

**BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL,  
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI**

OA NO. 20 OF 2026

In the matter of: -

News Item Titled "मध्य प्रदेश में इस साल 15 लाख पेड़ कटेंगे" Appearing in Dainik  
Bhaskar Dated 08.01.2026.

**Index**

<b>S. No</b>	<b>Particulars</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
1.	<b>Reply on behalf of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) respondent no. 3</b> in compliance to Hon'ble NGT order dated 13.01.2026 in O.A. No. 20 of 2026.	
2.	<b>Annexure-I</b> A copy of Madhya Pradesh Vrikshon Ka Parirakshan (Nagriya Kshetra) Niyam, 2002 dated 11.04.2002.	
3.	<b>Annexure-II</b> A copy of letter dated 02.02.2026 issued by CPCB to Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force Madhya Pradesh Forest Department.	



**Filed by Saurabh Balwani  
On behalf of Central Pollution Control Board**

Place: Delhi

Dated: 06.03.2026

**BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI**

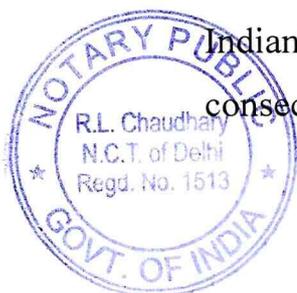
Original Application No. 20 of 2026

In the matter of:

News Item Titled "मध्य प्रदेश में इस साल 15 लाख पेड़ कटेंगे" Appearing in Dainik Bhaskar Dated 08.01.2026

**Reply on behalf of Respondent No. 3, CPCB, to the rejoinder filed by the applicant dated 11.08.2025.**

1. That, Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench (hereinafter referred to as "NGT") vide order dated 13.01.2026 in Original Application (hereinafter referred to as "OA") No. 20 of 2026 (PB) has impleaded Central Pollution Control Board (hereinafter referred to as "CPCB") as respondent and sought the response/reply of Central Pollution Control Board (hereinafter referred as "CPCB") in the instant matter. Thereby, the response is made in the instant OA in succeeding paragraphs.
2. That the captioned matter has been taken suo motu by the Hon'ble NGT, Principal Bench, based on a news item titled "मध्य प्रदेश में इस साल 15 लाख पेड़ कटेंगे" published in *Dainik Bhaskar* dated 08.01.2026. The issues raised in the said news item are related to the alleged cutting of more than 15 lakh trees aged between 50 to 100 years, and the proposed cutting of additional trees for various projects across different districts and cities of Madhya Pradesh, indicating alleged violation of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, the Indian Forest Act, 1927, and the Biodiversity Act, 2002, along with the consequential environmental impacts arising from such activities.



3. That, at the outset, the answering respondent deny all claims, contentions, allegations and averments against answering respondent CPCB in the above OA contrary to anything stated or submitted in this reply. Nothing in the OA may be deemed to have been accepted or admitted by the answering respondent for want of a specific denial or on the ground of non-traverse, save any averment which has been expressly admitted hereinafter.
4. That, it is humbly submitted that, CPCB has been constituted under Section 3 of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 (hereinafter referred to as "Water Act, 1974"). It performs the functions under the Water Act, 1974, The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 (hereinafter referred to as "Air Act, 1981") and The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (hereinafter referred to as "E (P) Act, 1986").
5. That, in context of requirement of Environmental Clearance (hereinafter referred to as "EC"), it is submitted that, the Clause 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 (hereinafter referred to as EIA Notification, 2006) provides for the requirements of prior EC and as per the above mentioned clause, the projects or activities which are falling under the category 'A' of the Schedule of the EIA Notification, 2006; the project proponent shall obtain the EC from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (hereinafter referred to as 'MoEF&CC') and the projects which are falling under the 'B' category of the Schedule of the EIA Notification, 2006; the project proponent shall obtain EC from the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (hereinafter referred to as 'SEIAA') before commencement of any construction work, or before start of land preparation, or before start of any expansion and modernization, as stipulated therein.



6. That, in context of consent required to be obtained by the projects and various units/components of the project, it is humbly submitted that, State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution Control Committees are the concerned authorities to grant Consent (Consent to Establish/Consent to Operate) under the Water Act, 1974 and the Air Act, 1981 in their respective jurisdiction of State/Union Territory and to ensure the compliance of conditions of consent and prescribed environmental standards.
7. That, the cutting and felling of trees in forest land are governed by the provisions of the Indian Forest Act, 1927, and the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and the rules made thereunder as applicable for the concerned state. Further cutting of trees in urban areas, in the State of Madhya Pradesh is governed by the Madhya Pradesh Vrikshon Ka Parirakshan (Nagariya Kshetra) Adhiniyam, 2001, copy of which is attached as **Annexure-I**. The implementation of these enactments is governed by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF), Head of Forest Force or designated authorities of the Government of Madhya Pradesh.
8. That, on receiving the matter, the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Madhya Pradesh Forest Department has been requested vide Letter dated February 02, 2026 for examining and providing factual position in the matter (Copy is enclosed at **Annexure -II**). Response is awaited.
9. The Answering Respondent seeks liberty to file additional affidavit if the same is considered necessary at later stage.



10. That, in light of the above submission, it is respectfully submitted that this answering respondent i.e. CPCB shall abide by all the order(s) or direction(s) passed by this Hon'ble Tribunal in this OA.



**(Sharandeep Singh)**

Scientist 'E'

Central Pollution Control Board

06.03.2026



**BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL  
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI**

Original Application No. 20 of 2026

In the matter of:

News Item Titled "मध्य प्रदेश में इस साल 15 लाख पेड़ कटेगे" Appearing in Dainik Bhaskar Dated 08.01.2026

**AFFIDAVIT**

I, **Sharandeep Singh**, aged about 46 years in the capacity of Scientist-E, having office at the Delhi, Central Pollution Control Board, Parivesh Bhawan, East Arjun Nagar, Delhi, do hereby solemnly affirm and sincerely state on oath as follows: -

1. That, I the deponent herein is the authorized representative to represent the Respondent CPCB in the present case, and as such, I am well conversant with the facts and circumstances of the present case on the basis of the information derived from the official records, and hence, I am competent to verify, sign and swear this affidavit on behalf of the Respondent CPCB.
2. That, the accompanying reply may be read part and parcel of the present affidavit.
3. That, the accompanying reply has been drafted and filed under my instructions and authority the contents thereof are true and correct on the basis of the records maintained during ordinary course of business of CPCB and available records and documents and the contents of the same are read over and explained to me and are not repeated herein for the sake of brevity.



*Sharandeep Singh*

**DEPONENT**

**शरन्दीप सिंह / Shara.ndeep Singh**  
वैज्ञानिक 'ई' / Scientist 'E'  
केंद्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड  
Central Pollution Control Board  
(पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन विभाग, भारत सरकार)  
(Min. Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India)  
परिवेश भवन, पूर्वी अर्जुन नगर, दिल्ली-110032  
Parivesh Bhawan, East Arjun Nagar, Delhi-110032

**VERIFICATION**

06 MAR 2026

06 MAR 2026

Verified at New Delhi on this day of \_\_\_\_ March, 2026, that the contents of the above reply are correct and true based on the records of the case as mentioned in the day-to-day affairs of the CPCB. Nothing has been concealed therefrom or misstated.


**DEPONENT**

शरणादीप सिंह / Sharaandeep Singh  
 वैज्ञानिक 'ई' / Scientist 'E'  
 केंद्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड  
 Central Pollution Control Board  
 (पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)  
 (Min. Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India)  
 परिसरा भवन, पूर्वी अर्जुन नगर, दिल्ली-110032  
 Parkash Bhawan, East Arjun Nagar, Delhi-110032

**ATTESTED**
  
 NOTARY PUBLIC  
 GOVT. OF INDIA

MAR 2026  
  
 06 MAR 2026

## <sup>1</sup>Madhya Pradesh Vrikshon Ka Parirakshan (Nagriya Kshetra) Niyam, 2002

Bhopal, the 11th April 2002

**No. F-30-4-2001-X-3.**— In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 24 of the Madhya Pradesh Vrikshon Ka Parirakshan (Nagariya Kshetra) Adhiniyam, 2001 (No. 20 of 2001), the State Government hereby makes the following rules for the purpose of preservation and replanting of trees in Urban areas of Madhya Pradesh, namely :—

### RULES

**1. Short title, extent and commencement.**— (1) These rules may be called the **Madhya Pradesh Vrikshon Ka Parirakshan (Nagriya Kshetra) Niyam, <sup>2</sup>[2002]**.

(2) The shall extend to the whole of the State of Madhya Pradesh.

(3) These rules shall apply in all urban areas of the State from the date of their publication in the Madhya Pradesh Gazette.

**2. Definitions.**— In these rules unless the context otherwise requires :—

- (a) “**Adhiniyam**” means the Madhya Pradesh Vrikshon Ka Parirakshan (Nagriya Kshetra) Adhiniyam, 2001 (No. 20 of 2001);
- (b) “**Forest Act**” means the Indian Forest Act, 1927 (No. XVI of 1927);
- (c) “**Section**” means a section of the Adhiniyam;
- (d) “**Transit Rules**” means Madhya Pradesh Transit (Forest Produce) Rules, 2000.

**3. Procedure for obtaining permission.**— (1) Any person desiring to fell, remove, uproot or sever stem from the root system, or dispose of by any means a tree (s) shall apply to the Tree Officer having jurisdiction on concerning urban area in Form-I, along with a processing Fee of Rs. 100/- per application. The application shall be accompanied by the following documents:—

- (a) details of land where the tree is standing (Khasra No., Plot No., Ward No. etc. along with location map);
- (b) proof of ownership of land or lease documents or any other document which can substantiate that the applicant has got ownership rights in the land in question;
- (c) details of tree(s) species, height, girth at basal area, condition of tree (sound, diseased, dying, dead, damaged, wind fallen, girdled or with any other peculiarity).

1. Published in M.P. Rajpatra Part 4 (Ga) dated 19-8-2003.

2. Substituted vide Not. No. 38-F-1-52-3/18-3, dated 19-8-2003.

(d) undertaking for compensatory plantation.

(2) The permission granted under sub-section (2) of Section 6 of the Adhiniyam shall be subject to the condition that the applicant shall plant another tree or trees of the same or other suitable species on the same site or the premises and where this is not possible shall make a cash contribution of Rs. 500/tree within 30 days from the date the tree is felled or within such extended period as the Tree Officer may allow.

**4. Power to release the property seized under Section 10.**— If the owner of the land executes a bond in Form-II the Tree Officer may release the seized property for the production of seized material whenever required.

**5. Disposal of confiscated property.**— The Tree Officer, shall apply to the Magistrate first class, having jurisdiction for the disposal of the confiscated property. The application shall contain the details of the confiscated property and the order of the confiscation.

**6. Power to compound offence.**— If the Offender agrees in writing for compounding of the offence and the Tree Officer is also satisfied that the case is not fit for challan in the Court, he may compound the offence by imposing the penalty which may not exceed Rs. 5000/- per tree in respect of offence, which the person is suspected to have committed. In addition to above, the value of the produce will also be realised and seized property and person if in custody shall be released.

<sup>1</sup>[**7. Mode of deposit of recovered amount.**— Any amount recovered under these Niyam shall be deposited in the treasury of Municipal Corporation or Municipal Council or Nagar Panchayat, as the case may be, established in the Urban Area.]



केन्द्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड

CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST & CLIMATE CHANGE, GOVT. OF INDIA.

No.: CM-13011/12/2026-LAW-HO-CPCB-HO

February 02, 2026

To,

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests,  
Head of Forest Force Madhya Pradesh Forest Department  
Satpuda Bhawan, 1st Floor, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh - 462003

Subject: Hon'ble NGT Original Application No. 20/2026 News Item Titled " मध्य प्रदेश में इस साल 15 लाख पेड़ कटेंगे " Appearing in Dainik Bhaskar Dated 08.01.2026 reg.

Ref.: Hon'ble NGT (PB) order dated January 13.01.2026 in Original Application No. 20/2026.

Madam/ Sir,

This is in reference to the order passed by the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (NGT) in the above-mentioned matter (copy enclosed), wherein issues have been raised on the basis of a news item concerning alleged large-scale cutting of trees in various districts of Madhya Pradesh.

The matter pertains to allegations regarding the cutting of more than 15 lakh trees, aged between 50 to 100 years, for various developmental projects such as roads, coal blocks, railway lines, and construction activities in areas including Bhopal, Indore, Gwalior, Singrauli, Khandwa, Vidisha, and Ujjain. It has been alleged that such activities have led to degradation of air quality and involve violations of the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, the Indian Forest Act, 1927, and the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

As per the news item, in Singrauli district alone, approximately 35,000 trees have been cut over 1397.54 hectares of forest land, out of which 1335.35 hectares reportedly constituted dense forest, and a further 5.7 lakh trees are proposed to be cut. Additionally, proposals involving cutting of trees have been reported in Khandwa (Kargol) for a railway project, Vidisha for the Bhopal-Kanpur Highway, Indore-Ujjain road project, Bhopal for a 10-lane road project, and Gwalior.

The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has been impleaded as Respondent No. 3 in the matter and is required to file its response before the Hon'ble Tribunal. In this regard, it is requested that the matter may kindly be examined and the factual position may be provided to CPCB at the earliest.

Encl.: As above

Yours faithfully,

केन्द्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड  
संभल  
दिनांक 03/02/2026

g/c

Sharandeep

(Sharandeep Singh)

Additional Director & Head-UPC-I

'परिवेश भवन' पूर्वी अर्जुन नगर, दिल्ली - 110032.

Parivesh Bhawan, East Arjun Nagar, Delhi - 110 032.

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