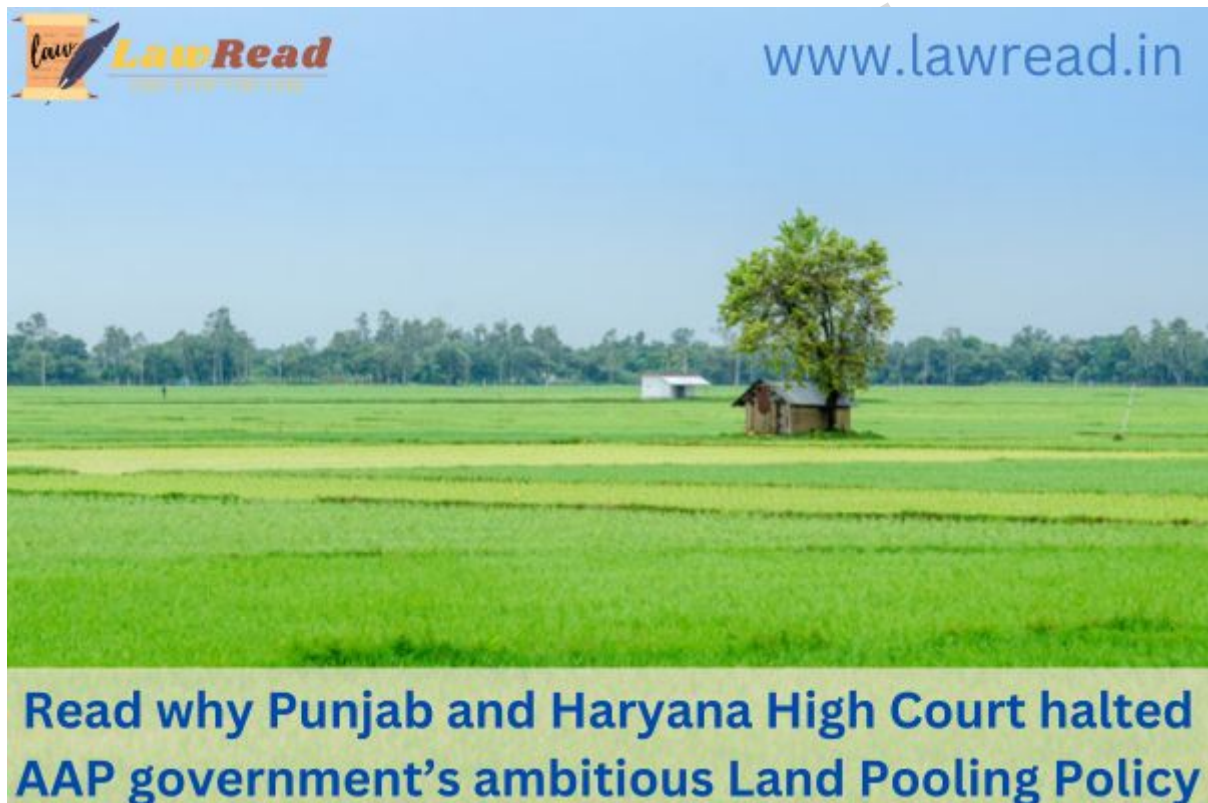


News

Read why Punjab and Haryana High Court halted AAP government's ambitious Land Pooling Policy



Under the 2025 policy, the State plans to acquire thousands of acres of land across districts in Punjab for urban development. Farmer, agricultural land (For representation only)

The Punjab and Haryana High Court recently stayed Punjab government's Land Pooling Policy 2005, observing that it was notified in haste without carrying out any Social or Environmental Impact studies [Gurdeep Singh Gill vs State of Punjab and Another].

The Bench of Justice Anupinder Singh Grewal and Justice Deepak Manchanda noted that the State was proposing to take over tens of thousands of acres of fertile land for proposed development works without the requisite studies.

"We are prima facie also of the view that the policy appears to have been notified in haste and all concerns including social impact assessment, environmental impact assessment,

timelines and redressal grievance mechanism should have been addressed at the very outset in the policy, before its notification," the Bench said.

Justice Anupinder Singh Grewal and Justice Deepak Manchanda Under the 2025 policy, the Aam Aadmi Party-led government plans to acquire thousands of acres of land across districts in Punjab for urban development. The government is offering landowners developed residential and commercial plots in exchange for their land.

The interim order was passed on August 07 on a petition moved by a resident of Ludhiana, who owns six acres of land that had been allotted to his father as a displaced person from Pakistan.

It was argued that the policy was arbitrary and irrational. There is no provision for providing compensation at the time of acquisition and only an annual livelihood allowance of ₹50,000 per acre would be paid but it would be too meager for the sustenance of families of small and marginal farmers, the Court was told.

The State argued that at this stage no Social Impact Assessment study was required to be carried out under Chapter II of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013, because neither the development work had commenced nor any compulsory acquisition was to be carried out.

It was also argued that the policy was purely voluntary in nature and aimed to boost the planned urban development without the complications of compulsory land acquisition. However, Amicus Curiae Senior Advocate Shailendra Jain submitted that land was proposed to be taken not only through direct acquisition but by way of compulsory acquisition as well.

"The State having not conducted any Social/ Environment assessment studies, would be in violation of the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act, 2013," he said. Jain also submitted that the policy does not have a legal framework defining any timelines and that it also lacks any grievance redressal mechanism. Considering the State's submission that all concerns of the Court would be addressed by the next date of hearing, the bench stayed the policy and listed the matter for hearing on September 10. "As an interim measure, lest any rights are created, the impugned Land Pooling Policy, 2025, notified on 14.05.2025 and 04.06.2025, and subsequently amended on 25.07.2025, shall remain stayed. In the meantime, the respondents may file the reply and complete the pleadings," the Court ordered. Amicus Curiae Senior Advocate Shailendra Jain appeared with advocate Rahul.

Advocates Gurjeet Singh Gill, Manan Kheterpal and Mannat Bir Kaur represented the petitioner. Senior Advocate Gurminder Singh, Advocate General Maninderjit Singh Bedi with

Additional Advocate Generals Maninder Singh, Shekhar Verma and Kuljit Singh represented the State of Punjab

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