

**GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI  
DEPARTMENT OF FORESTS & WILDLIFE  
2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR, A-BLOCK, VIKAS BHAVAN  
I.P ESTATE, NEW DELHI-02**

F. No. 11(26)/PA/DCF/95/Vol X/Part-4/1938-40

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RIDGE MANAGEMENT BOARD HELD ON 09.05.2018  
AT 5:00 PM UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF CHIEF SECRETARY, DELHI**

The meeting of the Ridge Management Board under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Delhi was held in the conference hall at 5 PM on 9.5.2018. The list of attendees is placed at Annexure I.

At the outset, the Member Secretary RMB welcomed the Chairman and other Board members and introduced Smt. Jayshree Ardey Chauhan who had recently joined the Department as PCCF and Head of the Department.

Thereafter each agenda was discussed by the Board and decisions taken as below:

**1. A) Demarcation and final notification of Ridge Forest land under Section 20 of Indian Forest Act, 1927**

The Member Secretary informed the Board that demarcation of Southern Ridge forest area by Revenue Department through TSM survey was in progress and encroachment free land in Jonapur and Aya Nagar had been taken over by Forest Department.

The DM South informed the current status of demarcation of notified Southern ridge areas to the Board and informed that large chunks of govt land were freed from encroachment in Asola village, besides completion of demarcation in Jaunapur and Ayanagar villages. The latest status report submitted by DM South was taken on record (Annexure-II). The Board stressed that the work of demarcation and final notification should be completed on priority and monthly reports on demarcation and eviction of encroachment should be submitted to RMB for updating. The Board further emphasized that Forest Department should secure the boundaries immediately and the coming monsoon should be utilized for afforestation of regained area.

The Board also placed on record their appreciation for the efforts of DM South, ADM Saket, Forest Department and Police Department for their effective role in taking over the Govt. land which was under encroachment.

**B) Demarcation of Morphological Ridge based on GSI map and Morphological features of Ridge to maintain the area as Natural Conservation Zone.**

The Member Secretary, RMB informed the Board that the demarcation of Morphological Ridge based on the maps provided by GSDL & prepared on the data

provided by Geological Survey of India was required to be done and the delineation of the boundary of morphological ridge on ground was required to be taken up by the Land Owning Agencies like DDA, MCD, CPWD, Revenue Authorities and Forest Department.

The Board observed that since morphological ridge was not a notified entity so the orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court will have to be studied to understand the concept so as to arrive at a logical decision. The Board directed that a detailed note may be put up in the next RMB meeting along with relevant orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court for deciding expeditious further action in this matter.

**2. Construction of Naval infrastructure at 183-Brar Square, Construction by Ordnance Factory Board, New Delhi Office and Grant of clearance for construction of office building for WESEE, at survey no. 183, Brar Square (UA: Navy, WESEE, Ordnance Factory Board)**

Three projects of Defence had been discussed in the earlier meetings of RMB held on 03.08.2017 and 15.12.2017. The User Agencies viz. WESEE, Ordnance Factory Board and Indian Navy had claimed that the area allotted to them by the Defence Estate Office was part of Morphological Ridge while the Department had claimed that these projects were falling within the overall boundary notification of 1994 for Central Ridge. The Board had therefore undertaken a site visit on 21st April 2018 to verify the facts on ground.

The Member Secretary RMB informed the Board that as per map prepared by GSDL on the basis of boundary notification issued in 1994, the area of the Central Ridge was 1812 Ha whereas the area of Central Ridge actually mentioned in the said notification was 864 Ha approx. The officials of Naval Authority, OFB, WESEE and the Defense Estate Officer while presenting their records said that the area proposed for three projects was not falling within the 864 Ha mentioned in 1994 notification.

The Board observed that in the recent past, RMB had considered the proposals in the immediate adjoining areas for other Defence establishments considering those areas to be falling in morphological areas as per records produced by Forest Department at that time. During field inspection also, the Board had observed that there were other existing Defence establishments in the adjacent areas. It was also seen that the density of vegetation is low on the sites proposed for the projects of Navy & WESEE. However, the density of trees was quite high for one project area of Ordnance Factory Board which was away from other two Defence project areas under consideration.

Since Navy and WESEE are strategic defense establishments of national importance, the Board recommended that the permission of construction of these

two Defence projects viz Navy and WESEE in morphological ridge area may be forwarded to CEC for obtaining the approval from Hon'ble Supreme Court subject to usual terms and conditions governing use of morphological ridge. For the third Defence project of Ordinance Factory Board, it was observed that the project was not site specific and since density of trees in that area was high, the Board decided not to recommend to CEC and advised Defence Estate Officer to identify another suitable site for Ordinance Factory Board outside the Central ridge and morphological ridge.

RMB also advised the Defence Estate Officer not to allot land to any Defence organization in the Defence land area shown in the map prepared by GSDL. The Board also asked Forest Department to put up detailed status of Ridge and Morphological Ridge in the Central Ridge area for rationalization of Ridge boundaries.

### **3. Project on eco restoration of Central Ridge area through biodiversity enrichment.**

Prof. C.R. Babu, Chairman, CEMDE, gave a presentation for a scheme for replacement of *Prosopis juliflora* (vilayati kikar) with indigenous species, by canopy lifting in a phased and controlled manner initially in Central ridge. A detailed estimated cost of Rs. 12.21 crore for eradication of vilayati kikar over a period of five years in 423 Ha of Central ridge area was also given.

The Board noted that Prof. C.R. Babu has been a pioneer in restoration works and has undertaken several projects like restoration of Yamuna Biodiversity Park and setting up of Aravalli Biodiversity Park in collaboration with Delhi Development Authority.

Since the Department intended to utilize the technical expertise of Prof. C.R. Babu for eradication of *P. juliflora*, the Board agreed "in principle" to the proposal and tentative expenditure to be borne from RMB fund for restoration of Central Ridge area. However, the Board clarified that the codal formalities in regard to due examination of estimates and following financial rules and procedures for award of work be strictly adhered to by the Department. A six monthly report of progress may be submitted to the RMB.

### **4. Construction of Bird Rescue Centre at Rajokri**

In consonance with the minutes of the Ridge Management Board meeting held on 03.08.2017, it was informed that an expert from Bombay Natural History Society, Dr. Vibhu Prakash, Dy. Director, BNHS, Vulture Conservation Centre, Pinjore, Haryana had visited the site and given his expert opinion on site selection and type of proposed structures. The Board noted the suggestion of utilizing the existing un-

used monkey shelter spread over 0.79 acres for the Bird Rescue Centre at Rajokri with an additional adjoining area of about 0.45 acre to accommodate the proposed aviaries.

The Member Secretary informed the Board that the total area for wild bird rescue centre at Rajokari would thus be restricted to 1.24 acres and the total number of trees required to be felled would be restricted to 159. However, efforts will be made to save maximum number of trees during construction and environment friendly building materials like Bamboo, wooden logs and thatch would be used for the construction of Bird Rescue Centre so as to merge with the background. 2000 saplings of fruit species will be planted around the proposed site in forest land.

The Board agreed to the proposal for construction of Bird Rescue Centre at the existing un-used monkey shelter at Rajokri and decided to recommend the same to Central Empowered Committee for consideration of Hon'ble Supreme Court. After getting approval of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, PWD/ I&FCD may be asked to prepare design and estimates accordingly in consultation with BNHS.

The Board further directed that BNHS being an expert agency on wild birds and having veterinarian doctors and staff, may be consulted during design and construction phase but relevant formalities in regard to due examination of estimates and following of codal formalities as per financial rules be strictly adhered to by the Department and approval of the competent authority for association of BNHS for running the wild birds rescue centre on mutually agreed terms and conditions be obtained by the Department.

## **5. Departmental Agenda**

The work plan submitted by the Department for an amount of 4.8 Crores for protection, management and rejuvenation of ridge and allied activities was discussed. The Board observed that instead of a standalone plan for hiring of security guards, the Department may prepare and put up a comprehensive plan for protection of Ridge areas which also includes use of technological advancements.

As regards procurement of 4 vehicles, the Board was informed that the RMB in its meeting held on 06.06.2016 had approved purchase of 04 vehicles and engagement of drivers for constitution of mobile squads for patrolling in ridge and other forest areas. However, the vehicles could not be purchased at that time and the Board was requested to ratify the purchase at the revised cost of Rs. 50 lacs. On enquiry by the Board as to why the vehicles were not purchased when they had been approved by RMB in June, 2016, it was clarified that due to increasing pollution levels the Hon'ble NGT had put a ban on registration of new diesel vehicles

above 2000 cc in Delhi and so the vehicles like Scorpio which are above 2000 cc could not be purchased at that time. The ban has been lifted by NGT since then.

The Board members enquired as to the finances available in RMB fund. The member secretary informed the Board that an amount of 169 crores was lying in RMB fund as receipts while there was expenditure of only 1.13 crores.

The Board agreed for hiring 4 field vehicles for mobile squads instead of purchasing 4 vehicles and engaging 4 drivers. Similarly, the Board agreed for purchase of 10 motorcycles instead of proposed 25 numbers of motor cycles for patrolling and protection of ridge. The other works like soil & moisture conservation works in the ridge, purchase of mini tractors, setting up of GIS lab with installation of porta cabin in West Division office and hiring of technical manpower as proposed were approved by the Board.

Thus the Board approved the work plan of Department with above mentioned modifications.

**6. Development of alternative site for Gas Godown near MTNL office, Motia Khan, New Delhi (UA: DDA)**

During the last meeting of RMB, the Board had discussed the proposal for development of alternative site for gas godown near MTNL office Idgah, Motia Khan over an area of 1515 sqm falling in morphological ridge which also involved felling of 41 nos. of trees.

The Board noted that DDA has since submitted a detailed note informing that the green area next to the existing gas godown had already been upgraded and the landscape plan of the area had been appended with the said note.

Since the existing godowns behind Jhandewalan Mandir had to be shifted away from densely populated area to the available vacant site whose land use was Public – Semi-Public (PSP) as per master plan, the Board recommended that the proposal for shifting of existing gas godowns to the identified area of 1515 sqm at Motia Khan near MTNL office inside the Morphological Ridge area may be forwarded to CEC for soliciting approval of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

**7. Construction of CC road upto Gurudwara Nanaksar by Nanaksar Satsang Sabha (UA: Nanaksar Satsang Sabha)**

The Member Secretary informed the Board that the Hon'ble Supreme Court in IA No. 18 WP(C) 4677/1985 'M.C. Mehta Vs. Union of India & Ors' had mentioned "So far as Gurudwara Nanaksar is concerned, it is stated that 1.5 acre land was allotted to the Gurudwara in 1971 by the Land and Development Officer, Govt. of India on Poorvi marg, Old Rajinder nagar, New Delhi. It is stated that all the space allotted

has been utilized and there is no space which can be retrieved from the possession of the Gurudwara. We accept the report.” Therefore, Nanaksar Gurudwara is part of Central Ridge and the Bhawan is constructed in an area of 1.5 acres.

The authorities of Nanaksar Satsang Sabha informed that the approach road to Bhawan having a width of 45 ft. which was earlier broken at the centre with the provision of kutcha pathway on either side was proposed to be constructed as Cement Concrete.

The Member Secretary informed that a notice had been served to Nanaksar Satsang Sabha for violation of Section 26 (d)g(h) of Indian Forest Act, 1927 for illegal construction of CC approach road in ridge forest area. The report and findings of the DCF (S) were placed before the Board as per which the area occupied physically on ground by Satsang Sabha is exceeding the allotted area.

After detailed discussion the following decisions were taken.

- (i) The area of 1.5 acres is allotted to Nanaksar Gurudwara by L&DO, Ministry of Urban Development, Govt. of India in the year 1971 under the usage category public and semi public facilities (religious) over which the Gurudwara is presently situated over which there is no dispute.
- (ii) The garden area of 0.67 acres, over which Nanaksar Satsang Sabha do not claim any ownership may be taken over by the Department and maintained properly.
- (iii) The area of 0.71 acres outside periphery encircling the entire Gurudwara is vacant and not being used. It has been concretized to avoid stagnation of run-off water. This area will not be used by Nanaksar Satsang Sabha for any other purpose.
- (iv) The Forest Department will write to L&DO to give details of land allotted to Nanaksar Satsang Sabha including the parking area and demarcate the area on ground. Till then status quo will be maintained.
- (v) The area of 0.22 acres of existing black top approach road may be allowed to be converted into CC approach road in the same area by the Nanaksar Satsang Sabha as cement concrete road is environmentally better than coal tar road.

#### **8. Construction of new buildings for up gradation of IIMC to international standards (UA: IIMC)**

The proposal of Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), New JNU Campus seeking NOC for construction of new buildings for up-gradation of IIMC to International Standards was discussed by the Board.

The Member Secretary informed that the proposed site for construction of IIMC is a part of JNU campus which falls within Morphological Ridge. He further informed that Chairman, CEC during his inspection of JNU campus on 20.4.2016 had directed the Environment Task Force of JNU to finalize the boundary demarcation of proposed green cover of 369 acres inside JNU campus and submit the same to the department for notification as Protected Forest.

After detailed discussion the Board observed that JNU had an overall campus of 1069 acres out of which IIMC had been allotted a mere 16.2 acres for construction of new buildings and up-gradation of existing IIMC to International Standards. The Board decided to recommend the proposal for construction of new buildings in the 16.2 acres allotted to IIMC inside JNU campus falling in morphological ridge area for up-gradation of existing IIMC to CEC while also informing of the embargo on construction and time line prescribed by CEC. However, the IIMC shall demarcate the 16.2 acres of land allotted to them by JNU and submit a map of the proposed construction area along with an undertaking that 40% of the 16.2 acres allotted to them shall be kept green at all times.

**9. Construction of CBI staff quarters in Maidangarhi by NBCC (UA: CBI, NBCC)**

The Board discussed the proposal for construction of staff quarters (Type II, III, IV and V along with NGO mess, basement parking and community centre) by Central Bureau of Investigation at Maidangarhi over an area of 3.1 Ha. The Board noted that the project required felling of 9 trees and although the proposed area for construction did not fall in Southern Ridge area but a portion of 5042.8 sqm was part of Morphological ridge area which the project proponents were ready to exclude from construction activities.

The Board noted that the proposal had already been accorded Environmental Clearance while the clearance from National Board of Wildlife for use of land falling in Eco-sensitive zone was under process. The Board decided to recommend and forward the proposal to CEC with the condition that 5% of the project cost shall be paid by user agency to RMB for undertaking protection and maintenance of ridge.

**10. Construction of toilet block in Mehrauli Archaeological Park by DDA (UA: DDA)**

A proposal had been received from Delhi Development Authority for construction of a toilet block (5m x 6m) in Mehrauli Archaeological Park over an area of 30 sqm. As per map received from GSDL, the proposed area falls in Morphological Ridge but no tree felling is involved

The Board directed the member secretary to put up a detailed proposal with the exact location of area for consideration in the next RMB meeting.

**11. Installation of distribution transformers in critical area/locations in Delhi by BSES (UA: BSES Rajdhani)**

A proposal for installation of eight (08) distribution transformers in critical areas/ locations had been received from BSES Rajdhani Power Limited. Since the proposal was neither clear nor exact area for which clearance was being sought was mentioned so the Board directed the member secretary to put up a detailed proposal in the next RMB meeting.

**12. Laying of Optical Fiber cable through Central Ridge by Ministry of Defence (Navy) (UA: Ministry of Defence)**

The proposal for grant of ROW permission to lay optical fibre cable (OFC) by Ministry of Defence (Navy) was discussed. The proposal is for laying of OFC for a length of 2500 m through the Central Ridge Reserve Forest along the boundary on the inside. A trench of dimension 2500 m X 0.3 m X 1.65 m (L x W x D) will be dug and the optical fibre will be laid.

Since the proposal is of strategic defence importance and does not involve any tree felling, the Board decided to recommend the proposal to CEC for obtaining approval of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and clearance under FCA, 1980 subject to following conditions:

- (i) The Ministry of Defense (Navy) will dig up the trench for laying of optical fibre along the boundary wall and no other alignment will be taken even if it involves extra length.
- (ii) The work will be done under close supervision of Forest Department and trees falling in the alignment will not be harmed by taking a detour, if required.
- (iii) The dug up trench will be refilled up and closed at the earliest and the entire work of laying of optical fibre including area restoration and man and material removal will be completed within 4 weeks.
- (iv) The work would be video recorded to establish that no trees were damaged during the laying of optical fibre and a copy of which would be submitted to the forest department after completion of the work for their record.

**13. Laying of water pipelines in colonies of Sangam Vihar and Aya Nagar (Delhi Jal Board).**

The member Secretary informed that during a recent meeting with the officials of DJB, they have stated that the laying of water pipelines in UCs would be so aligned so as to avoid entry into or working in any of the notified khasra or inside the boundary of the Ridge/Morphological Ridge. Since DJB has decided that they will lay



pipelines in the areas outside Ridge/ Morphological Ridge and no forest area will be involved so the agenda/ proposal is dropped.

**14. Conversion of O/H line with U/G XLPE cable from Bhoop Singh Colony Mor, Rajpur Khurd village and colony to Maidangarhi village, S/Stn, New Delhi (UA: BSES Rajdhani)**

The proposal of BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd. regarding conversion of O/H line with U/G XLPE cable from Bhoop Singh Colony Mor, Rajpur Khurd Village and colony to Maidan Garhi village S/Stn was discussed. The User Agency, informed that the proposal did not involve any construction work but digging of a trench of 45 cm x 1 m was required for laying of underground cable and after which the trench would be filled up again with excavated soil.

Since the alignment and extent of forest notified land/ morphological ridge required to be used could not be clarified so the matter was deferred and member secretary was asked to put up a complete proposal in the next RMB meeting for decision

**15. Installation of six tube wells in Sanjay Nagar Colony (UA: Delhi Jal Board)**

To improve the status of water supply in Sanjay Nagar Colony with a population of about 50,000 a proposal had been submitted by Delhi Jal Board seeking permission for installation of six (06) tube wells. The member Secretary informed that Sanjay Colony had been identified as an illegal encroachment in Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary and as per direction of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP(C) 4677/1985 the residents of the colony were required to be shifted.

The Board observed that only recently the Courts had adversely remarked that the water table of Delhi had declined due to indiscriminate bore wells. Since Sanjay colony was to be shifted, installation of tube wells cannot be allowed without express instructions of Hon;ble Supreme Court. The matter was dropped.

**16. Construction in Govt. Co-ed Senior Secondary School, Sanjay Colony Bhatti Mines (UA: DUSIB, Dt. Of Education)**

A request had been received from Directorate of Education regarding permission for construction/ repair works to be carried out in Government Co-ed Senior Secondary School, Sanjay Colony, Bhatti Sanctuary. The school is located on Khasra No. 1910 of Bhatti area and is notified as Sanctuary area. Sanjay Colony has been identified as an illegal encroachment on the land notified as Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary vide notification dated 15.04.1991. As per direction of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP(C) 4677/1985 residents of the colony are to be shifted to outside of the sanctuary.

The representative from PWD informed that the porta cabins presently being used in Govt. Co-ed Senior Secondary School, Sanjay Colony Bhatti area were in bad shape and there was a constant danger to the life of children studying there. The Member Secretary stated that the school is located on Khasra No. 1910 of Bhatti which is notified as Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary.

Neither the Education Department nor PWD came up with a complete proposal for renovation of already existing porta cabins and requirement of additional area, if any, so the proposal was deferred.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.

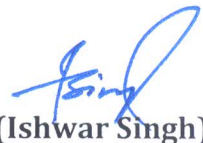
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**(Ishwar Singh)**  
**Addl. PCCF & Chief Wildlife Warden**  
**Member**  
**Ridge Management Board**

**Distribution:**

1. All RMB members.
2. All representatives of User agencies as per list of participants.
3. Member Secretary, Central Empowered Committee for kind information.



**(Ishwar Singh)**  
**Addl. PCCF & Chief Wildlife Warden**  
**Member**  
**Ridge Management Board**