

Will ensure efficient use of Rs 47,000 Cr CAMPA funds for Green India: Environment Ministry

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New Delhi: Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar chaired an in-depth meeting of State Forests Ministers on effective and efficient utilization of Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) funds at New Delhi today, in presence of Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar, Sushil Kumar Modi, Director General of Forests, Siddhanta Das and other senior forests officials from various states.

Speaking to media persons, Javadekar said that the meeting was held to discuss how to instate CAMPA and utilize its funds more effectively and create more afforestation, green cover along with water augmentation in order to improve the quality of forests, "We are meeting for the second time in the last 4 months and we will ensure that CAMPA Funds of about Rs 47,000 crore will be utilized efficiently for green India," stated Javadekar.

The Environment Minister further added that continuous deliberations with all stakeholders will be conducted in future in order to ensure maximum afforestation activities are carried out all over the country.

With the initial experience of the States regarding under-utilisation of the money collected towards compensatory afforestation, Supreme Court of India ordered for establishment of Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAF) and CAMPA in 2001.

In 2006, separate bank accounts were opened in which the compensatory levies were deposited and ad-hoc CAMPA was established for the management of Compensatory afforestation fund. In 2009, Hon'ble Supreme Court permitted the release of Rs 1,000 crore every year to States/UTs for compensatory afforestation and other activities.

In 2014, the Supreme Court permitted the release of 10% of the total deposit of states in the fund from interest accrued on the deposits. This Act has provisioned that CAMPA funds shall be kept in an interest-bearing non-lapsable Public Account. After detailed deliberations with the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) and Ministry of Finance and deliberations with other stakeholders, the fund flow mechanism could be finalized and CAF Rules were finally put in place in 2018.

After notification of CAF Rules, with approval of the Supreme Court on 28 January 2019, an amount of Rs 54,685 crore from ad-hoc CAMPA has been brought under the control of Government of India. The Union Government has transferred CAMPA Funds to the tune of Rs 47,436 crore to 27 States/UTs and will be utilized as per the provisions of the CAF Act and CAF Rules.

It is noteworthy to mention that about Rs 47,436 crore of CAMPA funds were handed over by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to various states on 29 August this year.

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