

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION**

PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION NO.1 OF 2026

Nikhil Datta Raut ...Petitioner
Versus
The State of Maharashtra & Ors. ...Respondents

Mr. Rahul Mote, Advocate for Petitioner.

Mr. Neha S. Bhide, GP a/w Mr. K.B. Dighe, Additional GP,
Mr. S.P. Kamble, Additional G.P. for Respondent nos.1 to 4,
11, 12 and 26.

Ms. Jaya Bagwe, for Respondent nos. 5 and 6- MPCB.

Mr. Riti Gada i/by Dua Associates for Respondent no.17.

Mr. Nitin V. Gangal a/w Namita M. Mestry for Respondent
Nos. 24, 25 and 29.

**CORAM: SHREE CHANDRASHEKHAR, CJ &
GAUTAM A. ANKHAD, J.**

DATE : 17th FEBRUARY 2026.

P.C.:

Mr. Rahul Mote, the learned counsel for the petitioner is seeking adjournment for producing additional documents on record. He also seeks an adjournment on the ground that his learned assisting counsel has gone to Uttar Pradesh to attend marriage of Advocate Akshay Mishra. It was on 27th January 2026, the hearing of this Public Interest Litigation was adjourned on the ground that Mr. Rahul Mote, the learned counsel has met with an accident. We are not inclined to grant any further adjournments in the matter.

2. In this Public Interest Litigation, the petitioner who claims that he is the Palghar-District President of a social

organisation, namely 'Anti-Corruption Jan Aakrosh', has sought the following prayers:

- "(a) Grant an immediate stay on all mining, quarrying, and industrial operations of the private Respondents (Nos. 13 to 25) mentioned in this petition.*
- (b) Direct the Respondent Nos. 2, 3, 5, and 6 to immediately seal the premises of the said illegal and polluting units.*
- (c) Direct the Respondent No.4 (Superintendent of Police, Palghar) to provide immediate police protection to the Petitioner"*
- (d) Pass any such other and further orders as this Hon'ble Court may deem fit and expedient in the interest of justice, equity, and good conscience."*

3. The petitioner has made as many as 29 persons and corporate entities as party-respondents. He has grievances against Tahsildar of Palghar, different village Panchayats, Regional Transport Officer, Deputy Conservator of Forests, Circle Officer of Taluka Wada. He has also added Blueberry Agro Products Private Limited, Magicrete Building Solutions Private Limited, Super Sand Stone, Zeeco India Private Limited, Richtech Green Energy, Moltus Research Laboratory Private Limited, Ozyer Chemicals L.L.P., Wealthy Crop Science Private Limited, Adhikari Readymix Concrete, Nidhi Realtors, K. K. Constructions etc. which are the corporate entities as party respondents. In this Public Interest Litigation, the petitioner states that there has been rampant illegal stone quarrying, unchecked mining of black salt, illegal operation of RMC plants, illegal extraction of minerals and unauthorized industrial operations throughout Palghar district. This is done with the active collusion of government authorities to avoid paying any

royalty, tax or fees to the government resulting in colossal financial loss to the State. The learned counsel for the petitioner refers to the minutes of the meeting dated 13th February 2024 of the Deputy Collector, Palghar and submits that the directions issued on the complaints made by the petitioner have not been implemented.

4. We find no merit in this petition. Mr. K.B. Dighe, the learned Additional Government Pleader states that there are three FIRs bearing FIR No.40 of 2022 dated 2nd February 2022, FIR no.460 of 2022 dated 7th December 2022 and FIR no.154 of 2024 dated 24th March 2024 lodged against the petitioner by the respondent no.13. Suppression of this vital information by the petitioner is yet another reason to dismiss this Public Interest Litigation. The PIL is vague and bereft of particulars. As regards the different corporate entities and the respondent-authority, no specific allegation has been made except stating that permission to Super Sand Stone was illegally granted to it. Similar allegation is made against Zeeco India Pvt. Ltd. that certain heavy industries are operating in the Eco-sensitive zone. The very nature of the relief sought by the petitioner against the array of parties gives a *prima facie* indication that this PIL has been filed with oblique motive and personal gain. It is settled law, as held by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in "*Ashok Kumar Pandey v. State of West Bengal*"¹, that a person acting *bona fide* and having

1 (2004) 3 SCC 349

sufficient interest in the proceedings of Public Interest Litigation shall alone have *locus standi* and the petition filed for personal gain or any other oblique considerations cannot be entertained.

5. In view of the above, Public Interest Litigation no.1 of 2026 is dismissed.

[GAUTAM A. ANKHAD, J.]

[CHIEF JUSTICE]