

Forest land to be diverted for transmission line to Mumbai

09 February 2022



THE STATE government, on Tuesday, issued a government resolution (GR) to divert 57 hectares of forest land, including 37 hectares of mangrove forest, for the 400 KV Kharghar-Vikhroli transmission line, with an aim to improve power supply in Mumbai.

This is in line with CM Uddhav Thackeray's directive to the energy department officials in 2020 to execute the project soon. The directive was issued after Mumbai faced a severe power outage on October 12, 2020.

The transmission line project that will stretch over 14.5 km from Airoli in Thane to Vikhroli in Mumbai Suburb will have 47 transmission towers.

According to the minutes of the meeting of the Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority (MCZMA), held earlier, the project would require the removal of 679 mangrove trees for the approach path and tower foundation. Besides, 6,874 mangrove trees will also get affected by the stringing operation required in the project.

While MCZMA said that it recommended the project for clearance only because it had a direct bearing on power supply for the city, it asked the project proponent to plant six times the number of mangroves getting affected. The proposal passed by MCZMA allowed the project proponent to use the option wherein the line passes from outside of the Thane creek flamingo sanctuary, the mangroves outside the BMC dumping ground at Kanjurmarg, the Godrej property and then to the 400 KV Vikhroli substation. Thereafter, the line will get extended from Vikhroli sub-station to BMC sewerage treatment plant at Ghatkopar and join the Kharghar-Vikhroli line.

The MCZMA has also said that the project proponent must also take permissions from National Board for Wildlife Protection, Mangrove Cell, Forest Department and High court.

It has also told the project proponent to install bird diverters in the transmission towers to prevent collision of flamingos and other birds with the towers.

The project, which had been in the works for several years now, gained critical importance after Mumbai faced a severe power failure in October 2020 and CM Uddhav Thackeray convened a meeting and said that it needs to be completed on priority.

Source:<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/mumbai/forest-land-to-be-diverted-for-transmission-line-to-mumbai-7763493/>