding M/S Balaji Associates' proposed stone crusher plant; since elephants are highly mobile species, information at the Forest beat level in the vicinity are presented

S. No	Beat	Range	Division	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
1	Banbaha	Lacchiwala	Dehradun FD (DFD)	9	5	0	0	7	1
2	Fatehpur	Lacchiwala	DFD	4	2	0	0	0	3
3	Lachhiwala South	Lacchiwala	DFD	3	0	0	0	0	0
4	Majri	Badkot	DFD	42	16	6	10	5	9
5	Ghamandpur	Badkot	DFD	20	7	21	14	16	9
6	Jakhan-1	Badkot	DFD	24	3	13	3	1	5
7	Sainkot-1	Badkot	DFD	6	7	4	4	3	0
8	Gola	Rishikesh	DFD	7	13	7	21	12	8
9	Amsot	Ramgarh	Rajaji TR	2	0	0	0	0	0
10	Bullawala	Kansrao	Rajaji TR	0	0	0	0	0	6
11	Gular Padwa East	Motichur	Rajaji TR	7	17	9	16	8	23
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>124</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>64</b>

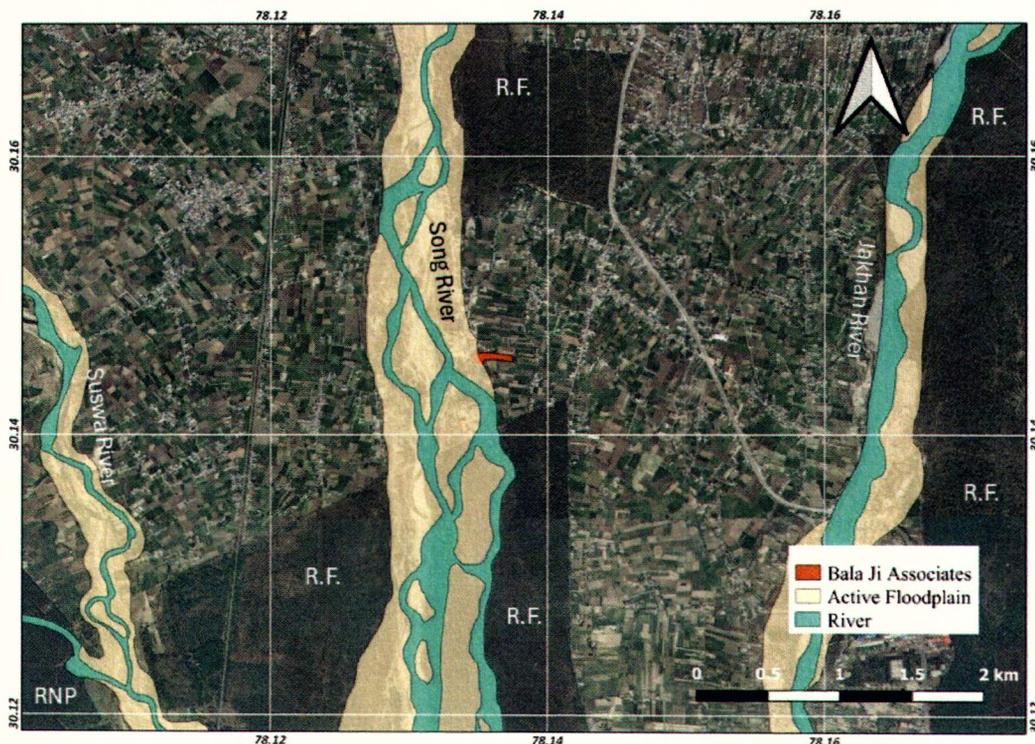
**Table-2:** Minimum approximate aerial distances of important geographical and other features from the proposed stone crusher plant

S. No.	Feature	Distance (km)	S. No.	Feature	Distance (km)
1	Song River (Active Floodplain)	0.00	7	RF Barkot	2.50
2	Song River (Flow area)	0.14	8	Jakhan Rau	2.50
3	RF Kansrao	0.50	9	Suswa River (Active Floodplain)	2.60
4	RF Lachhiwala	1.00	10	Suswa River (Flow area)	2.70
5	NH7 (Dehradun-Haridwar Road)	1.10	11	Rajaji NP/TR/Eco-Sensitive Zone (Draft/Proposed)	2.95
6	Northern Railway track	1.40	12	Kansrao-Barkot (Lal Thappar) Elephant corridor	5.10

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#### D. Summary:

Rajaji National Park/Tiger Reserve harbours a substantial fraction of the elephant population occurring in the northwest region. In the western part of Rajaji National Park, a few critical corridors – mainly along or across rivers and riverbeds/floodplains – maintain habitat connectivity for elephants. The long-term persistence of elephants in the landscape primarily rests on maintaining the integrity of these critical corridors. Effective management of human-elephant conflicts, which are presently widespread, is also dependent on maintaining habitat contiguity for the hindrance-free movement of elephants. In addition to these identified elephant corridors, there is also occasional elephant movement along the riparian tracts of major *raus* and rivers, such as the Song and some of its tributaries. The various *raus* and rivers interspersed in the region are not only important dispersal habitats and corridors for elephants, but also for other threatened wild animals in the region, including tigers.



**Fig-3:** The proposed stone crusher plant is partly sited on Song River's active floodplain area which, along with other existing structures and anthropogenic activities such as active riverbed material mining, effectively narrows the corridor width and reduces their functionality to serve as wildlife/ecological corridors (note: River and Active Floodplain layers obtained from Geological Survey of India's [Bhukosh](#) portal)

This necessitates judicious riverfront management. Major riverfront modification and chronic anthropogenic disturbances in the vital stretches of River Song could be inimical to elephants and other threatened wildlife in the long-term. Recent published information on the movement, persistence and establishment of home ranges of a few tigers in the Badkot, Rishikesh and Thano Ranges of Dehradun Forest Division indicate that the suitable habitats exist and/or can be restored in areas northwest of Rajaji TR. Thus, a comprehensive assessment of the select riverfront in terms of

*W. P. Singh*

wildlife occurrence/use and movements across multiple seasons and current impediments for movement assumes critical importance for making informed decisions and policy recommendations. While case-specific assessments are needed, it maybe more useful to scientifically assess the cumulative effects of ongoing human-induced disturbances to select riverfronts – including on inhabiting wildlife, their habitats & movement corridors, and associated forest/river ecosystems (including impacts on fluvial and hydrological processes and on river/channel morphology) along with socio-economic impacts on human lives and livelihoods – in a holistic manner, so that mitigation measures, if and as appropriate, can be advanced to facilitate elephant movement and persistence in the larger landscape towards reducing probabilities of negative human-elephant/wildlife interactions.



**Fig-4: A** – Elephant dung pile found at the edge of Kansrao Reserved Forest at about 380 m from the proposed stone crusher site during a brief site visit on August 07, 2024; **B** – Song River and its active floodplain area act as important riverine and river-scrub habitats for several wild animals, and as important dispersal routes and movement corridors for large mammalian wildlife including leopards, tigers and elephants

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*W. P. S. S.*