



RAJASTHAN HIGH COURT
**HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE FOR RAJASTHAN AT
JODHPUR**
सत्यमेव जयते

IN RE:

**Acute Water Crisis in Jodhpur City and Deteriorating
Condition of Ancient Water Sources.**

**HON'BLE DR. JUSTICE PUSHPENDRA SINGH BHATI
HON'BLE DR. JUSTICE NUPUR BHATI
Order**

20/05/2026

1. Article 21 of the Constitution of India provides:

**"No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty
except according to procedure established by law."**

The right to clean and safe drinking water has been recognized as an integral facet of the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution of India, since access to potable water is indispensable for survival, public health, sanitation and dignified human existence. In ***Subhash Kumar v. State of Bihar (1991) 1 SCC 598***, the Hon'ble Supreme Court held that the right to life includes the right to enjoyment of pollution-free water and air for full enjoyment of life. Similarly, in ***Narmada Bachao Andolan v. Union of India (2000) 10 SCC 664***, it was observed that water is the basic need for survival of human beings and forms part of the right to life and human rights enshrined under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. Further, in ***A.P. Pollution Control Board v. Prof. M.V. Nayudu (2001) 2 SCC 62***, the Hon'ble Supreme Court held that access to clean drinking water is fundamental to life and that the State is under a constitutional obligation to





provide clean drinking water to its citizens. Likewise, in ***Hinch Lal Tiwari v. Kamala Devi [(2001) 6 SCC 496]***, the Hon'ble Supreme Court emphasized the necessity of protecting, restoring and maintaining ponds, tanks and other water bodies in the larger public, environmental and ecological interest, while recognizing such natural resources as essential for maintaining ecological balance and ensuring a healthy environment under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

2. Article 47 of the Constitution of India further provides that the State shall regard the improvement of public health as one of its primary duties, while Article 48A mandates that the State shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and safeguard forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife of the country. Article 51A(g) also casts a corresponding fundamental duty upon every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment including lakes, rivers and water bodies.

3. It is in this backdrop that this Court is constrained to take serious note of the grave issues concerning the acute water crisis prevailing in Jodhpur City, historically known as the "Blue City", the deteriorating and neglected condition of ancient water bodies and traditional water harvesting systems, the apparent ineffective implementation of statutory provisions relating to rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge and the alarming status of reservoirs, dams, check dams and urban water conservation systems, which issues have been brought to the notice of this Court through various newspaper reports published in:





(i) Dainik Bhaskar (Jodhpur Edition) dated 15.05.2026 carrying the headline "बाई रे! 14 करोड़ डूब गए...", highlighting the deteriorated condition of Baiji Talab, damaged filtration systems, pipeline leakages and administrative lapses resulting in substantial loss of water resources;

(ii) Rajasthan Patrika (Jodhpur Edition) dated 15.05.2026 titled "सब भगवान भरोसे... सिर्फ ढाई दिन का पानी बचा, केनाल से 5 दिन बाद आएगा", reporting critically depleted storage levels, apprehensions of dead storage conditions, disruption in canal supply and looming drinking water emergency in the city;

(iii) Dainik Bhaskar (Jodhpur Edition) dated 16.05.2026 carrying the headline "जोधपुर में जल इमरजेंसी... बस 2 दिन का पानी बचा, नहर से सप्लाई 21 तक पहुंचेगी, पाली से पानी लाने के लिए तत्काल मांगी वाटर ट्रेन", indicating that emergency measures including requisitioning of water trains were being explored to sustain drinking water supply;

(iv) Dainik Bhaskar (Jodhpur Edition) dated 16.05.2026 titled "पानी की बूंद-बूंद जरूरी, पर माफिया चुराकर बेच रहा था", referring to illegal extraction and black-marketing of water amidst severe scarcity and public unrest;

(v) Dainik Bhaskar (Jodhpur Edition) dated 17.05.2026 carrying the headline "14 की जगह मांगे थे वाटर ट्रेन, 15 को पीएमओ से जलसंकट बताया", reflecting the gravity of the crisis and urgent representations made to higher authorities regarding water scarcity;

(vi) Rajasthan Patrika (Jodhpur Edition) dated 17.05.2026 carrying the headline "नहर में लौटी जलधारा" and "जोधपुर में वाटर ट्रेन से पानी लाने



का कोई सिस्टम ही नहीं”, highlighting disruption in canal supply, absence of any established emergency framework for transportation of water through railway tankers, dependence upon tanker supply and widespread public complaints regarding water scarcity and black-marketing of water;

(vii) Rajasthan Patrika (Jodhpur Edition) dated 18.05.2026 titled “हर घंटे 5 किमी का सफर तय कर रहा हमारा पानी”, detailing delayed canal supply, dependence on emergency arrangements and the fragile state of urban water distribution systems;

(viii) Dainik Bhaskar (Jodhpur Edition) dated 18.05.2026 carrying the headline “पानी में घिरे अफसर...”, reporting contradictory official statements, public anxiety and severe stress upon the water distribution infrastructure;

(ix) Dainik Bhaskar (Jodhpur Edition) dated 19.05.2026 titled “टैंकर लूट के बाद दस दिन में 10 प्रदर्शन व मारपीट भी”, highlighting widespread public protests, law and order concerns, violence relating to tanker supply and acute public distress arising out of water scarcity;

(x) Rajasthan Patrika (Jodhpur Edition) dated 19.05.2026 carrying the headline “300 ट्यूबवेल, 80 टैंकर और बचे-खुचे पानी से चल रही 20 लाख लोगों की जल-जीवन रेखा”, indicating alarming dependence upon emergency groundwater extraction, tanker supply and residual reservoir storage for survival of nearly 20 lakh residents;

(xi) Rajasthan Patrika (Jodhpur Edition) dated 19.05.2026 carrying the headline “सूखे 19 बांध, जिनमें पानी वह भी एक चौथाई से कम”, reporting that out of 43 dams in the Jodhpur zone, 19 reservoirs





had completely dried up while the remaining reservoirs were functioning at critically low storage levels;

(xii) Rajasthan Patrika (Jodhpur Edition) dated 19.05.2026 carrying the headline "गुलाबसागर-फतेहसागर की नहर में गिर रहा सीवरेज, कैसे पहुंचेगा शुद्ध पानी", disclosing serious allegations regarding discharge of sewage and waste water into historic canal systems connected with traditional water sources, thereby raising grave concerns relating to contamination of drinking water sources and public health hazards;

(xiii) Rajasthan Patrika (Jodhpur Edition) dated 19.05.2026 titled "बूंदों के प्रहरी बने सैकड़ों हाथ : 'अमृत जलम' महाअभियान में जोधपुर के तीन प्राचीन जलाशयों पर एक साथ श्रमदान", highlighting community participation and public initiatives undertaken for cleaning, restoration and rejuvenation of traditional water bodies in and around Jodhpur;

(xiv) Dainik Bhaskar (Jodhpur Edition) dated 19.05.2026, titled "अनमोल पानी का खजाना यूँ लूट गया...जो तालाब-कुएं कभी हमारी प्यास बुझाते थे, आज इतने दूषित कि पीना तो दूर, नहाना भी मुश्किल", highlighting the alarming deterioration, pollution and neglect of ancient ponds, wells and traditional water bodies in Jodhpur, which once served as vital sources of potable water for the city but have now become severely contaminated and unfit even for basic human use;

(xv) Dainik Bhaskar (Jodhpur Edition) dated 20.05.2026 carrying the headline "कल रात जोधपुर पहुंचेगा पानी, पीएचईडी का दावा- 22 से नियमित जलापूर्ति करेंगे", reporting continued disruption in canal-based water supply, repeated shutdowns, critically reduced supply duration in





various localities, dependence upon emergency arrangements and public hardship arising from irregular distribution of potable water;

(xvi) Rajasthan Patrika (Jaipur Edition) dated 20.05.2026 carrying the headline "मानसून से पहले 'हेल्थ चेक', राजस्थान के 315 बांधों की होगी जांच", reporting that safety audit, structural inspection and assessment of storage capacity, encroachments and catchment conditions of dams and reservoirs across Rajasthan, are being undertaken prior to monsoon, thereby highlighting the larger statewide concerns relating to preservation, maintenance and sustainable management of water resources and reservoir infrastructure.

(xvii) Dainik Bhaskar (Jodhpur Edition) dated 20.05.2026 carrying the headline emphasizing the urgent need for the conservation and development of lakes such as Fatehsagar, Gulab Sagar, Chatur Sagar, and Ummed Sagar in Jodhpur, describing them as vital bridges to prosperity and a lifeline for the city's water security. It highlights how these water bodies, once central to the city's life and development, are currently facing severe challenges including siltation, pollution, encroachment, and neglect, which threaten the groundwater recharge and overall ecological balance.

4. The newspaper reports referred to hereinabove, when read conjointly, prima facie disclose that the issue is not confined merely to temporary shortage of water supply, but reflects a deeper and continuing crisis arising from depletion, pollution, encroachment and neglect of traditional water bodies and reservoirs, unregulated urban expansion, excessive dependence upon external canal systems, over-exploitation of groundwater





and apparent deficiencies in long-term urban water management and conservation planning.

4.1. The reports further indicate critically depleted storage levels in reservoirs and traditional water systems, disruption in canal supply, increasing dependence upon emergency arrangements such as tanker supply and tube-wells, and allegations relating to illegal extraction, black-marketing and inequitable distribution of water. The material placed before this Court also reflects apprehensions regarding contamination of historic canal systems and traditional water channels due to discharge of sewage and waste water, thereby raising serious concerns touching upon public health, environmental sustainability and access to safe drinking water.

4.2. At the same time, the material placed before this Court also reflects that experts, environmentalists and members of civil society have consistently emphasized the urgent necessity of revival, restoration and scientific rejuvenation of traditional water bodies and historic water harvesting systems in Jodhpur, which historically sustained the region for centuries even under severe climatic conditions. The reports regarding public participation and voluntary *shramdaan* for cleaning and restoration of ancient reservoirs further indicate growing public concern regarding preservation of water resources and environmental sustainability.

5. The salient features emerging from the newspaper reports, inter alia, reveal the following:





(a) Jodhpur city, having a population of approximately 20 lakh residents, is presently facing an acute and alarming drinking water crisis, with repeated newspaper reports indicating severe depletion of available water reserves and disruption in regular water supply arrangements.

(b) The reports indicate that the daily water requirement of the city exceeds 210 Million Litres (MLD), whereas the existing reserves in reservoirs and dams connected with the city's supply system have fallen to critically low levels.

(c) Newspaper reports dated 15.05.2026 to 20.05.2026 reveal that several dams and reservoirs within the Jodhpur region have either completely dried up or are left with water levels far below their storage capacity, with some reservoirs reportedly approaching "dead storage" conditions.

(d) It has been reported that out of 43 dams in the Jodhpur zone, 19 reservoirs have completely dried up and the remaining reservoirs contain only a fraction of their storage capacity, thereby creating an unprecedented water scarcity situation.

(e) The reports further disclose that the city is presently surviving substantially on emergency arrangements including operation of nearly 300 tube-wells, deployment of more than 80 tankers and utilization of residual and reserve water sources.

(f) Newspaper reports further indicate that disruption and shutdown of canal supply from the Indira Gandhi Canal/Rajiv Gandhi Lift Canal system resulted in serious apprehension of





complete exhaustion of potable water reserves available to the city.

(g) Several reports indicate that water released after canal shutdown was expected to reach Jodhpur only after considerable delay, thereby creating a grave apprehension of interruption of drinking water supply to the residents of the city.

(h) The reports further reveal that authorities were compelled to consider extraordinary measures including requisitioning of water trains from other districts/states for transportation of drinking water to Jodhpur in order to avert a complete collapse of the water supply system.

(i) Certain reports indicate that water supply in various localities was reduced to once in several days, while residents, particularly women and elderly persons, were compelled to wait in long queues and travel considerable distances merely to secure basic drinking water.

(j) Newspaper reports further reveal public protests, demonstrations and unrest in several areas of Jodhpur on account of acute water shortage, irregular supply and failure of authorities to ensure equitable distribution of water.

(k) The reports disclose allegations of illegal extraction of water, unauthorized water connections, tanker mafia activities, black-marketing of water and exploitation of the prevailing crisis through sale of water at exorbitant rates.





(l) Certain reports further indicate that employees and officers of the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) were subjected to public anger and protests owing to the continuing scarcity and inadequate supply arrangements.

(m) The reports also disclose that sewage water, waste material, plastic and garbage are being discharged into ancient canal systems and traditional water channels connected with historical water bodies including Gulab Sagar–Fateh Sagar canal systems, thereby contaminating traditional sources of potable water and posing serious environmental and public health concerns.

(n) Ancient water bodies and traditional water harvesting structures including Chand Baori (Jodhpur Parkota), Tapi Baori, Jaitha Bera, Mahila Bagh Jhalra, Gulab Sagar, Ganglav Talaab, Turji ka Jhalra and other historical reservoirs, which historically sustained large populations for centuries, are reported to be lying neglected, polluted, encroached upon or rendered dysfunctional.

(o) The reports further indicate that such traditional water systems once possessed extensive catchment areas and canal networks capable of independently supplying water to several lakh residents for prolonged periods, thereby demonstrating their immense ecological and public utility value.

(p) Certain newspaper reports also reveal encouraging instances of public participation, voluntary shramdaan and community-led conservation initiatives undertaken for cleaning, restoration and rejuvenation of ancient reservoirs and traditional water bodies under various water conservation campaigns.





(q) Experts quoted in the newspaper reports, including retired engineers and water conservation specialists, have emphasized the urgent necessity of revival, restoration and scientific preservation of traditional water bodies and rainwater harvesting systems so as to reduce dependence on external canal supply and over-exploited groundwater resources.

(r) The aforesaid reports prima facie indicate serious issues concerning environmental degradation, contamination of water resources, administrative inaction, depletion of groundwater, encroachment upon traditional water bodies and an imminent threat to the fundamental right to access clean and adequate drinking water.

6. Prima facie, the issues emerging from the newspaper reports involve substantial questions concerning enforcement of the fundamental right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution of India, protection of environmental and ecological resources, preservation of Rajasthan's traditional water heritage, maintenance of public health and discharge of constitutional obligations by the State authorities under Articles 47 and 48A of the Constitution of India. The issues requiring consideration by this Court broadly relate to:

(i) the acute and recurring drinking water crisis affecting Jodhpur City and surrounding regions;

(ii) the deteriorating, polluted and neglected condition of ancient water bodies, traditional water harvesting systems and historic canal networks;





(iii) the implementation and enforcement of statutory provisions relating to rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge and urban water conservation under the prevailing municipal laws, building regulations and governmental policies; and

(iv) the present status, conservation, maintenance and sustainable management of reservoirs, dams, check dams, wetlands and other recharge structures forming part of the regional water security framework.

6.1. This Court is therefore of the considered opinion that the issues highlighted in the newspaper reports require immediate attention and coordinated response from the concerned authorities, particularly with regard to preservation, restoration and rejuvenation of traditional water bodies, maintenance of sustainable urban water supply systems, prevention of pollution and encroachment, regulation of groundwater extraction, restoration of reservoirs, dams and check dams and formulation of long-term measures for ensuring water security in Jodhpur City and surrounding regions.

6.2. This Court also deems it necessary to examine the implementation, monitoring and enforcement of statutory provisions relating to rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge and urban water conservation made mandatory under the applicable municipal laws, building regulations and governmental policies, particularly in view of the apparent absence, inadequate enforcement or ineffective implementation of such measures despite recurring and foreseeable water scarcity conditions





prevailing in the region. This Court further considers it necessary to ascertain whether such mandatory conservation measures are being effectively integrated with urban planning, building permissions, occupancy certifications and sustainable water management mechanisms within Jodhpur City.

7. A cumulative consideration of the aforesaid newspaper reports prima facie discloses serious deficiencies in preservation, protection and scientific management of traditional water bodies, reservoirs and urban water resources in and around Jodhpur, apart from indicating increasing vulnerability of the city's water security framework. The material placed before this Court further reflects concerns relating to depletion of groundwater reserves, contamination of traditional canal systems, inequitable distribution of drinking water and excessive dependence upon emergency supply mechanisms. These traditional water systems are not merely valuable sources of potable water, but also constitute an inseparable part of Rajasthan's ecological, environmental and cultural heritage. This Court is prima facie satisfied that:

(a) Right to clean, safe and adequate drinking water forms an integral part of the fundamental right to life guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

(b) The State is under a legal and constitutional obligation to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard lakes, reservoirs, dams, check dams, canals, traditional water bodies and other natural resources in terms of Articles 47 and 48A of the Constitution of India.





(c) Traditional water harvesting systems, historical water bodies and decentralized conservation structures in Rajasthan are required to be protected, preserved and restored, particularly in view of their ecological significance and historical role in sustaining human settlements in arid regions, as recognized in various judicial pronouncements of the Hon'ble Supreme Court as well as this Hon'ble Court.



(d) Prima facie, the material placed before this Court further indicates that statutory provisions relating to rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge and urban water conservation, including Section 238(1) of the Rajasthan Municipalities Act, 2009, provisions contained in the applicable Rajasthan Building Bye-laws and Urban Development Regulations and the Rajasthan Urban Water Supply Policy, 2018 mandating installation and maintenance of rainwater harvesting systems in urban areas, do not appear to have been effectively implemented and enforced within Jodhpur City despite recurring and foreseeable water scarcity conditions prevailing in the region.

(e) Prima facie, the material placed before this Court further indicates apparent deficiencies in implementation, monitoring and enforcement of mandatory rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge mechanisms while granting building permissions, occupancy/completion certifications and urban development approvals, thereby adversely affecting sustainable groundwater recharge and long-term urban water security.



(f) The newspaper reports prima facie indicate large-scale neglect, pollution, encroachment and degradation of traditional water bodies, historic canal systems and recharge structures, including discharge of sewage, waste water, garbage and plastic material into water channels connected with potable water sources.

(g) The reports further prima facie indicate serious concerns relating to depletion of groundwater reserves, absence of sustainable long-term water conservation measures and excessive dependence upon emergency arrangements such as tanker supply, tube-wells and proposed water trains for sustaining urban drinking water supply.

(h) Prima facie, the material placed before this Court further indicates apparent deficiencies in maintenance, desiltation, conservation and scientific management of reservoirs, dams, check dams and traditional recharge systems forming part of the regional water infrastructure, thereby adversely affecting storage capacity, groundwater recharge and long-term water sustainability.

(i) The allegations relating to illegal extraction, black-marketing and inequitable distribution of water during the prevailing scarcity situation disclose serious administrative and governance concerns warranting immediate judicial scrutiny.

8. This Court takes serious note of the alarming situation emerging from the newspaper reports referred to hereinabove, which disclose not merely a temporary disruption in water supply, but a continuing crisis affecting public health, environmental





sustainability and access to safe drinking water for residents of Jodhpur City. The situation assumes greater gravity in the context of Rajasthan's fragile ecological conditions and its historical dependence upon traditional water harvesting systems for survival in arid regions.

8.1. This Court further observes that water resources, lakes, reservoirs, dams, check dams, traditional water bodies and natural sources of potable water are held by the State in trust for the benefit of the people under the well-recognized Public Trust Doctrine, and therefore cannot be permitted to suffer destruction, pollution, encroachment or neglect in a manner detrimental to public interest, environmental sustainability, the rights of future generations and the doctrine of inter-generational equity.

8.2. The material placed before this Court further prima facie indicates that if timely and effective measures are undertaken for revival, restoration and scientific rejuvenation of traditional water bodies and historic water harvesting systems, coupled with effective implementation of statutory rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge mechanisms contemplated under Section 238(1) of the Rajasthan Municipalities Act, 2009, the applicable building regulations and urban development policies, the prevailing water crisis and dependence upon emergency arrangements can be substantially alleviated. Historically, the region sustained itself for centuries through decentralized traditional water conservation systems adapted to arid climatic conditions, and therefore their restoration and scientific



integration with modern urban planning may constitute an essential component of long-term water security and environmental sustainability.

8.3. In view of the aforesaid circumstances, and considering the larger issues concerning enforcement of fundamental rights, preservation of Rajasthan's traditional water heritage, protection of environmental and ecological resources and ensuring sustainable urban water security, this Court is of the considered opinion that the issues disclosed herein warrant immediate judicial scrutiny and coordinated intervention in larger public interest. Accordingly, this Court deems it appropriate to invoke its suo motu jurisdiction in larger public interest so as to explore and secure an effective, scientific and expeditious solution to the concerns highlighted in the newspaper reports.

Let the matter be registered as a writ petition titled:

SUO MOTU : IN RE:

Acute Water Crisis in Jodhpur City and Deteriorating Condition of Ancient Water Sources.

Versus

1. State of Rajasthan through Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur (Raj.).
2. The Principal Secretary, Public Health Engineering Department, Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur (Raj.).
3. The Principal Secretary, Urban Development & Housing Department, Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur (Raj.).
4. The Principal Secretary, Department of Local Self Government, Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur (Raj.).
5. The Member Secretary, Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board, Jaipur (Raj.).





6. The District Collector, Jodhpur (Raj.).

7. The Commissioner, Jodhpur Development Authority, Jodhpur (Raj.).

8. The Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Jodhpur South, Jodhpur (Raj.).

9. The Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Jodhpur North, Jodhpur (Raj.).

10. The Chief Engineer, Public Health Engineering Department, Jodhpur (Raj.).

11. The Chief Engineer, Water Resources Department, Jodhpur (Raj.).

12. The Director, Ground Water Department, Rajasthan, Jaipur (Raj.).

13. The Divisional Railway Manager, North Western Railway, Jodhpur Division, Jodhpur (Raj.).

14. The Chairman, Rajasthan Water Resources Regulatory Authority, Jaipur (Raj.).

8.4. All the respondents are directed to file their respective detailed responses/status reports to the issues highlighted in the newspaper reports for consideration of this Court.

8.5. The newspaper report(s), which have been extensively referred to and relied upon herein, shall be treated as part of the pleadings and shall be addressed and responded to specifically by the concerned authorities.

9. Looking to the acute water crisis prevailing in Jodhpur City and surrounding areas of Western Rajasthan, coupled with the deteriorating condition of ancient water resources, this Court finds that repeated concerns raised by citizens, experts and the media indicate that the situation has reached alarming proportions owing to severe water scarcity, inadequate conservation measures, ineffective implementation of rainwater harvesting provisions,





depletion of groundwater reserves and neglect of traditional water systems. The material placed before this Court further prima facie indicates that the recurring crisis is not merely the result of temporary disruption in canal supply, but also reflects larger structural deficiencies in sustainable urban water management, scientific conservation of reservoirs and implementation of long-term groundwater recharge mechanisms.

9.1. Thus, this Court takes suo motu cognizance of the issues involved, as they directly affect the fundamental right to clean and adequate drinking water guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India and raise substantial concerns relating to environmental sustainability, public health and preservation of Rajasthan's traditional water heritage. Accordingly, the following directions are issued:

(a) Issue notices to the respondents, namely:

1. State of Rajasthan through Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur (Raj.).
2. The Principal Secretary, Public Health Engineering Department, Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur (Raj.).
3. The Principal Secretary, Urban Development & Housing Department, Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur (Raj.).
4. The Principal Secretary, Department of Local Self Government, Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur (Raj.).
5. The Member Secretary, Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board, Jaipur (Raj.).
6. The District Collector, Jodhpur (Raj.).
7. The Commissioner, Jodhpur Development Authority, Jodhpur (Raj.).



8. The Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Jodhpur South, Jodhpur (Raj.).

9. The Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Jodhpur North, Jodhpur (Raj.).

10. The Chief Engineer, Public Health Engineering Department, Jodhpur (Raj.).

11. The Chief Engineer, Water Resources Department, Jodhpur (Raj.).

12. The Director, Ground Water Department, Rajasthan, Jaipur (Raj.).

13. The Divisional Railway Manager, North Western Railway, Jodhpur Division, Jodhpur (Raj.).

14. The Chairman, Rajasthan Water Resources Regulatory Authority, Jaipur (Raj.).

(b) The respondents shall file detailed affidavits/status reports indicating the steps taken hitherto and the proposed future course of action, inter alia, covering the following aspects:

- Present storage position, live storage capacity and water availability status in all major reservoirs, dams, check dams and water supply systems connected with Jodhpur City, along with updated storage data, desiltation status and supply capacity;
- Present physical condition, encroachment status and water quality condition of all major traditional water bodies, wetlands and water harvesting structures referred to in the newspaper reports, including Chand Baori, Tapi Baori, Gulab Sagar, Ganglav Talaab, Turji ka Jhalra and other historical reservoirs, along with GPS coordinates, photographs and present conservation status;
- Details regarding sewage discharge, contamination, dumping of waste material and pollution affecting traditional canal systems





and water bodies, including action taken against violators and status of sewage treatment infrastructure;

- Details of groundwater extraction within Jodhpur City and adjoining areas, including number of operational tube-wells, groundwater depletion levels, recharge capacity and sustainability assessment reports;

- Details regarding implementation and enforcement of statutory provisions relating to rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge and urban water conservation, including compliance with Section 238(1) of the Rajasthan Municipalities Act, 2009, applicable building bye-laws and governmental policies mandating rainwater harvesting systems in urban areas;

- Details indicating the number of buildings, institutions, commercial establishments and government offices in which rainwater harvesting systems have been installed and are functional, along with details of inspection, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms adopted by the authorities concerned;

- Steps taken to regulate tanker supply, prevent illegal extraction and black-marketing of water and ensure equitable distribution of drinking water during the prevailing scarcity situation;

- Details regarding emergency arrangements proposed or undertaken, including tanker deployment, alternate supply mechanisms and feasibility of transportation of water through railway tankers, if any;





- Feasibility reports for desiltation, restoration, rejuvenation and scientific conservation of traditional water bodies, dams, check dams and catchment systems;

- Estimated cost, timelines and action plans for revival and restoration of traditional water harvesting systems, reservoirs, recharge structures and historic canal networks;

- Existing and proposed rainwater harvesting measures, recharge mechanisms, watershed management strategies and groundwater conservation plans for Jodhpur City; and

- Long-term policy measures proposed for ensuring sustainable urban water security and prevention of recurrence of such crisis situations in future.

(c) The State Government shall constitute a High-Level Expert Committee comprising hydrologists, groundwater experts, environmental scientists, wetland and ecology experts, traditional water systems experts, urban planning experts, representatives of reputed NGOs working in the field of water conservation, a representative of the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and officers of the Public Health Engineering Department, Water Resources Department, Ground Water Department, Jodhpur Development Authority and Municipal Corporations concerned. The Committee shall undertake a comprehensive assessment of the prevailing water crisis and submit a "Master Water Security, Restoration and Conservation Plan", containing short-term, medium-term and long-term measures for ensuring sustainable water security in Jodhpur. The plan shall specifically include





measures relating to restoration of traditional water bodies, groundwater recharge, rainwater harvesting integration, protection of catchment areas, prevention of encroachments, scientific maintenance of dams and check dams, sewage treatment and community participation mechanisms.

(d) As an interim measure, the State Government and all concerned local authorities shall:

(i) Take immediate steps to prevent further discharge of sewage, waste water, garbage, plastic material and untreated effluents into traditional water bodies, canals, reservoirs, dams, check dams and recharge structures connected with potable water sources;

(ii) Ensure regular cleaning, desiltation, maintenance, protection and temporary fencing of surviving traditional water structures, reservoirs, canals, dams and check dams, particularly those identified in the newspaper reports;

(iii) Undertake immediate inspection and identification of encroachments, illegal constructions and obstructions existing over traditional water bodies, catchment areas, natural drainage channels and recharge zones and submit action taken reports before this Court;

(iv) Take strict action against illegal extraction, black-marketing, unauthorized tanker operations and inequitable distribution of water under the applicable laws;

(v) Ensure equitable supply of potable drinking water in all affected areas and formulate immediate emergency response





mechanisms for vulnerable localities including contingency arrangements in the event of further disruption in canal supply;

(vi) Undertake immediate inspection of all major traditional water bodies, reservoirs, dams and check dams and submit compliance reports indicating their present physical condition, storage capacity, desiltation status and conservation requirements before the next date of hearing;

(vii) Ensure that no untreated sewage or waste water is discharged into any reservoir, talab, jhalra, canal, dam, check dam or traditional water channel connected with potable water sources;

(viii) Ensure strict implementation and enforcement of statutory provisions relating to rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge under Section 238(1) of the Rajasthan Municipalities Act, 2009, applicable building bye-laws and governmental policies, particularly in relation to government buildings, commercial establishments, institutions and newly sanctioned constructions; and

(ix) Undertake immediate survey regarding existence, functionality and maintenance status of rainwater harvesting systems installed in public buildings, educational institutions, hospitals, government offices and urban establishments within Jodhpur City and submit a status report before this Court.

(e) The Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board shall immediately conduct water quality assessment and contamination analysis of all major traditional water bodies, reservoirs, dams, check dams and canal systems referred to in the newspaper reports and





submit a detailed report before this Court indicating the present contamination levels, environmental risks, remedial measures required and accountability of the authorities concerned.

10. Mr Rajesh Panwar, learned Senior Advocate & Additional Advocate General, Mr. N.S. Rajpurohit, learned Additional Advocate General and Mr. P.S. Chundawat, learned Government Counsel, are directed to obtain instructions on behalf of all the respondents in their respective capacities and update this Court regarding the immediate measures undertaken by the authorities concerned.

11. Mr. Abhishek Mehta, Advocate and Ms. Aditi Moad, Advocate are appointed as learned Amicus Curiae to assist this Court in the present matter.

12. List the matter on **22.05.2026**, while showing the names of above-mentioned learned Additional Advocate Generals, learned Government Counsel and the learned Amicus Curiae in the cause list.

13. The Registry is directed to register the present proceedings as a suo motu Public Interest Litigation under Article 226 of the Constitution of India and furnish copies of this order along with the newspaper reports to the learned Amicus Curiae as well as all the respondents for immediate compliance and necessary action.

(DR. NUPUR BHATI),J

(DR.PUSHPENDRA SINGH BHATI),J

Skant/-