Press Release
13.11.2026

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Jalandhar Zonal Office, arrested Kuldeep Singh, former Additional Deputy Commissioner (Rural Development), Pathankot, and Nipun Mahajan, associated with stone-crusher and mining operations, on 11.11.2026 under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. The Special Court (PMLA), Jalandhar, granted ED custody of both till 16.11.2026.

ED investigation was initiated on the basis of Vigilance Bureau, Amritsar FIR No. 26 dated 09.08.2023. The FIR concerns the fraudulent transfer of 734 kanal and 1 marla (Approx. 92 acres) of common village (shamlat) land at Village Bhattian, Gram Panchayat Gol, District Pathankot, to private persons. The land lies in the Ravi River belt near the international border.



Approximate 4.2 km straight-line distance from a Ravi riverbed point near Gol Village to the international border

Kuldeep Singh held additional charge as ADC (Rural Development), Pathankot, from 24.02.2023 until his retirement on 28.02.2023. Lal Chand Kataruchak, the then Punjab Minister of Civil Supplies and Forests, recommended him for the post through a DO letter dated 23.02.2023 to the then Minister of Rural Development and Panchayats. A request to expeditiously pass the order regarding the transfer of the Shamlat was conveyed to Kuldeep Singh through an intermediary. Kuldeep Singh said he passed the order dated 27.02.2023 in favour of private claimants of shamlat land after that request, one day before his superannuation.

Nipun Mahajan revealed that to obtain possession of this mineral rich shamlat land, he entered into Powers of Attorney and purchase agreements with the accused in the FIR and made payments to them through bank accounts and in cash.

Earlier searches were conducted on 16.07.2026 at 16 premises linked to the case, which led to seizure of ₹1.75 crore in cash from Nipun Mahajan's premises. Thirty-one bank accounts linked to him and associated persons were also frozen, with aggregate balances of ₹91.34 lakh as on 18.07.2026. Further incriminating documents were also found and seized, which revealed customer receipts were not entered in the books and Q-forms were not issued for substantial part of sales showing illegal sale of sand and minor minerals through his crusher entities.

IIT Ropar survey findings

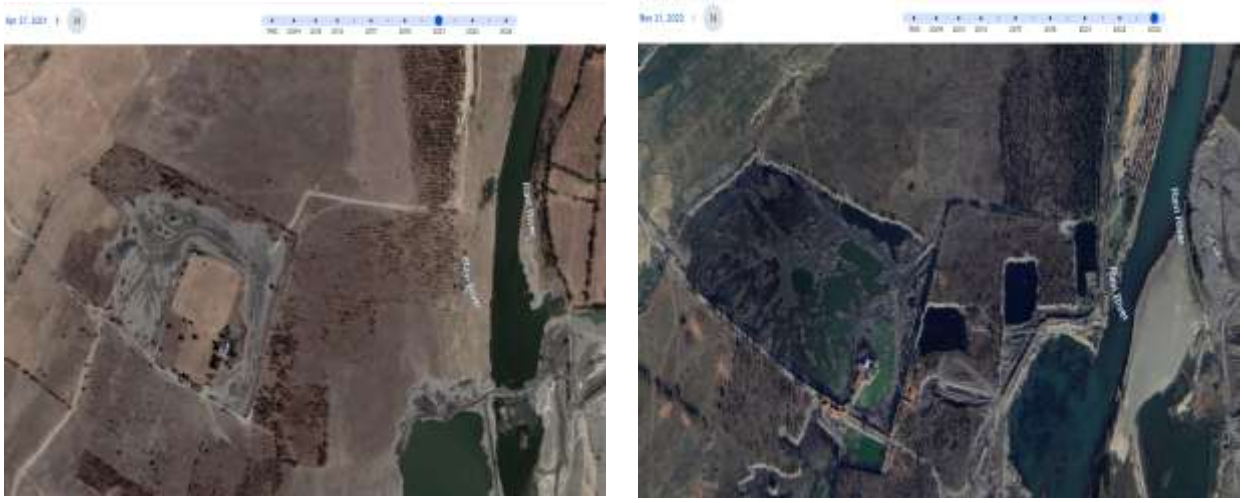
Shamlat land (92 acres Approx.). A drone and bathymetric survey conducted by a team from IIT Ropar assessed illegal excavation of 50.74 lakh (Approx.) cubic feet amounting to ₹11.16 crore.

Adjoining selected sites. On the basis of information gathered during the course of investigation, large scale illegal excavation was also noticed on the other sites and areas surrounding Bhattian and Gol Village. In these areas, IIT Ropar survey report revealed 27 illegally excavated pits across seven selected sites in the Bhattian-Gol

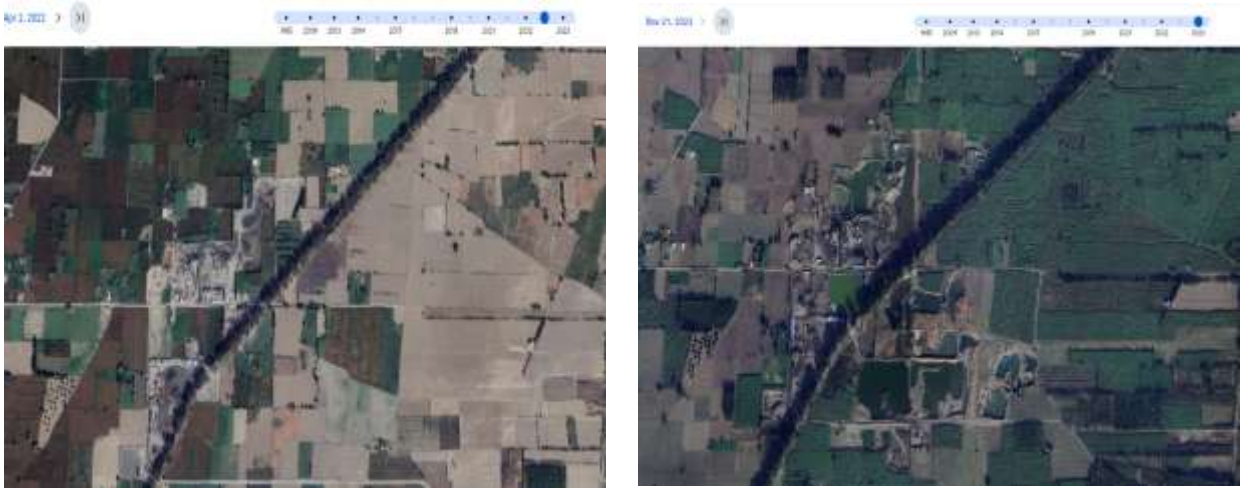
area in which illegal excavation of approximately 16.70 crores cubic feet amounting to ₹367.5 crore have been carried out.

Historical satellite imagery of some of the areas adjoining Villages Bhattian and Chak Koshaliyan shows substantial changes in the number, size and extent of excavation pits over the years. The images below show a sample machine-made excavation on land for which no mining lease had been granted by the Punjab government. The comparison illustrates the scale and persistence of unauthorised mining in Pathankot. **The illegal extraction continues rampantly till date.**

April 2021 **November 2023**



April 2022 **November 2023**



Historical satellite views of two areas adjoining Village Bhattian

ED is continuing to examine the land transactions, mineral extraction, crusher sales and financial flows to determine the nature and extent of Proceeds of Crime.

Further investigation is under progress.