

Puducherry forest department to have separate unit for speedy clearance of proposals for cutting trees

The move is a step towards ensuring expeditious appraisal of proposals seeking clearance for felling trees to execute infrastructure projects in the Union Territory.

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RAJESH B NAIR



The meetings of Project Management Unit will ordinarily be convened on the first and third Tuesdays of every calendar month to ensure systematic appraisal and time-bound disposal of proposals received. File | Photo Credit: S.S. Kumar

As a sequel to the Ease of Doing Business legislation passed by the Legislative Assembly, the Puducherry government has constituted a Project Management Unit in

the Department of Forest and Wildlife to ensure expeditious appraisal of proposals seeking clearance for cutting trees to execute infrastructure projects in the Union Territory.

The seven-member PMU will be headed by Deputy Conservator of Forest. The other members include Sub-Collector/ Sub-Divisional Magistrate nominated by the Collector, Executive Engineer, PWD, Commissioner of Municipality or Commune Panchayat concerned, Joint Director of Industries and Commerce Department, Deputy Director of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Deputy Director of Department of Forest and Wildlife.

A notification constituting the PMU said as the territory does not have any notified reserved or protected forest area, provisions under *Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam*, 1980 (formerly the Forest and Conservation Act, 1980) would not be applicable for diversion of forest land. The PMU would expedite proposals for felling trees while protecting the local environment, the notification said.

“It has been decided to institutionalise and mandate a fixed schedule for meetings of the aforesaid PMU to regularly meet for considering and clearing proposals related to compensate the loss of ‘trees by trees’ furnished by any public or private agency for projects to be undertaken within the territorial jurisdiction of the UT of Puducherry,” the notification said.

The notification further said that the meetings of PMU will ordinarily be convened on the first and third Tuesdays of every calendar month to ensure systematic appraisal and time-bound disposal of proposals received.

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