

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RIDGE MANAGEMENT BOARD HELD ON
18TH NOVEMBER, 2015 1800 HRS UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF
SHRI K.K. SHARMA, CHIEF SECRETARY AND CHAIRMAN, RMB.**

The following attended the meeting:

1.	Shri K. K. Sharma, Chief Secretary	Chairman
2.	Shri Ashwani Kumar, Secretary (E&F)	Member
3.	Shri Ravi Singh, Secretary General & CEO, WWF India	Member
4.	Rear Admiral Sanjeev Kale, DG, WESEE	Representative, WESEE
5.	Shri J. Muku, Consultant, WESEE	Representative, WESEE,
6.	CMDE S. K. Pujari, WESEE	Representative, WESEE,
7.	Capt. Jhumish Anand, WESEE	Representative, WESEE,
8.	M. K. Jain, Dy Dir, WESEE	Representative, WESEE,
9.	Prof. Bhupinder Zutshi, Registrar, JNU	Representative – JNU,
10.	Ms. Sushree Mathur, Architect	Representative – JNU,
11.	Shri B. S. Sehrawat, AGM, RITES	Representative – JNU,
12.	Shri Pradeep Kumar, SE, JNU	Representative – JNU,
13.	Shri Anbarasu, Div. Comm & Secretary, Revenue	Representative – Revenue
14.	Shri Sanjay Kumar, DC, New Delhi	Representative – Revenue (Dist.)
15.	Ms. Niharika Rai, DM, South	Representative – Revenue (Dist.)
16.	Shri R. S. Tyagi, Member, DJB	Representative, DJB
17.	Shri Y. D. Sharma, Dy Dir (Hort) DDA	Representative, DDA
18.	Dr S. S. Dagar, Dir (Hort), DDA	Representative, DDA
19.	Shri Amit Das, Addl. Dir (Plg), DDA	Representative, DDA
20.	Shri J. P. Parat, Dir (Plg) DDA	Representative, DDA
21.	Ms. Poonam A. Dewan, Dir (Landscape), DDA	Representative, DDA
22.	Shri Chandu Bhutia, Dir (Plg)	Representative, DDA
23.	Shri S. K. Jaiswal, Director, MHA	Representative, MHA
24.	Shri M. S. N. Swamy, Jt. Dir, DCPW, MHA	Representative, MHA
25.	Shri T. B. J. S. Rajappa, Jt. Dir, DCPW, MHA	Representative, MHA
26.	Shri Naresh Kumar, Dy Dir, DCPW, MHA	Representative, MHA
27.	A. K. Shukla, CCF & CWLW	Member
28.	Shri Tarun Coomar, APCCF	Member Secretary

The meeting began with discussions on the proposals for developmental projects requiring clearance of authorities and seeking recommendation of the board.

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Ms. Sunita Narain, Member, RMB, sought leave of absence due to preoccupation outside Delhi. Smt. Sunita Narain, member RMB has submitted a note giving certain suggestions.

Agenda 1: Restoration of Forest Land.

The Board noted the decisions taken in the meeting taken by CS in pursuance of the direction of the of the High Court in WP(C) 1346/2015 – Court on its own motion – Air Pollution in Delhi in Hon'ble High Court of Delhi. Further, Board was also apprised that at the instance of the Hon'ble Court, Pr. Secretary PWD, GNCTD has been appointed nodal officer for Action Plan to ensure that no further encroachment occurs in Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary and Jt. Secretary, MoEF&CC is to Coordinate with Pr. Secy. PWD to ensure that the Central Ridge is free from encroachment.

The Board also noted the developments in OA No. 58/2013 wherein Hon'ble NGT has directed for restoration of Ridge forest land and directed Forest Settlement Officers (FSO) for early settlement of rights and claims for final notification of Ridge Forests under Sec. 20, Indian Forest Act, 1927 (IFA 1927).

Divisional Commissioner & Secy. Revenue assured the Board that scrutiny/matching of digitized maps of Southern Ridge Area given by Forest Department was underway and findings will be made available soon.

Agenda 2: Grant of clearance for construction of office building of weapons and electronics Systems Engineering Establishment (WESEE) Ministry of Defence, Govt. of India at Survey No. 183, Brar Square.

A presentation was made by officers of WESEE, an organization providing electronic systems support under the aegis of Indian Navy. An independent headquarters office has been proposed to be constructed in an area of 3.656 acres at Brar Square Defense Estate allocated by Defense Estate Officer. Though the proposed building is claimed to be of green standards, significant portion of the location falls on the Central Ridge RF.

In light of the directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP(C) 4677/1985 regarding preservation of the Ridge, the Board decided that WESEE should re-examine their proposal afresh to realign their building or relocate the site of the building, outside the Ridge RF.

Agenda 3: Construction of a new Hostel (Shipra – II) at JNU Campus, New Delhi.

J.N.U. has proposed to construct a new hostel (Shipra II)/NE Hostel in 16195 sqm land in its campus. A presentation was made by the Architect Ms Sushree Mathur, of JNU project.

The Board was apprised by project proponent of the dire need to provide students with accommodation, JNU being a residential university. It was noted that the project of hostel is not isolated but some other constructions of infrastructure expansion in JNU are also linked. The other projects are:

1. Academic Building
2. Extension of Advanced Instrumentation Research Facilities Building.

Project proponent and DDA representative referred to the Notification of 1994 which specified boundaries, interalia of South, Western, Central Ridge. They stated that the project area is west of the Aruna Asaf Ali Road, which is present day JNU Road that defines western boundaries of the ridge. Project Proponent also clarified that project area is their land and other project in the past did not face any regulatory hurdle from forest point of view. It emphasized that JNU is a prestigious university and they badly need hostels etc. which cannot be located away from campus.

DDA representatives clarified that project area has never been under its management as regional park, etc. They also pointed out that Forest Department should not ask them to certify to confirm boundary of the ridge because the 1994 Notification defining ridge boundary was issued by the Forest Department Development Department (here itself).

Member, Shri Ravi Singh observed that the proposed construction sites, apart from the features of ridge, also have mature Khejri trees. He suggested the JNU administration to minimize felling of trees particularly Khejri trees (*Prosopis cineraria*). He further suggested

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transplantation of the trees. DDA representatives were having serious doubt about the success of tree plantation in view of difficult terrain / soil conditions, a part from being a costly affair.

The JNU campus is presently bounded by Aruna Asaf Ali Marg on the east and Nelson Mandela Road on the west. As per the minutes of the meeting dated 02.11.1988 of state names authority, the present day Nelson Mandela Road refers to road no. 17. The notification for the ridge was issued in 1994 and defines the western boundary as JNU Road. As such, the JNU Road can not be the Nelson Mandela Road. If Nelson Mandela Road were meant to be the western boundary of the ridge, Nelson Mandela Road should have been used to define the western boundary of the ridge rather than JNU Road because named Nelson Mandela Road came into being in 1988 as per the minutes of the state names authority mentioned above.

In view of above, the project site is noted to be falling outside the ridge. However Forest Department has reported that the project site is rocky and has morphological features and because of which the board deems it fit to refer the case to Central Empowered Committee for clearance.

The JNU is a prominent educational institution established under an act of Parliament and is catering the needs of the students of all over the country. The project in question is meant to provide, inter alia, residential facility to students hailing from the North-East region of the country. Such projects deserve to be considered for the implementation / execution for the sake of nation development. The facility like hostel cannot be located far away from the campus.

In view of above, the board recommends approval of the project and refers it to the Central Empowered Committee for clearance. Project proponent shall economize the cutting of trees under the supervision of the Forest Department and try to make a serious attempt to transplant the trees. If transplantation is not viable, compensatory afforestation as per policy shall be carried out.

Agenda No.4: Proposal for construction of 15 rain shelters at Buddha Jayanti Park.

(Central Ridge)

Buddha Jayanti park is a park built around the commemorative plantation by Late Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1964, of a Bodhi Tree (brought from Shri Lanka) . It covers a significant area (about 35 ha) of the 86 ha area of the Central Ridge Reserved Forest, and is maintained by CPWD.

The CPWD has originally proposed to put up 15 rain shelters in a tree less patch of a path in the work but now it has been pruned to 5 shelters, to meet the demands of morning walkers and other visitors of the park. Proposed structures are circular concrete side open huts with sloping roofs.

The suggestions of Member Shri Ravi Singh, the Board that this should not spur proposals for more construction in the park by the project proponent was taken note of.

The Board decided to recommend the case for clearance to CEC and approval of Hon'ble Supreme Court. Board also decided that the CCF (WL) may keep a watch on the construction so that it remains ridge friendly.

Agenda No. 5: Construction of Boundary wall around the land of DCPW, MHA at Central Ridge Reserved forest.

The Directorate of Coordination Police Wireless (DCPW), Ministry of Home Affairs runs a facility for Central Police Radio Training Institute (CPRTI) with its ancillary infrastructure (residential and non-residential). The organization had begun construction of a boundary wall with concertina topping around their 16.8 acres land located in the Central Ridge Reserved Forest, without authorization. Board also noted that the organization have damaged more than 70 trees.

The DCPW representatives submitted that the safety and security of the inmates, the CPRTI both residential and non-residential, and or sensitive documents/records will be compromised if boundary wall is not allowed.

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In the PIL WP(C) No. 4677 of 1985 M.C. Mehta V/s UoI & Ors, a series of directions have been issued by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. Relevant to the matter under consideration are some directions and submissions in the case, extracts are reproduced: -

1. *Record of proceedings dated 03.01.1996.*

"We direct the Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India through Home Secretary, GOI to relocate the three Govt. Agencies which are operating in the ridge area. A responsible officer of the Ministry of Home shall file an affidavit within two weeks of the receipt of this order indicating the time schedule within which these three agencies which are operating in the Ridge area can be relocated."

2. *Record of proceedings – dated 26.7.1996.*

"Mr. Bhaskar Khulbe, Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs has filed an affidavit. It is stated in the affidavit that some of the security forces have already been removed from the ridge area. He further states that alternate accommodation is being prepared and totality of the ridge area shall be vacated by the security forces by September 15, 1996. We accept the undertaking given by Mr. Khulbe. The Ridge Management Board shall take over the formal charge of the area. We expect the GoI to clear the debris etc. from the place vacated by the security forces."

During the meeting, however, representatives of MoHA Shri S. K. Jaiswal, Director and Shri M. S. N. Swamy, Jt Director informed that commitment before the Hon'ble SC organization falls outside the purview of the "organizations" under MHA that were required to be relocated outside the Central Ridge Reserved Forest.

During the meeting, however, representatives of MoHA Shri S.K. Jaiswal, Director and Shri M.S.N. Swamy, Jt. Director informed that commitment before the organization falls outside the purview of "organization" under MHA that were required outside the Central Reserve Force Security forces" as Mr. Bhasker Khulbe, DS, MoHA has committed in this affidavit in Hon'ble Supreme Court of India , that would be relocated outside the Ridge.

Representative of MoHA during the meeting, submitted that CPTRI falls outside the purview of "Security forces" mentioned in the affidavit of Mr. Bhasker Khulbe, DS, MoHA Hon'ble SC. Commitment in the affidavit relating to security forces has been fulfilled by relocating them.

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Chief Wildlife Warden pointed out that boundary wall as proposed will pose an impediment to movement of wildlife. Member, Shri Ravi Singh submitted that the board should give due importance to national security. Chairman suggested that the project proponent may consider cordoning only that part of the institution which deserves to be provided security and where sensitive information are stored and personnel are housed. Such area may be considerably smaller than the huge 16.8 acres proposed to be cordoned off. Rest of the area can be left open or fenced in a manner rendering it negotiable by local wildlife.

The Board advised the proponent to come back after addressing the issues arising out of the records. Which doing so the project proponent must reconfirm from its record that it is not in violation of the orders/directions in M.C. Mehta case in Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

Other Agenda items:

It was decided that the remaining agenda will be taken up in a subsequent meeting.

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

GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI
DEPARTMENT OF FORESTS & WILDLIFE
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No. F.11(26)/PA/DCF/95/Vol.X/ 1836-55

Dated: 4-3-16

A.K.
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(A.K.Shukla)

Chief Conservator of Forests &
Member, RMB

Copy to:

1. Chief Secretary, A-Wing, 5th Floor, Delhi Secretariat, New Delhi-110002.
2. Member Secretary, Central Empowered Committee, II Floor, Chanakya Bhawan, Chanakyapuri New Delhi-110021.
3. Secretary (E & F), C Wing, 6th Level, Delhi Secretariat, New Delhi-110002
4. VC, DDA and Member RMB, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi-110023
5. The Pr. Secretary (Finance), Govt. of Delhi, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, 4th Level, A-Wing, Delhi Secretariat, IP Estate, New Delhi.

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6. Addl. PCCF, Member Secretary RMB, Department of Forests and Wildlife, A-Block, 2nd floor, I.P.Estate.
 7. Secretary (PWD), Govt. of Delhi, I.P.Estate, Delhi Secretariat, New Delhi
 8. Secretary (Planning), B-Wing, 6th Floor, Delhi Secretariat, IP Estate, New Delhi.
 9. Pr. Commissioner (Land), DDA Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi-110023
 10. Div. Commissioner and Secretary Revenue, 5 Sham Nath Marg, New Delhi-110054
 11. District Magistrate, South District Mehrauli Badarpur Road, Saket, New Delhi-110039
 12. District Magistrate, New Delhi District, Jam Nagar House, New Delhi-110001
 13. District Magistrate, South East District, Old Gargi College Building, Lajpat Nagar-IV, New Delhi-110024
 14. Commodore S.K. Pujari, Addl. Director General, WESEE, Ministry of Defence, West Block-5, R.K.Puram, New Delhi.
 15. Prof. Bhupinder Zutshi, Registrar, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Mehrauli Road, Near Munirka, New Delhi-110067
 16. Sh. S.K. Jaiswal, Director, Ministry of Home Affairs, North Block, Central Secretariat, New Delhi-110001
 17. The Chief Engineer, CPWD, (HQ) II, Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi-110011
 18. The Executive Engineer, F-Division, CPWD, Room No.558, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi-110001.
 19. Ms. Sunita Narain, Director, Centre for Science and Environment & Member RMB, 41 Tughlakabad Institutional area, New Delhi-110062
 20. Mr. Ravi Singh, CEO, WWF-India and Member RMB, 172-B, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi-110003



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