

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RIDGE MANAGEMENT BOARD HELD ON 20th
MAY, 2013 AT 1600 HRS. UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP
OF SH.D.M.SPOLIA, CHIEF SECRETARY AND CHAIRMAN OF THE
RIDGE MANAGEMENT BOARD

The following attended the meeting:-

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| 1. Sh. D.M.Spolia, Chief Secretary, Govt. of NCT of Delhi | : Chairman |
| 2. Sh.Amit Yadav, Secretary (Finance) | : Representative (Finance Deptt.) |
| 3. Sh.Sanjiv Kumar, Secretary (E&F) | : Member |
| 4. Smt. Poonam Dewan, Director (Landscape), DDA | : Representative, DDA |
| 5. Sh. Dina Nath | : Representative, DDA |
| 6. Brig. N. Balan, Brigadier Admin. HQ | : Special Invitee |
| 7. Col. Vishal Bhargav, Col., Land | : Special Invitee |
| 8. Smt. Sunita Narain, Director, CSE | : Member |
| 9. Sh. Ravi Singh, CEO, WWF | : Member |
| 10. Sh.A.K.Shukla, CCF, Govt. of NCT of Delhi | : Member |
| 11. Sh.G.N.Sinha, APCCF, Govt. of NCT of Delhi | : Member Secretary |

Secretary (E & F) formally welcomed Smt. Sunita Narain, Director, CSE and Shri. Ravi Singh, CEO, WWF as nominated members of the Ridge Management Board who were attending their first meeting of the Board. After formal introduction of Chief Secretary, Chairman, RMB welcoming the members and special invitees asked the Member Secretary, RMB to put up the proposal pending for consideration by the Board.

The Member Secretary informed the house that agenda items had already been discussed in earlier meeting of the Ridge Management Board on 12.04.2013. Chairman, RMB had asked for a field inspection report which can clearly outline the area proposed for construction, type of construction, area under roads, green area and vacant area etc. before taking up the issue by the board. A joint Field Inspection report was placed before the Board for consideration furnishing the details as desired by the Chairman in previous meeting. Chairman and 2 new members requested the Member Secretary to furnish the role of Ridge Management Board beyond Ridge Area Notification under section 4 of the Indian Forest Act 1927. The Member Secretary informed the house that the Hon'ble Supreme Court under I.A No. 18 and 22 in WP (C) 4677/85 M.C. Mehta

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v/s Union of India & Ors. had directed NCT, Delhi Administration to make it mandatory that the Ridge is to be kept free from encroachers and its pristine glory is to be maintained at all times. This order also states that the Ridge is the rocky outcrops of Aravalli hills and some parts of the Ridge has been erased in the Central Ridge Area. No further infringement of the Ridge is to be permitted and it is to be maintained in its pristine glory.

In view of the above directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court all forest lands and wastelands which are the property of the Government or over which Government has proprietary rights were brought under Proposed Reserve Forests under section 4 of the Indian Forest Act 1927, known as Northern Ridge, Central Ridge, South Central Ridge and Southern Ridge. Subsequently the Government of NCT of Delhi took a stand in the court of law that following features will be relevant for classification of any area as Ridge in Delhi.

1. Morphological Ridge as per Geological Survey of India Map.
2. Land recorded as Gair Mumkin Pahar in Revenue Record.
3. Areas included in the Regional Park in the existing land use plan contained in Master Plan of Delhi 2021.

Hon'ble High Court of Delhi under WP (C) 3339/2011 has opined:-

"That approximately 864 Hectares of ridge land of the Central Ridge was notified as proposed reserved forest under Section 4 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927, vide Notification dated 24th May, 1994.

That the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its order dated 9th May, 1996 in W.P.(C) No.4677/1985 viz. M.C. Mehta Vs. UOI and Ors. clearly enunciate that some parts of the Ridge have been erased in the Central City area. No further infringement of the Ridge is to be permitted. It should be maintained in its pristine glory.

That both impugned sites form a part of the Defense Estate Land and are of the character of a Geological Ridge, though falling outside the Notified Forest Ridge Land.

That none of the organizations under the Ministry of Defence, Government of India have sought any clearance either from the Ridge Management Board or the Hon'ble Supreme Court through the Central Empowered Committee (CEC), before undertaking any construction in the area. Such permission is a pre-requisite in view of the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its order as aforementioned.

It is clear from the aforesaid that the area in question is given the character of a Geological Ridge though falling outside the Notified Forest Ridge Land. Even in respect of such a land, clearance from the Ridge Management Board or the Hon'ble Supreme Court through the Central Empowered Committee is to be obtained before carrying out any construction. Such permission is a pre-requisite in view of the directions of the Supreme Court."

In the above background and Joint Field Inspection conducted by senior officers of the Department of Forests & Wildlife, Govt. of NCT of Delhi alongwith the officers from defence, proposals are placed before RMB. With permission from the Chair, the User Agencies were requested to present their cases on agenda item for the meeting before the Board.

Agenda 1: Clearance for construction of infrastructure on army land in area adjacent to the Central Ridge Area.

Brigadier N. Balan on behalf of three (3) Defence units B Squadron 61 CAVALRY, 105 Infantry Battalion (Territorial Army) Rajputana Rifles and Air Support Signal Unit (ASSU), requested for clearance of 87.09 acres of Defence land categorised under morphological ridge area. Chairman, RMB sought details of the strength of various units including horses, etc. from the User Agency. He also requested to provide the details of the project features like proposed area under roads, type of construction, no. of stories, area under green cover and detailed layout plan alongwith field inspection report of CCF to the Board for consideration of the proposal.

As per the field inspection report, the proposed site is near Ring railway line from Inderpuri to Naraina (Brar Square Station). On the top of the hillock, for an area of 15.52 acres, construction of ASSU is proposed; on the lower side of the hillock on an area of 33.37 acres 105 Infantry Battalion (Territorial Army) will be accommodated and 61 CAVALRY unit is proposed for establishment at a distance of approximately 500 m from this hillock towards equestrian training centre.

The trees on the site are typical to Ridge vegetation and the details of the trees are enclosed. The details of the construction has been provided by the User Agency and an area of around 10% is proposed under roads and 2 offices are in double-storey for 105 Infantry Battalion (Territorial Army) Rajputana Rifles and Air Support Signal Unit (ASSU) whereas 61 CAVALRY office will be in single storey. Residential accommodation for 105 Infantry Battalion (Territorial

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Army) Rajputana Rifles and Air Support Signal Unit (ASSU) are also in double storey whereas residential accommodation for 61 CAVALRY will be in single storey.

As per the plan, area proposed under green cover is around 55 % and proposed construction area is approx. 14%. The proposed construction may not have serious impacts on the present ecosystem as large area has been considered under green cover.

It was also informed that the total area of site 771 acres is recognized as defence land, where 256.34 acres has been allocated to different units as per list enclosed at Annexure-1. The site plan is also enclosed at Annexure-2.

After considering issues as mentioned above, Board decided to forward the proposal to CEC for consideration.

Agenda 2: Utilization of land adjacent to the Army Public School at Ridge Road.

CEC forwarded the proposal from Brig. N. Balan, Brigadier Administration Headquarters, Delhi area, Delhi Cantt., for use of ridge land adjacent to school boundary wall for boarding and debussing of students, parking of private vehicles engaged for conveyance of students from their residence and vice-versa. Member Secretary informed the House that Hon'ble Supreme Court in I.A. No. 18 in WP (C) 4677/85 M.C. Mehta v/s Union of India & Ors. dated 11-09-1996 had allowed the Army Public School to retain and maintained 21.8 acres as green area out of 30.5 acres of defence land falling within the ridge area.

As per GPS survey of the School, the status of the land within the Campus is as follows:-

1. Total Area- 32 acres
2. Builtup Area- 2.92 acres
3. Park- 5.02 acres
4. Parking- 1.45 acres
5. Open Area- 20.29 acres
6. Roads- 2.32 acres

At present, buses are moving inside the School for boarding and debussing of students from gate no. 1 and moving out from gate no. 2. The School authorities are objecting the construction of masonry wall towards the ridge road by the department for security reasons as heavy influx of vehicles on the ridge road, may invite mishappening.

The ridge land in front of the gate of the school is in 4 parts as follows:

1. 319.47 sq.m.
 2. 1347.32 sq.m.
 3. 2188.03 sq.m.
 4. 852.205 sq.m.
- Total - 4707.02 sq.m.**

The rush of vehicles on the ridge road and movements of around 4500 students on the road for boarding and debussing purposes may lead to mishap/accident. In view of the facts mentioned above, it was decided to forward the proposal to CEC for consideration.

Agenda 3: Conservation of the ridge.

Smt. Sunita Narain, Member, RMB, suggested that a detailed action plan for conservation of the ridge be placed for consideration. Chief Secretary directed the Department of Forests and Wildlife to prepare the detailed action plan for conservation and enrichment of the ridge forest land on priority before the next Board meeting.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair.

**GOVT. OF NATIONAL CAPITAL TERRITORY OF DELHI
DEPARTMENT OF FORESTS AND WILDLIFE
A-Block, II Floor, Vikas Bhawan, New Delhi-02**

F. No.11 (26)/PA/DCF/95/Vol. X/2353-62

Dated: 26 June, 2013

Distribution :

1. The Pr. Secretary (Finance) & Member, RMB, Department of Finance, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, 4th Level, A-Wing, Delhi Secretariat, I.P. Estate, New Delhi.
2. The Secretary (E & F) & Member, RMB, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, 6th Level, C-Wing, Delhi Secretariat, I.P. Estate, New Delhi.
3. The Vice Chairman, DDA & Member, RMB, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi.
4. The Addl. Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests & Member Secretary, RMB, Vikas Bhawan, 2nd Floor, A-Block, I.P. Estate, New Delhi - 110002.

5. The Chief Conservator of Forests & Member, RMB, Vikas Bhawan, 2nd Floor, A-Block, I.P. Estate, New Delhi – 110002.
6. The Conservator of Forests & Member, RMB, Vikas Bhawan, 2nd Floor, A-Block, I.P. Estate, New Delhi – 110002.
7. Sh. Ravi Singh, WWF-India, 172-B, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi-03.
8. Ms. Sunita Narain, Centre for Science & Environment, 41 Tughlaqabad Institutional Area, Delhi-62.
9. Brig. N. Balan, Special Invitee, RMB, Brigadier Administration Headquarters, Delhi area, Delhi Cantt., Delhi-110010.
10. The Dy. Conservator of Forests (South) & Special Invitee, RMB, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, New Delhi.



(G.N. Sinha)

Addl. Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests &
Member Secretary, RMB

Copy to:

1. The Chief Secretary, Chairman, Ridge Management Board (RMB), Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Delhi Secretariat, I.P. Estate, New Delhi- 110002.
2. Sh. M.K. Jiwrajka, Member Secretary, CEC, 2nd floor, Chanakya Bhawan, Chanakyapuri, Delhi-21.



(G.N. Sinha)

Addl. Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests &
Member Secretary, RMB