

(PARIVESH 1.0)

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Advisory Committee (AC) meeting held on
10.06.2026**

Agenda No. 15

Subject: Proposal for seeking approval of the Central Government under Van (Sanrakshan evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 8.0357 ha. forest area for proposed 3rd railway line between Jujharpur (Km.750+000) and Dodharamohor (Km.792+650) section in Favour of Central Railway CST Mumbai in the State of Madhya Pradesh (File No. 6-MPR027/2023-BHO (E-217728))- reg.

1. The above stated agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 10.06.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The Dy. DGF (Central), RO, Bhopal and Nodal Officer, Government of Madhya Pradesh were present in the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained to the AC. The Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
 - i. The Govt. of Madhya Pradesh vide their letter No AF 5/1211/2022/10-11/2407 dated 08.06.2023 forwarded a fresh proposal to obtain prior approval of the Central Government, in terms of the Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 to the Regional Office Bhopal for diversion of 8.0357 Ha Forest area for proposed 3rd railway line between Jujharpur (Km.750+000) and Dodharamohor (Km.792+650) section in favour of Central Railway CST Mumbai in the State of Madhya Pradesh.
 - ii. The Itarsi-Nagpur broad gauge double line is a key segment of the high-density Rajdhani corridor connecting New Delhi with Chennai, Secunderabad, Bengaluru, and Thiruvananthapuram. The section passes through Narmadapuram (Hoshangabad), Chhindwara, and Betul districts of Madhya Pradesh and Nagpur district of Maharashtra. It is a fully electrified (25 kV AC) double-line route carrying heavy passenger and freight traffic between North and South India. As the section is operating at saturated capacity, additional Mail/Express and freight trains cause congestion and delays. To enhance carrying capacity, the Government of India has approved construction of a third line between Jujharpur (Km 750+000) and Dodharamohar (Km 792+650), to be implemented by Central Railway, Nagpur Division.
 - iii. The instant proposal pertains to the construction of a 3rd railway line, whereas two railway lines have already been established. The vegetation is represented by a diverse assemblage of native tree.

- iv. The proposal involves the diversion of the 8.0357 ha of forest land having the canopy density of the 0.6 of Eco Class III. The number of trees proposed to be felled in the instant proposal is 2601.
- v. The State Govt. reported that the instant railway line project will impact the Satpura Melghat Tiger Corridor. Compartment number P-129 of Itarsi Range and P-44, P-46 are coming directly under the corridor, whereas Compartment number P-131, P136 of Itarsi Range around the Corridor.
- vi. Further, the RO Bhopal, has reported the *Panthera tigris*, *Panthera pardus*, *Bos gaurus*, *Rusa unicolor*, *Axis axis*, *Melursus ursinus*, *Cuon alpinus*, *Hyaena Sus scrofa*, *Macaca mulatta* etc. in and around the land proposed for diversion.
- vii. The Central Railways vide its letter dated 30.07.2025 submitted that the area proposed for NBWL clearance for critical zone is total 287.64 hect. with breakup as 132.7 hect. for Tiger corridor no 1, 47.56 hect for Eco-Sensitive zone and 102.81 hect for Tiger corridor no 2 which is affecting the critical zone length of 9.76 km, 2.79 km and 4.792 km respectively along the 3rd and 4th line project. The Diversion of Forest land is proposed under 03 Nos of different proposals as 1st proposal for 8.0357 hect., 2nd proposal for 3.6122 hect and 3rd proposal for 21.3983 hect Forest area.
- viii. In this matter, it is explained that the issue of need for Wildlife Clearance arose when 1st proposal scrutinized at Govt. of India Bhopal, but meanwhile Railway has applied 02 new proposals for the same 3rd Railway line project between Jujharpur, (Km 751.1) to Chichonda (Km 911.7) section of length 168.6 km. As two tiger corridors and one Eco-Sensitive Zone are falling within this section covering total length of 9.767km, 2.79km and 4.792km respectively and this total length of critical zone 17.35km is passing through the Railways ROW which is worked out as 287.64 ha.
- ix. As the 3rd and 4th line project is linear & continues and bifurcating the above mentioned critical zone of STR and MTR the Wildlife Clearance is mandatory for entire length of project that in 168.6km. Hence, in the light of above fact, in spite of going for Wildlife Clearance for each diversion proposal separately the total area for NBWL is proposed as 287.64 ha jointly for all the three diversion proposals.
- x. The State Government submitted that the user agency has filed an online application for wildlife clearance vide Proposal No. WL/MP/RAIL/468116/2024, which is presently under consideration by the Government of India. Further DFO, vide letter dated 01.04.2026, reported that the User Agency submitted that the related wildlife clearance proposal (Proposal No. WL/MP/RAIL/468116/2024) was considered by the Standing Committee of NBWL in its meeting held on 19.01.2026.
- xi. Thereafter, the Committee decided to constitute a Site Inspection Committee comprising representatives of the Ministry, Wildlife Institute of India (WII), National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), State Forest Department, and the User Agency, and deferred the proposal pending site appraisal. Subsequently, a

joint site inspection was conducted on 15.03.2026, and the inspection report was received on 20.03.2026. The User Agency further informed that necessary modifications to the proposed wildlife overpass would be undertaken in compliance with the recommendations of the inspection committee and based on the study conducted by SFRI.

- xii. The State Govt. reported that on the eastern side of the railway bridge, construction was found within 4 meters inside the forest boundary at the beginning of the approach road, and on the western side, construction was found within 6.4 meters inside the forest boundary at the beginning of the approach road. It was found that all construction work on the down track side was carried out within the ROW, whereas on the up-track side, construction was carried out unauthorized on forest land measuring 3 meters in width and 122 meters in length. Accordingly, a total of 0.0366 ha of forest land was used for construction by the Railway Department in violation of the VSESA, 1980.
- xiii. The State Government submitted that a report on the violation of the area of 0.0366 ha under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 had been forwarded by the Chief Conservator of Forests, Betul, vide letter No. 1745 dated 18.12.2025 to the State Govt. However, the detailed Action Taken Report is awaited from State Govt.

xiv. The land use for the instant proposal is as under:

Sl. No.	Component	Forest Land (Ha)	Non Forest Land (Ha)
1.	Railway Line	8.0357	11.1926

- xv. Against the 8.0357 ha of forest land proposed for diversion, the State Govt. has identified the 20 ha of Degraded forest land and out of which 16.0714 ha has been recommended for the CA purpose by the State Government.
- xvi. The Regional Office has recommended the proposal with the following observations:
1. Analysis of Google Earth imagery reveals that subway construction commenced in late 2021, prior to obtaining statutory clearance and no effective preventative action was taken by the Forest Department while the application was under consideration.
 2. The Railway Department, through the Executive Engineer (Construction), Betul, submitted a 1986 Right of Way (ROW) map for examination. However, no authenticated documents were provided to justify the subway construction during the inspection and the proposal submitted under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, failed to include the ROW in the attached KML file; only the applied-for area was demarcated.
 3. The old railway line, tracks, and subway span a width of 58 meters. The approach roads and the old bridge measure 57.9 meters in width. In addition, a construction on the eastern side extends 4 meters into the forest boundary; on the western side, it extends 6.4 meters. While construction on the "down track" side remained within the ROW, unauthorized construction occurred on

the "up track" side, covering a strip of forest land 3 meters wide and 122 meters long.

4. It is confirmed that the Railway Department has utilized 0.0366 ha of forest land without prior approval of the Central Government, in violation of the provisions of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. Accordingly, it is recommended that the User Agency shall either provide equivalent non-forest land under the control of the Forest Department or, in its absence, deposit an amount equal to two (2) times the Net Present Value (NPV) of the forest land so used. In addition, the User Agency shall bear the full cost of compensatory afforestation, including maintenance for a period of ten (10) years, as per an approved site-specific scheme. The non-forest land provided shall be duly transferred and mutated in favour of the State Forest Department or notified as forest land, prior to grant of Final (Stage-II) approval under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 and relevant guidelines
 - xvii. The State Govt. submitted that the Divisional Forest Officer, Narmadapuram, vide letter dated 01.04.2025, reported that while the User Agency had submitted railway maps, no documentary evidence regarding ownership of the railway land had been provided. The DFO further stated that the User Agency had uploaded KML files of disjointed and non-contiguous areas on the PARIVESH portal. Subsequently, the Divisional Forest Officer, North Betul, vide letter dated 22.05.2026, also reported that the User Agency had not furnished any documentary evidence establishing ownership of the railway land to the Forest Division Office.
 - xviii. Further, as per the DSS analysis, the area proposed for diversion is 8.038 ha and non forest land involved in the proposal is 4.761 ha. instead of 11.1916 ha. Also, the User Agency has not submitted the documentary evidences regarding ownership of the railway land.
 - xix. The State Govt. submitted that the User Agency, in its letter dated 14.08.2023, stated that Track No. 1 (Up Main Line) between Nagpur and Itarsi was constructed in 1919, while Track No. 2 (Down Main Line) was constructed in 1986. The User Agency further submitted that both railway lines were constructed within the existing Railway-owned land/right of way (ROW). However, the DFO observed that the User Agency has not furnished any information or documentary evidence regarding the prior approval obtained under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, for the construction of the second railway line (Down Main Line) in 1986.
 - xx. The State Govt. submitted that the No Objection Certificates (NoCs) for the intersecting locations were obtained from NHAI vide letter dated 23.10.2023. However, it was stated that information regarding any prior approvals granted by the Ministry to NHAI is not available with the Railways. Further, the DFO reported that the PCCF (Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden, Madhya Pradesh, vide letter dated 17.11.2025, had accorded in-principle wildlife clearance for diversion of 101.47 ha of forest land in connection with the four-laning of NH-46 (formerly NH-69) within the Satpura–Melghat Tiger Corridor.
 - xxi. The Committee observed that the Railway Department, through the Executive Engineer (Construction), Betul, submitted a 1986 Right of Way (ROW) map for examination to the Regional Office and State Government. However, no authenticated documents were provided to

- justify the subway construction during the inspection and the proposal submitted under the Adhinyam, 1980, failed to include the ROW in the attached KML file; only the applied-for area was demarcated.
- xxii. The Committee observed that the User Agency has uploaded KML files of disjointed and non-contiguous areas on the PARIVESH portal. Subsequently, the Divisional Forest Officer, North Betul, vide letter dated 22.05.2026, also reported that the User Agency had not furnished any documentary evidence establishing ownership of the railway land to the Forest Division Office. In this regard, the Nodal Officer has clarified that the total forest land involved in the proposal has been included. The balance area of the land involved in the proposal is non forest land/under the ownership of the Railways.
- xxiii. The Committee observed that the user agency has filed an online application for wildlife clearance vide Proposal No. WL/MP/RAIL/468116/2024, and was considered by the Standing Committee of NBWL in its meeting held on 19.01.2026. The Committee decided to constitute a Site Inspection Committee comprising representatives of the Ministry, Wildlife Institute of India (WII), National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), State Forest Department, and the User Agency, and deferred the proposal pending site appraisal. Subsequently, a joint site inspection was conducted on 15.03.2026, and the inspection report was received on 20.03.2026. The User Agency further informed that necessary modifications to the proposed wildlife overpass would be undertaken in compliance with the recommendations of the inspection committee and based on the study conducted by SFRI.
- xxiv. The Committee also observed that this Ministry vide O.M. dated 20.02.2026 requested the NTCA to provide the comments in view of the provisions under section 38 (O) (1) (g) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- xxv. The Committee further observed that as per the FC Division's guidelines dated 08.07.2024, the proposals, involving entire forest land located in one or more Protected Areas, would be considered for grant of 'in-principle' approval under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980, only after obtaining the recommendation of the SC-NBWL, permitting use of forest land for non-forestry purpose, has been obtained. Further, the proposal involving forest land located both within and outside the Protected Areas, the 'in-principle' approval can be granted in the portion of land outside the Protected Area provided that the Stage-II in such proposals will be given only after recommendation of SC-NBWL. Further, no working permission after Stage-I will be admissible in such cases to avoid fait accompli situation. Also, the proposals located in ESZ, requiring approvals under the Adhinyam as well as Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, would be processed simultaneously.
- xxvi. The Committee further observed that No Objection Certificates (NoCs) for the intersecting locations were obtained from NHAI vide letter dated 23.10.2023. However, the information regarding any prior approvals granted by the Ministry to NHAI is not available with the Railways.
- xxvii. The Committee further observed that the State Government submitted a report on the violation under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam

Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 has been forwarded by the Chief Conservator of Forests, Betul, vide letter No. 1745 dated 18.12.2025 to the State Govt.

5. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the Dy. DGF (Central), RO, Bhopal and Nodal Officer, Government of Madhya Pradesh. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Madhya Pradesh, the Committee recommended the proposal for '**Stage-1/In-principle**' approval for diversion of 8.0357 ha. forest area for proposed 3rd railway line between Jujharpur (Km.750+000) and Dodharamohor (Km.792+650) section in favour of Central Railway CST Mumbai in the State of Madhya Pradesh with general, standard and the following specific conditions:
- i. The User Agency shall pay the five (5) times penal NPV for the extent of violation done plus 12 percent simple interest from the date of raising of such demand till the deposit is made by the User Agency.
 - ii. Action under section 3A/3B of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 be initiated by Regional Office, Nagpur, as applicable.
 - iii. The Ministry has issued guidelines dated 21.01.2026 prescribing penal compensatory afforestation in cases where forest land has been used in violation of the provisions of the Adhinyam. Accordingly, the State Government shall ensure compliance with the said guidelines and identify land towards penal compensatory afforestation, as applicable, in lieu of forest land used in the violation of the Adhinyam along with supporting documents such as the KML file, Compensatory Afforestation scheme, suitability certificate, etc. The compensatory levies corresponding to the penal CA shall be deposited in the account of the State CAMPA and the same shall be duly intimated to the Ministry.
 - iv. Penal compensatory afforestation, as applicable by the State Government shall be verified by Regional Office, Bhopal and report shall be sent to the Ministry for examination along with CA details during submission of compliance report of Stage- I approval.
 - v. The final approval in the instant proposal shall be granted only after obtaining the requisite approval of the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (SC-NBWL), wherever applicable, and submission of the same to the Ministry for record.
 - vi. No working permission or any authorization for execution of works in the forest land proposed for diversion shall be granted or acted upon in the instant proposal prior to grant of final approval under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980.
 - vii. The State Government shall furnish a certificate, prior to issuance of the final approval, certifying that the entire forest land involved in the project, including all components and associated activities, has been duly included in the instant proposal for consideration under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980, and that no forest land has been left out from the proposal.

Agenda No. 27

Policy Agenda No. 1

File No. FC-11/47/2023-FC

Subject: Incorporation of Right-of-Way (RoW) Requirements as per Central Electricity Authority (Technical Standards for Construction of Electrical Plants and Electric Lines) Amendment Regulations, 2025 in Van (Samrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, and the Van (Samrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023- regarding.

1. The policy agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 10.06.2026. The DDGF (Central) from various Regional Offices and Nodal Officers of the States also attended the meeting.
2. The Member Secretary briefed the Advisory Committee about the issue and development took place in the matter.
3. The Advisory Committee, noted that the Ministry of Power and Central Electricity Authority has requested to incorporate the Right-of Way (RoW) requirements as specified in Central Electricity Authority (Technical Standards for Construction of Electrical Plants and Electric Lines) Amendment Regulations, 2025 in the Consolidated Guidelines of the MoEF&CC. As per the provisions of amended Technical Standards, the RoW in the forest areas has been reduced due to technological intervention.
4. The Committee, after considering the submissions made by the Ministry of Power and CEA, noted the following:
 - i. Schedule VII under Regulation 84(4) of the Central Electricity Authority (Technical Standards for Construction of Electrical Plants and Electric Lines) Regulations, 2022 prescribed RoW requirements for transmission lines using ACSR conductors on lattice structures.
 - ii. Subsequently, CEA examined technological options for reducing RoW requirements, including the use of pole structures and High Temperature Low Sag (HTLS) conductors. Based on stakeholder consultations and industry requests, the revised RoW norms were incorporated through the Central Electricity Authority (Technical Standards for Construction of Electrical Plants and Electric Lines) Amendment Regulations, 2025, notified on 09.10.2025.
 - iii. The amended Schedule VII specifies RoW requirements for:
 - a. ACSR conductors on lattice structures;
 - b. ACSR conductors on pole structures;
 - c. HTLS (CFCC/ACSS/GAP) conductors on pole structures; and
 - d. HTLS (CFCC/ACSS/GAP) conductors on lattice structures.
 - iv. These technological interventions substantially reduce land requirements, including tree felling in forest areas. The amended regulations provide significant reductions in both RoW width and tower footing area. RoW reduction ranges from 1–12 metres (up to about 26%), while tower footing area can be reduced by over 96% through the use of pole structures and HTLS conductors.
 - v. The matter was considered by the Committee in its earlier meeting held on 02.12.2025 and the Committee, after detailed deliberation in the matter inter-alia recommended the following:
 - a. The Right of Way (RoW) prescribed in the amended Technical Standards

and that referred to in the matrix communicated by the Central Electricity Authority appear to be at variance for certain configurations of power lines. This matter requires deliberation with the Central Electricity Authority. Accordingly, representatives of the Authority may be invited to make a presentation before the Committee in its next meeting.

- b. The RoW of 69 meters corresponding to 800 kV transmission lines, as was provided in the Guidelines issued by the Ministry on 05.05.2014 and inadvertently omitted in the Consolidated Guidelines issued on 28.03.20219 and 29.12.2023, may be incorporated into the Guidelines. A clarification in this regard may accordingly be issued by the Ministry.
 - vi. The representatives of the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), Ministry of Power, informed the Committee that the revised Right-of-Way (RoW) requirements for transmission lines passing through forest areas are based on improved tower configurations and advanced conductor technologies. In cases where transmission lines are proposed using conventional tower configurations, the corresponding RoW requirements prescribed under the existing guidelines of the Ministry shall continue to apply. The revised RoW standards have been incorporated in Schedule VII of the Central Electricity Authority (Technical Standards for Construction of Electrical Plants and Electric Lines) Amendment Regulations, 2025, notified on 09.10.2025. A copy of the revised RoW norms is enclosed at Annexure-I.
 - vii. The Committee observed that the amended standards significantly reduce RoW requirements in forest areas. The adoption of improved tower configurations and advanced technologies is expected to substantially reduce the extent of forest land required, minimize tree felling and habitat disturbance, and consequently lower the ecological impact on forest flora and fauna.
 - viii. The Committee also opined that the Ministry of Power may consider issuing appropriate advisories/guidelines to all States/UTs and power transmission agencies encouraging the adoption of improved tower configurations and advanced conductor technologies in forest areas. Such measures would optimize land use, reduce diversion of forest land, and ensure minimal adverse impact on forest ecosystems and wildlife habitats. In view of the above, CEA has requested that the RoW requirements specified in the Amendment Regulations, 2025 be adopted in the Consolidated Guidelines issued under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023.
5. **Decision of the Committee:** The Committee, after detailed deliberations, observed that advancements in technology have led to the adoption of improved tower and pole designs requiring smaller wing spans, reduced tower footing areas, and narrower RoW corridors. These technologies have the potential to reduce RoW requirements in forest areas by up to 20%, thereby significantly minimizing tree felling and the overall impact on forest ecosystems. Accordingly, the Committee recommended the following:
- i. In addition to exiting guidelines prescribed for RoW for older configuration, the Ministry may consider adopting new RoW for construction of transmission lines in forest areas for the improved configuration of towers and conductors as prescribed in the Schedule VII of the Central Electricity Authority

(Technical Standards for Construction of Electrical Plants and Electric Lines) Amendment Regulations, 2025, notified on 09.10.2025.

- ii. The Ministry of Power shall issue appropriate advisories/guidelines to all States/UTs and power transmission agencies encouraging the adoption of improved tower configurations and advanced conductor technologies in forest areas. Thereafter, the existing Right of Way (RoW) prescribed for old configuration of towers and conductors in the forest areas under the Consolidated Guidelines shall be discontinued and replaced by the revised RoW standards.

(Confirmed through email)

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