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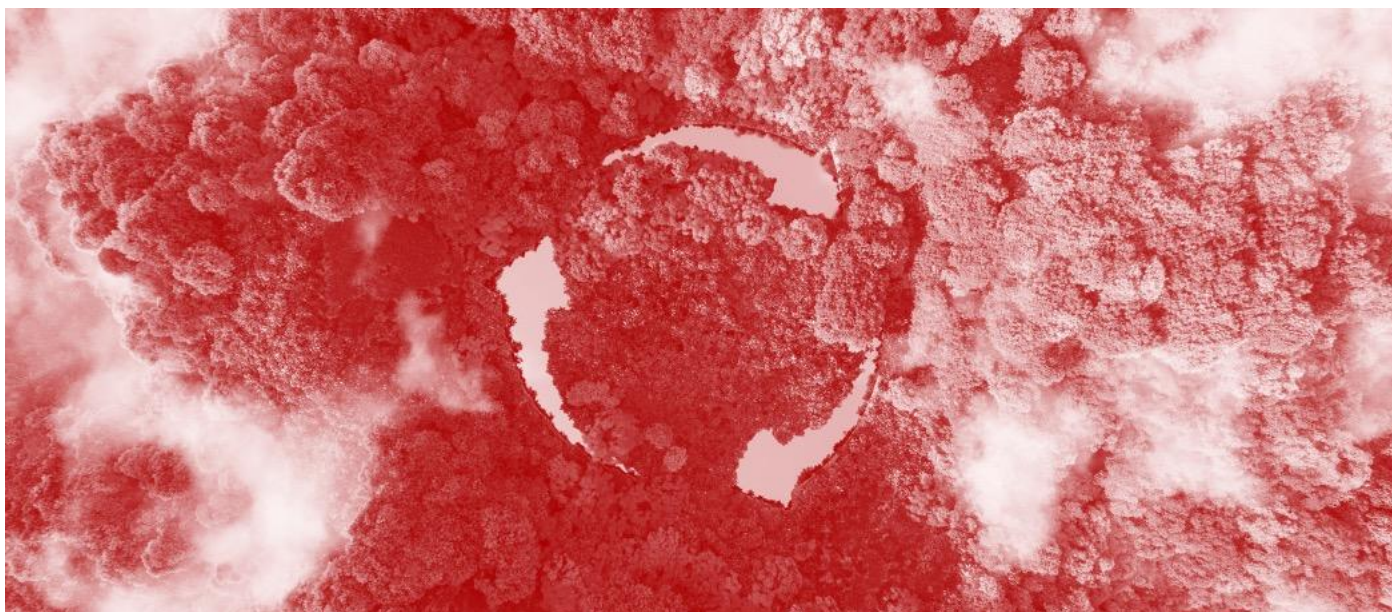


Knowledge Management

Semi-Annual Environmental Disputes
and Environmental, Social & Governance
Compendium 2025

July – December 2025

Semi-Annual Environmental Disputes and Environmental, Social & Governance Compendium 2025



Introduction

This Compendium consolidates all key developments undertaken in the environmental disputes and Environmental, Social & Governance (“ESG”) related regulatory updates which were circulated as a part of the JSA Newsletters/Prisms during the calendar period from July 2025 till December 2025.

Regulatory updates

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Amendment Rules, 2025 notified

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (“MoEFCC”), on July 1, 2025, notified the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Amendment Rules, 2025 (“EPR Amendment Rules”), introducing a comprehensive Extended Producer Responsibility

(“EPR”) framework for scrap of non-ferrous metals such as aluminium, copper, zinc and their alloys. The EPR Amendment Rules, which will come into force from April 1, 2026, aim to improve traceability, incentivise recycling and reduce environmental damage caused by improper handling and disposal of metal scrap. A centralised certificate-based mechanism is introduced, supported by an online portal, to ensure compliance, monitor flows and enable trading of EPR obligations. The EPR framework covers producers, recyclers, refurbishers, collection agents and bulk consumers. All stakeholders must register with the Central Pollution Control Board (“CPCB”) on a dedicated online portal, with separate registration required for each operational role.

Producers must meet increasing recycling targets from 10% in Financial Year (“FY”) 2026–27 to 75% by FY 2032–33 either through in-house recycling or by purchasing tradable EPR certificates issued to registered recyclers. For eligible products, refurbishing is incentivised with certificates that allow partial deferral of recycling obligations. A minimum recycled content requirement for manufacturers will apply from FY 2028–29 (ranging from 5%–25%).

The CPCB portal will manage registrations, reporting, certificate trading, and compliance monitoring. Returns are mandatory (half-yearly and annual), and penalties, including registration revocation and environmental compensation, apply for non-compliance. Oversight is led by CPCB and a multi-stakeholder Steering Committee, with State Pollution Control Boards (“SPCBs”) supporting on-ground enforcement and awareness.



Environment (Protection) Third Amendment Rules, 2025

MoEFCC, *vide* notification dated July 11, 2025, notified the Environment (Protection) Third Amendment Rules, 2025. A proviso is inserted to Schedule-I (against serial number 5A) of the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, stating that MoEFCC may, in consultation with the Central Electricity Authority and CPCB, for reasons to be recorded in writing, grant an exemption to thermal power plants from installation of cooling towers.

Environment (Protection) Fourth Amendment Rules, 2025

MoEFCC, *vide* notification dated July 11, 2025, notified the Environment (Protection) Fourth Amendment Rules, 2025 (“**Notification**”), where the mandates regarding meeting sulphur dioxide emission norms are yet again changed. In the past 10 (ten) years, the mandate for construction of Flue Gas Desulfurisation (“FGD”) by thermal power plants governed the field. FGD was envisaged to control sulphur emissions. Most thermal power plants experienced repeated delays due to high-cost requirements of installation of FGD.

Simultaneously it was found that ambient SO₂ levels remained within national limits across much of the country due to low sulphur content in Indian coal.

Studies showed that FGD retrofits would have limited air-quality benefits in many regions. In response, CPCB and MoEFCC re-examined the FGD framework. The amendment exempts most thermal power plants from the requirement of construction of FGD as follows:

1. the Notification now exempts about 79% of thermal capacity in the country (Category C): Plants beyond 10 kms of Delhi/NCR or other million-plus/critically polluted cities no longer face mandatory SO₂ limits and need only meet old stack-height criteria by December 31, 2019;
2. the Notification keeps 11% of capacity under review (Category B): plants near other polluted or non-attainment areas will be assessed on case to case basis:
 - a) Category B plants are any thermal power plants within 10 km of a CPCB designated critically polluted area (industrial hotspots) or a non-attainment city (one that has failed to meet NAAQS for any pollutant); and
 - b) Category B plant which already holds an Environmental Clearance (“EC”) can now log into MoEFCC’s PARIVESH online portal and formally request a review of whether the new SO₂ emission standards should apply to them. The Expert Appraisal Committee will thereafter examine the requirement of either FGD (to be constructed by December 31, 2028) or minimum stack height compliance;
3. the Notification maintains hard SO₂ controls for about 10% of capacity (Category A): Plants within 10 (ten) kms of the NCR or any city with more than 1,000,000 (one million) people must install FGDs and comply by December 31, 2027; and
4. any plant retiring before December 31, 2030, can skip installation of FGD upon furnishing an undertaking where if it continues to run past its stated retirement date without having met the SO₂ norms (i.e. without an FGD), it will pay an environmental compensation of INR 0.40 (Indian Rupees zero point forty) per unit (kWh) for electricity generated post December 31, 2030.

Categorisation of thermal power plants was first done by MoEFCC through notification dated March 31, 2021. Majority of coal plants formed part of Category C. The Notification brings major relief for plants in less-populated regions, saving costly FGD capex of about INR 1,20,00,000 (Indian Rupees one crore twenty

lakh)/MW along with hurdles of commissioning downtime. At the same time metropolitan airsheds and hotspots will still get emission controls by 2027. The Notification avoids a one-size-fits-all approach while honouring public health requirement.

Environment (Protection) Fifth Amendment Rules, 2025

MoEFCC, *vide* notification dated July 21, 2025, notified the Environment (Protection) Fifth Amendment Rules, 2025. Amendments are made to Schedule-I, serial number 36 (entries relating to aluminium plants). The emission standards for aluminium plants stand revised. These amendments will come into force on July 21, 2027.



Environment (Protection) Sixth Amendment Rules, 2025

MoEFCC, *vide* notification dated July 22, 2025, notified the Environment (Protection) Sixth Amendment Rules, 2025. Amendments are made to Schedule-I, serial number 40 (entries relating to pesticide industry). New standards for effluent discharge and air emission are introduced, to curb pollution from chemical waste and protect water and air quality. Further, the existing pollution control norms are replaced with updated pollutant limits and environmental parameters to encourage sustainable industrial practices within the pesticide sector.

Environment (Protection) Seventh Amendment Rules, 2025

MoEFCC, *vide* notification dated September 4, 2025, notified the Environment (Protection) Seventh Amendment Rules, 2025. Amendments are made to the effluent standards for pulp and paper industry under entry no. 14 under Schedule-I of the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986.

Environment (Protection) (Management of Contaminated Sites) Rules, 2025

MoEFCC, *vide* notification dated July 24, 2025, notified the Environment (Protection) (Management of Contaminated Sites) Rules, 2025 (“**MCS Rules**”) under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. The MCS Rules create a national framework for the identification, assessment and remediation of contaminated sites impacted by hazardous and toxic substances. They constitute India’s first dedicated legal framework for the systematic identification, assessment, remediation and monitoring of chemically contaminated sites across the country. They establish a science-based, time-bound process grounded in strict liability and the polluter-pays principle, to protect human health and ecological integrity from legacy industrial and hazardous contamination. The MCS Rules have defined terms such as ‘Contaminated Site’ and ‘Responsible Person’, with details of threshold contaminant levels specified for soil and water. Local bodies must identify suspected sites, while SPCBs conduct assessments and publish confirmed site lists *via* a central online portal. Once listed, SPCBs must initiate remediation within 3 (three) months, directing the person responsible to prepare and fund a remediation plan. Where no responsible party is identified (orphan sites), SPCBs or State Governments take over remediation. Plans must include risk assessments, technologies, financials and health/safety measures, and require SPCB approval. Funding sources include environmental compensation funds, State and Central cost-sharing and the Environmental Relief Fund. Responsible parties must reimburse public expenditures within 3 (three) months. SPCBs and CPCB may impose environmental compensation for non-compliance. Voluntary remediation is permitted with conditions but does not exempt liability. Oversight is ensured through expert committees, digital monitoring and mandatory reporting. All actions must align with CPCB-issued standard operating procedures and guidelines.

Environment Audit Rules, 2025

MoEFCC notified the Environment Audit Rules, 2025 (“**Audit Rules**”) which came into force on August 29, 2025. The Audit Rules establish a framework for certifying and registering environmental auditors to ascertain environmental compliance of the projects,

activities or processes, thereby ensuring that audits are conducted in a systematic and structured manner. The deployment of certified auditors aims to enhance transparency and accountability and reduce conflicts of interest, thereby fostering both public confidence and a business-friendly environment.

Salient features

1. **Roles and responsibilities of registered environment auditors:** Their functions, *inter alia*, include
 - a) conducting environmental audits of projects, activities, or processes;
 - b) sampling and analysis of emissions, effluents, and wastes, and assess pollution control systems;
 - c) reporting violations or non-compliance with environmental regulations;
 - d) computing environmental compensation for non-compliance, where directed;
 - e) preparing and submitting audit reports;
 - f) verifying activities related to the Green Credit Registry, if directed;
 - g) undertaking environmental audits assigned by CPCB, SPCBs or Pollution Control Committees ("PCCs"), including under EPR frameworks;
 - h) conducting environmental audits assigned under the Ecomark Rules, 2024;
 - h) carrying out audits assigned under the Environment Impact Assessment ("EIA") Notification, 2006, and Coastal Regulation Zone notifications of 2011 and 2019;
 - i) auditing projects, activities, or processes, when assigned by project proponents;
 - j) verifying self-compliance reports submitted to ensure adherence to environmental standards and conditions; and
 - k) performing any other functions as may be specified by the Central Government.
2. **Authority to visit sites and collect samples:** In respect of assignments conferred by the Central or State Governments, registered environment auditors are empowered to enter project premises, collect samples and audit evidence, and access all relevant information and documents.
3. **Roles and responsibilities of Environment Audit Designated Agency:** Their functions, *inter alia*, include:
 - a) specifying minimum eligibility criteria for certified environmental auditors;
 - b) developing screening methods (exams or other processes) to identify qualified candidates for certified environmental auditors;
 - c) certifying environment auditors, including renewal, suspension, withdrawal, or cancellation of certification;
 - d) specifying criteria for registration of certified environmental auditors
 - e) registering certified environment auditors, including renewal, suspension, withdrawal, or cancellation of registration;
 - f) monitoring performance of registered environmental auditors and issue directions as needed;
 - g) facilitate capacity building through training, workshops, seminars, and online courses;
 - h) taking disciplinary action against certified or registered environmental auditors, when required;
 - i) specifying guidelines, procedures, and standards for certified and registered auditors' functioning;
 - j) maintaining a publicly accessible online register of certified and registered environmental auditors; and
 - k) publishing an annual report within 6 (six) months of each FY and submitting it to the Central Government.

The Central Government will notify Environment Audit Designated Agencies on the basis of eligibility criteria, terms, conditions, and tenure specified in its guidelines, with the power to revoke such notification at any time before the expiry of tenure based on performance. The tenure of such agencies may also be renewed, subject to fulfilment of the criteria prescribed in the guidelines.
4. **Certification mechanism for environment auditors:** The certification will be carried out by Recognition of Prior Learning (i.e., a mode of certification based on prior experience and

expertise, which shall remain in operation for a limited period); and National Certification Examination (a structured examination process for assessing eligibility for certification).

5. **Code of conduct for registered environment auditor and certified environment auditor:** The Central Government will issue guidelines on the code of conduct for certified and registered environmental auditors, covering aspects of integrity, ethics, confidentiality, and conflict of interest. Misrepresentation, suppression, falsification, or distortion of facts/data will be treated as professional misconduct. Strict confidentiality must be maintained and unauthorised disclosure of project-related information constitutes misconduct. For professional misconduct, the Government may debar auditors (temporarily or permanently), suspend or revoke certification/registration or initiate action under applicable laws.
6. **Allocation of assignments and fees:** Registered environment auditors will be assigned to specific project entities through a random assignment method. Further, the amount and procedure for payment of the certification, registration and audit fee shall be determined by guidelines issued by the Central Government and will be binding on both, certified and registered environmental auditors.
7. **Preventing conflict of interest:** To maintain independence and avoid conflicts of interest, registered environmental auditors must not:
 - a) be related to the project owner, operator, occupier, or proponent;
 - b) hold or have held any financial interest in the project or its associated entities;
 - c) have provided services (other than independent reviews or auditing) to the project, process, or activity such that they would be auditing work performed by themselves or their firm;
 - d) accept inducements, commissions, gifts, or benefits from the auditee or related parties; and
 - e) audit any project for which they prepared the EIA, Environmental Management Plan, or related reports forming part of the audit scope.

8. **Steering Committee:** The Audit Rules provide for formation of a Steering Committee, responsible for overall implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of the Audit Rules, and for reviewing and recommending amendments to the same and related guidelines.

Conclusion

Introduction of the Audit Rules furthers the Indian Government's commitment towards ease of doing business and principles of trust-based governance. Ensuring compliance with key statutes such as the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, the Green Credit Rules, 2023, along with other related regulations, is vital for protecting the environment from degradation while fostering sustainable development. The Audit Rules are expected to play a transformative role by strengthening compliance through independent third-party verification, making adherence to environmental norms more credible, measurable, and enforceable. By establishing a pool of trained and certified professionals, the Audit Rules enhance regulatory capacity, allowing Government agencies to focus on high-risk enforcement and policy improvements. Most importantly, these audits will encourage proactive risk management by identifying non-compliance early and enabling timely corrective measures to prevent environmental harm.



Enforcement of Rule 15(1) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023

MoEFCC, *vide* notification dated October 1, 2025, notified October 1, 2025 as the effective date for Rule

15(1) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023. Rule 15(1) lays an obligation upon the Chairperson of the advisory committee to convene a meeting at least once a month.

Greenhouse Gases Emission Intensity Target Rules, 2025

MoEFCC, *vide* notification dated October 8, 2025, notified the Greenhouse Gases (“GHG”) Emission Intensity Target Rules, 2025 (“Emission Rules”). The Emission Rules set out GHG emission intensity targets on industrial units across the aluminium, cement, pulp and paper, and chlor-alkali sectors. Pursuant to the Emission Rules, these sectors are required to reduce their GHG emissions per unit of output from the FY 2023-24 baseline levels. Some of the key responsibilities of the obligated entities are as follows:

1. achieve the specified GHG emission intensity targets in the respective compliance year;
2. meet its GHG emission intensity targets outlined under the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme, 2023 (“CCTS”);
3. surrender the banked Carbon Credit Certificates (“CCCs”) or CCCs purchased in the respective compliance year equivalent to the shortfall to comply with the GHG emission intensity target;
4. register on the portal under Indian Carbon Market Framework; and
5. submit all the documents in the manner as stipulated in the detailed procedure under the CCTS.

List of white category sectors classified by CPCB as per the 2016 classification methodology is amended

MoEFCC, *vide* notification dated October 17, 2025, amended the Schedule dealing with the list of ‘white category industrial plants/sectors’ by adding 47 (forty seven) industries to the list (earlier the list consisted of 39 (thirty nine) industries). The list now consists of 86 (eighty six) industries exempted from requiring prior ‘Consent to Establish’ and ‘Consent to Operate’ permits under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and are considered ‘practically non-

polluting’ as specified under the notifications dated November 12, 2024.



Ministry of Power

Amendments to the Delhi Solar Energy Policy 2023

The Ministry of Power (“MoP”), *vide* notification dated July 10, 2025, notified the amendments to the Delhi Solar Policy 2023. Some of the key amendments are as follows:

1. **Hybrid RESCO Model is re-defined:** It is redefined to mean the consumer pays the Renewable Energy Service Company (“RESCO”) developer *via* the Distribution Company (“Discom”) under a single bill, with net-metering benefits also reflected in the same bill.

RESCO is a company that invests in, installs, owns, operates, and maintains rooftop solar plants (or other renewable energy systems) on behalf of consumers. The consumer does not own the plant. As per previous definition, the consumer had no direct commercial relationship with the RESCO for power purchase. The Discom bought solar power from RESCO, and the consumer benefitted via net-metering credits only. Hybrid RESCO now shifts the commercial flow.

2. **Capital subsidies revised:** Residential consumers – INR 10,000 (Indian Rupees ten thousand)/unit up to 3 (three) kW (maximum INR 30,000 (Indian Rupees thirty thousand)). Group housing societies / RWA - INR 2,000 (Indian Rupees two thousand)/unit up to 500 (five hundred) kW (including Electric Vehicles (“EVs”) charging, capped at 3 (three) kW per house).
3. **Generation Based Incentive (“GBI”):** Previously, in the Hybrid RESCO model GBI would be paid directly to the RESCO developer because the RESCO owns the plant. Amended policy deletes the

specific sentence about paying GBI to RESCO under Hybrid RESCO.

This change could be since RESCOs are already recovering costs through the tariff paid via the Discom billing structure.

4. **PMSG-based Installations i.e. National Portal:** Applications for net-metering will be routed through the National Portal (PM Surya Ghar- PMSG portal) to the Discom. Non-PMSG Installations - applications to be through the Delhi State Portal or directly through Discoms.

Applications on PMSG portal are now connected with the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy's direct benefit transfer/subsidies.

5. **Apex Committee:** Constitution of an Apex Committee to monitor policy implementation has also been deleted in this amendment.

Electricity (Amendment) Rules, 2025

MoP, *vide* notification dated September 19, 2025, notified the Electricity (Amendment) Rules, 2025. The amendments provide clarification on the rules around energy storage, grid connectivity, and renewable energy. Some of the key amendments are as follows:

1. the owners of Energy Storage Systems ("**ESS**") are now allowed to sell, lease, or rent their storage capacity to other entities, including consumers, utilities, or other service providers;
2. ESS can now be deployed either independently or as a part of generation, transmission, or distribution infrastructure. Generating companies, transmission and distribution licensees, consumers, system operators, or independent ESS providers are now allowed to develop, own, lease or operate ESS assets; and
3. clarification is provided on the legal status of ESS assets. If an ESS is co-located with a generation or distribution asset, it will carry the same legal status as the asset owner. In cases where the ESS is not co-located but is still owned by a generating station or distribution licensee, it will be considered part of the owner's assets, though its scheduling and dispatch will remain separate.



Energy Conservation (Compliance Enforcement) Rules, 2025

MoP, *vide* notification dated October 22, 2025, issued the Energy Conservation (Compliance Enforcement) Rules, 2025 ("**Rules**") under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001 ("**Act**"). Some of the key provisions are as follows:

1. The Rules are applicable on the following entities:
 - a) persons referred to in Section 13A of the Act;
 - b) manufacturers or importers mentioned in Section 14(c) of the Act; and
 - c) designated consumers as specified under Section 14(n) and (x) of the Act.
2. The Bureau of Energy Efficiency ("**BEE**") has been made responsible for compliance enforcement with the norms and standards specified by the Central Government.
3. In case of any shortfall in achievement of targets:
 - a) the norms and standards specified by the Central Government under Section 14(x) of the Act will apply to the extent of such shortfall independent of the norms and standards provided by the State Commission under the provisions of the Electricity Act, 2003; and
 - b) penalty on the defaulting entities will be imposed in accordance with the provisions of the Act.
4. The BEE is responsible for:
 - a) obtaining necessary information from the entities covered under Rule 2, in accordance with the provisions of the Act;
 - b) verification of compliance and submission of report to the Central Government;
 - c) serving notice to the contravening entities for non-compliance;

- d) authorising 1 (one) or more representative to represent the matter before the adjudicating officer; and
 - e) taking all necessary actions as may be required for implementation of the Rules.
5. The jurisdiction of the adjudicating officer for adjudicating on failure to comply with the provisions of Section 13A and 14 of the Act, would be, where the:
- a) registered office or the manufacturer or importer is located, in case of appliances, equipment and vehicles mentioned under Section 14(b) of the Act;
 - b) industry or establishment is located in case of industries specified as designated consumers under Section 14(n) of the Act; and
 - c) industry or establishment of the designated consumer is located, or the registered head office (in case where compliance is undertaken at the holding company level), in case of non-fossil consumption specified for designated consumers.
6. Penalties paid by the entities must be credited into the Central Energy Conservation Funds under Section 20 of the Act (out of which 90% must be transferred to the State Government and 10% must be transferred to the Central Government):
- a) in case of appliances, equipments and vehicles: to the Consolidated Fund of the concerned State in proportion to its share of the total sales by the manufacturer or importer of the specific appliance, equipment, or vehicle during the compliance period;
 - b) in case of industries specified as designated consumers: to the Consolidated Fund of the concerned State where the industry or establishment is located; and
 - c) in case of non-fossil consumption specified for designated consumers: to the Consolidated Fund of the concerned State where the industry or establishment of the designated consumer is located.
7. All amounts recovered towards compliance, which are not covered under Section 26 of the Act must be credited to the Central Energy Conservation Fund.



Central Pollution Control Board

Guidelines on Municipal Solid Waste incineration-based waste to energy plants

CPCB, *vide* notification dated August 18, 2025, issued the Guidelines on Municipal Solid Waste (“MSW”) Incineration-Based Waste to Energy (“WtE”) Plants (“WtE Guidelines”). The WtE Guidelines aim to establish a uniform regulatory framework for the development, operation, and monitoring of incineration-based WtE plants across India, addressing environmental, operational, and compliance challenges while enabling energy recovery from non-recyclable MSW.

Incineration-based WtE plants provide a viable solution for managing high-calorific, non-recyclable MSW by reducing landfill dependency and recovering energy in the form of electricity and heat. The WtE Guidelines align with the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 (“SWM Rules”) and promote circular economy practices, including safe utilisation of bottom ash in construction applications.

CPCB notes that several WtE plants in India have faced operational, environmental, and social challenges, including emission breaches, odour control failures, leachate contamination, and public health concerns. Accordingly, the WtE Guidelines prescribe a structured approach covering waste preprocessing, incinerator design, emission monitoring, ash and leachate management, and environmental safeguards. The WtE Guidelines apply to all existing, under-construction, and proposed WtE plants, Urban Local Bodies (“ULBs”), and regulators, ensuring that WtE facilities operate in an environmentally sound, technically efficient, and economically viable manner.

Salient features

1. **Classification as ‘Blue Category’ projects:** CPCB has classified MSW incineration-based WtE plants

under the 'Blue Category' of projects, recognising them as 'Essential Environmental Service' for domestic waste facilities for managing domestic solid waste.

2. **Viable solution for non-recyclable, high-calorific waste:** The WtE Guidelines highlight that WtE plants offer a technically viable solution for treating residual fractions of municipal solid waste that cannot be processed through composting, anaerobic digestion, or material recovery. These fractions typically include plastics, textiles, paper, and other high-calorific combustible components. Through controlled thermal treatment, WtE plants convert these waste streams into usable energy, achieving significant volume reduction while minimising uncontrolled Methane (“**CH₄ (methane)**”) emissions, leachate generation, and fire hazards caused by unscientific landfilling practices.
3. **Alignment with the SWM Rules:** The WtE Guidelines are fully aligned with the SWM Rules, and mandate compliance with the following key provisions:
 - a) Rule 15 of the SWM Rules: Responsibility of local bodies to facilitate construction and operation of solid waste processing facilities.
 - b) Rule 16 of the SWM Rules: SPCB/ PCC to authorise, regulate, and monitor the facilities.
 - c) Rule 21 of the SWM Rules: Non-recyclable MSW with calorific value $\geq 1,500$ (one thousand five hundred) kcal/kg cannot be landfilled and must be diverted to generating energy.
 - d) Schedule II (Part C) of the SWM Rules: Prescribes emission standards and mandates installation of advanced pollution control systems.
4. **Hazardous Waste Management Rules, 2016 (“HWM Rules”):** If the toxic metals in incineration ash (i.e. bottom ash and fly ash) exceeds the limits specified in the HWM Rules, then the disposal or beneficial use of bottom ash and fly ash will be governed by the HWM Rules.
5. **WtE process framework:** The WtE Guidelines outline a detailed process flow for energy recovery through incineration:
 - a) Step 1 - Waste reception and preprocessing: MSW delivered to plants undergoes radioactive scanning, weighing, homogenisation, and moisture control to improve calorific value.
 - b) Step 2 - Segregation: Manual and mechanical sorting to recover recyclables, compostables, and Refuse Derived Fuel (“RDF”).
 - c) Step 3 - Composting: MSW received at the WtE unit consists of organic fractions (approx. 8–10%) that are unsuitable for incineration and are therefore diverted for controlled composting to prevent boiler corrosion and emission spikes.
 - d) Step 4 - Incineration and energy recovery: RDF fraction after segregation is incinerated in moving-grate furnaces at $\geq 950^{\circ}\text{C}$, producing high-pressure steam for electricity generation while achieving approx. 80% volume reduction.
 - e) Step 5 - Ash and residue handling:
 - i) Bottom ash (20–30%) is recovered, tested, and potentially reused in construction if non-hazardous.
 - ii) Fly ash (2–3%), containing toxic metals, is sent to secure landfills or pre-treated for safe secondary use.

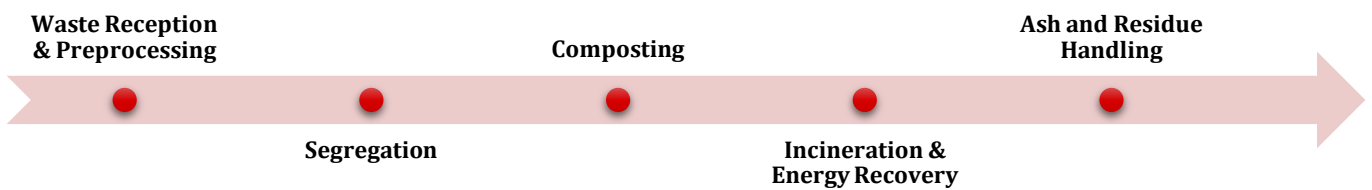


Fig. 1 – MSW incineration-based WtE process

6. **Environmental issues:** The WtE Guidelines identify 4 (four) key environmental risks associated with WtE plants:
- Stack emissions: Incineration releases NO_x, SO₂, CO, particulate matter, heavy metals, dioxins, and furans, which require strict control using advanced emission management systems.
 - Solid residues: Improper disposal of fly ash and bottom ash can lead to soil and groundwater contamination, necessitating safe handling and secure landfilling.
 - Leachate management: Untreated leachate from waste pits and ash handling areas can pollute surface and groundwater, requiring proper collection and treatment systems.
 - Odour control: Persistent odours from waste reception and processing zones cause community discomfort and regulatory challenges, making effective odour management essential.
7. **Environmental management plan:** The WtE Guidelines prescribe a comprehensive plan to ensure effective pollution control and regulatory compliance:
- Air pollution control devices: Installation of lime dosing systems, activated carbon injection, and bag filters, along with Online Continuous Emission Monitoring Systems (“OCEMS”) for real-time emission tracking.
 - Leachate treatment: Provision of engineered drainage and leachate treatment plants using advanced technologies such as reverse osmosis, multi-effect evaporators, and mechanical vapour recompression evaporators to prevent water contamination.
 - Ash management: Bottom ash can be reused in construction if found non-hazardous, while fly ash containing toxic components must be securely landfilled or treated before secondary use.
 - Odour management: Use of negative-pressure systems to direct odorous air to boilers for combustion and herbal-based disinfectants for effective biological odour control.
8. **Monitoring and compliance:** All WtE plants are required to install OCEMS to continuously track

emissions, including PM, NO_x, SO₂, CO, HCl, HF, dioxins, and furans, and transmit real-time data to CPCB and SPCBs. Facilities must also conduct periodic sampling of treated leachate, bottom ash, and fly ash to ensure compliance with applicable environmental thresholds. Non-compliance may lead to suspension or revocation of authorisations, penalties under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, and mandatory corrective actions as directed by regulators.

Conclusion

The WtE Guidelines mark a significant step towards structured, compliance-driven municipal SWM in India. By introducing design-based safeguards, emission control measures, ash/leachate management standards, and continuous monitoring protocols, CPCB ensures that WtE plants operate sustainably while reducing landfill dependency. For project developers, ULBs, and regulators, the WtE Guidelines provide a clear institutional and technical roadmap to achieve environmentally responsible energy recovery from MSW.



Installation and connectivity of OCEMS in air polluting industries operating in NCR-Delhi

CPCB, *vide* notification dated November 26, 2025, communicated that with a view to take measures relating to certification of instruments and equipment for monitoring air quality (emission), the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory, Delhi (“CSIR-NPL”), is designated as national verification agency. The CSIR-NPL has launched an OCEMS certification scheme and is in process of issuing OCEMS verification/conformity certificate. The CSIR-NPL has certified 21 (twenty one)

OCEMS models for various parameters. All SPCBs and PCCs of Delhi NCR are requested to ensure installation of only CSIR-NPL certified OCEMS in the air polluting industries. Such certified OCEMS will only be permitted for connectivity with CPCB server.



Ministry of Heavy Industries

Amendments to PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) Scheme

The Ministry of Heavy Industries, *vide* notification dated August 7, 2025, notified the amendments to the PM E-DRIVE Scheme. The amendments made to the Scheme are as follows:

1. the PM E-DRIVE Scheme, with an outlay of INR 10,900 crore (Indian Rupees ten thousand nine hundred crore), will be implemented from October 1, 2024, to March 31, 2028, for faster adoption of EVs, setting up of charging infrastructure and development of EV manufacturing eco-system in the country. Further, EMPS-2024 being implemented for the period from April 1, 2024, to September 30, 2024, is subsumed under this scheme; and
2. the total payout under the scheme will be limited to the scheme outlay of INR 10,900 crore (Indian Rupees ten thousand nine hundred crore). In case the funds for the scheme or its relevant sub-components are exhausted prior to the terminal date of the scheme i.e. March 31, 2028, then the scheme or its relevant sub-components will be closed accordingly i.e., no further claims will be entertained. However, the terminal date for registered e-2W, registered e-rickshaws & e-cart and registered e-3W (L5) will be March 31, 2026.

Operational Guidelines for deployment of EV Public Charging Stations under the PM E-DRIVE Scheme

The Ministry of Heavy Industries, *vide* notification dated September 26, 2025, notified the Operational Guidelines for deployment of EV Public Charging Stations under the PM E-DRIVE Scheme. The Government of India approved the PM E-DRIVE Scheme with an outlay of INR 10,900 crore (Indian Rupees ten thousand nine hundred crore), *vide* notification dated September 29, 2024. One of the objectives of the scheme is to expedite the adoption of EVs by facilitating the establishment of EV public charging stations. The Scheme envisages support of INR 2,000 crore (Indian Rupees two thousand crore) for setting up of adequate public charging infrastructure for various categories of vehicles to instil confidence amongst EV users. The norms recommend a tiered subsidy structure to be followed to support the installation of EV charging infrastructure across different locations. The Scheme provides varying levels of subsidy depending on the location:

1. 100% subsidy on infrastructure and equipment for Government premises with public access;
2. 80% on infrastructure and 70% on equipment at public sector-controlled locations such as airports, railway stations, metro stations, and fuel outlets;
3. 80% subsidy on infrastructure for other locations in cities and highways; and
4. 80% subsidy on infrastructure for BSS/BCS installations.

Securities and Exchange Board of India

Proposal to amend provisions relating to related party transactions under the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (“SEBI”) has, on August 4, 2025, issued a consultation paper on amendments to provisions relating to Related Party Transactions (“RPTs”) under the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 (“LODR Regulations”). Some of the key proposals are as follows:

1. threshold for determining material RPTs undertaken by listed entities;
2. threshold for determining material RPTs undertaken by subsidiaries of a listed entity;
3. relaxation in the minimum information to be furnished to the audit committee and shareholders for the approval of RPTs;
4. inclusion of a new provision (Regulation 23(4)) with respect to validity of omnibus approval for RPTs granted by the shareholders; and
5. explanation to clarify that the exemption from RPT approval requirements are applicable to transactions between a listed holding company and its wholly owned subsidiary.

SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) (Third Amendment) Regulations, 2025

SEBI, *vide* notification dated September 8, 2025, issued the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) (Third Amendment) Regulations, 2025, amending the LODR Regulations. Some of the key amendments are as follows:

1. Regulation 39(2A) is inserted stating that a listed entity must issue securities pursuant to any scheme of arrangement or any subdivision, split or consolidation of securities only in the dematerialised form. The listed entity must open a separate demat account for such securities of investors not having a demat account; and
2. Regulation 91E(2A) is inserted stating that social enterprises registered on a Social Stock Exchange ("SSE") without raising funds must submit a self-certified annual impact report. Provided that a Not-for-Profit Organisation ("NPO") that is registered on an SSE will be permitted not to raise funds through it for a maximum period of 2 (two) years from the date of registration or such duration as may be specified by SEBI. Provided further that upon expiry of the period of 2 (two) years from the date of registration, the NPO must have at least 1 (one) listed project, failing which it will cease to be registered.

SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) (Fourth Amendment) Regulations, 2025

SEBI, *vide* notification dated October 22, 2025, issued the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) (Fourth Amendment) Regulations, 2025, amending the LODR Regulations. Amendment is made to Regulation 56 of the LODR Regulations, requiring listed entities to forward specific information to the debenture trustee as soon as possible, and in any case not later than 24 (twenty-four) hours from the occurrence of the event or receipt of information (earlier it required debenture trustees to forward information promptly, the 24 (twenty four) hour time period was not mentioned).



SEBI (Delisting of Equity Shares) (Amendment) Regulations, 2025

SEBI, *vide* notification dated September 2, 2025, issued the SEBI (Delisting of Equity Shares) (Amendment) Regulations, 2025, amending the SEBI (Delisting of Equity Shares) Regulations, 2021. Special provisions dealing with delisting of public sector undertakings are inserted. Some of the key amendments are as follows:

1. they apply to delisting of equity shares of public sector undertakings, other than banks, non-banking financial companies and insurance companies, subject to certain conditions;
2. equity shares of a public sector undertaking can be delisted from all the recognised stock exchanges, subject to certain conditions, such as:
 - a) the aggregate shareholding of the acquirer along with other public sector undertaking(s) equals or exceeds 90% of the total issued shares of that class;

- b) the delisting is approved by the shareholders of the public sector undertaking by way of a special resolution passed through postal ballot or e-voting; and
 - c) the delisting is undertaken through the fixed price process; and
3. voluntary strike-off (effected after 1 (one) year from the date of delisting but not later than 30 (thirty) days from the expiry of such one-year period) initiated by a public sector undertaking, whose shares have been delisted will be subject to fulfilment of certain conditions, such as:
- a) any money owed to public shareholders who have not tendered their shares in the delisting process must be transferred to a designated account of the stock exchange;
 - b) if unclaimed after 7 (seven) years, the money must be transferred to the Investor Education and Protection Fund ("IEPF") under the Companies Act, 2013; and
 - c) if transfer to IEPF fails, the amount will be transferred to SEBI's investor protection and education fund. Investors can claim their dues from the stock exchange, which will then seek reimbursement from the relevant fund as per SEBI's specified procedures.

Minimum information to be provided to the audit committee and shareholders for approval of RPTs

To facilitate the ease of doing business for listed entities, SEBI, *vide* circular dated October 13, 2025, has eased the requirement to provide minimum information to the audit committee and shareholders for approval of RPTs.

Under the revised framework, listed entities are now required to provide detailed information as per the RPTs Industry Standards only for transactions exceeding 1% of their annual consolidated turnover or INR 10,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees ten crore), whichever is lower. For smaller transactions below these thresholds, entities may submit the simplified 'Minimum Information' format. Further, transactions not exceeding INR 1,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees one crore) in a FY are exempt from these requirements altogether. The changes aim to streamline compliance while maintaining adequate transparency for significant RPTs.

SEBI (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) (Third Amendment) Regulations, 2025

SEBI, *vide* notification dated October 31, 2025, issued the SEBI (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) (Third Amendment) Regulations, 2025, amending the SEBI (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2018. Amendments are made to Schedule XIII, Part A, paragraph (10) relating to the allocation norms for anchor investors in a book-built public issue. Some of the key amendments are as follows:

1. for an allocation of up to INR 250 crore (Indian Rupees two hundred fifty crore), a minimum of 2 (two) and a maximum of 15 (fifteen) anchor investors are permitted, with a mandatory minimum allotment of INR 5,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees five crore) per investor;
2. for allocations exceeding INR 250 crore (Indian Rupees two hundred fifty crore), a minimum of 5 (five) and a maximum of 15 (fifteen) investors are permitted for the first INR 250 crore (Indian Rupees two hundred fifty crore), plus an additional 15 (fifteen) investors for every subsequent INR 250 crore (Indian Rupees two hundred fifty crore) crore or part thereof, subject to a minimum allotment of INR 5,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees five crore) crore per investor; and
3. 40% of the anchor investor portion is now reserved, with 33.33% reserved for domestic mutual funds and 6.67% reserved for life insurance companies and pension funds. Any under-subscription in the life insurance/pension fund category may be allocated to domestic mutual funds.



International Financial Services Centres Authority

Master Circular for ESG Ratings and Data Products Providers in International Financial Services Centres

The International Financial Services Centres Authority (“**IFSCA**”), *vide* circular dated August 5, 2025, notified the Master Circular for ESG Ratings and Data Products Providers (“**ERDPP**”) in International Financial Services Centres (“**IFSCs**”). This circular specifies the requirements/ directions on various provisions pertaining to ERDPP under the IFSCA (Capital Market Intermediaries (“**CMIs**”)) Regulations, 2025 (“**CMI Regulations**”). Some of the key aspects are as follows:

1. an entity desirous of seeking registration as an ESG ratings and data products provider must apply to IFSCA for registration under the CMI Regulations and submit/file its applications exclusively through Single Window IT System (SWIT System);
2. the certificate of registration granted to a CMI will be perpetual unless it is suspended or cancelled by IFSCA;
3. ERDPP registered with IFSCA must have a principal officer and a compliance officer based out of the IFSC in compliance with the qualification and educational requirements as specified in the CMI Regulations;
4. the ERDPP must comply with the IFSCA (Anti Money Laundering, Counter Terrorist-Financing and Know Your Customer) Guidelines, 2022 and circulars and directions issued thereunder. Further, the ERDPP must ensure that the registration on FIU-IND FINGate 2.0 portal (“**FIU-IND Portal**”) is completed prior to commencement of business and in case of an urgency to commence business, the registration must be completed within 30 (thirty) days from the date of commencement of business. The ERDPP must also ensure that any addition or modification to their line of business is updated on the FIU-IND portal within a period of 30 (thirty) days from the date of commencement of such an additional line of business;
5. the ERDPP providing ESG ratings must have guidelines/criteria/methodology on the rating process and the same must be disclosed on its

website. Further, the ERDPP must segregate its activities relating to ESG Ratings and ESG Data Products from its other activities to ensure that there is no conflict of interest between these activities;

6. in terms of code of conduct provided under Schedule II of the CMI Regulations, the ERDPPs are required to have an internal policy for outsourcing of its activities from outside of IFSC prior to commencement of operations and the ERDPP must ensure compliance with the policy at all times;
7. the ERDPP must intimate IFSCA, within 15 (fifteen) days of any direct or indirect change in control of the intermediary; and
8. the ERDPP must submit reports to IFSCA on a quarterly basis in accordance with the requirements specified under the circular titled ‘Reporting Norms for CMIs’ dated February 8, 2024. Further, in terms of Regulation 25 of the CMI Regulations, the ERDPP must have an annual audit conducted in respect of compliance with the CMI Regulations and the copy of such compliance audit report for a FY must be furnished to IFSCA by September 30 of such year.



Ministry of Corporate Affairs

Companies (Meetings of Board and its Powers) Amendment Rules, 2025

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs, *vide* notification dated November 3, 2025, issued the Companies (Meetings of Board and its Powers) Amendment Rules, 2025, amending the Companies (Meetings of Board and its Powers) Rules, 2014. The following 2 (two) categories are inserted to the definition of ‘business of financing industrial enterprises’ under Rule 1(2):

1. for a non-banking financial company registered with the Reserve Bank of India, it includes the ordinary course of business of giving loans or

providing guarantees/security for loan repayment; and

2. for a finance company registered with IFSCA, the expression includes activities provided in specific sub-clauses of Regulation 5(1)(ii) of the IFSCA (Finance Company) Regulations, 2021, when done in the ordinary course of its business.



Government of Bihar, Energy Department

Bihar notifies Renewable Energy Policy, 2025 to accelerate clean energy deployment

The Government of Bihar notified the Bihar Policy for Promotion of Bihar New and Renewable Energy Sources, 2025 (“**Policy**”) on July 10, 2025, with the aim of harnessing 23.97 (twenty-three point nine seven) Gigawatt (“**GW**”) of Renewable Energy (“**RE**”) and 6.1 (six point one) GW-hour of energy storage by FY 2029–30. The Policy is aligned with national and international climate commitments and supersedes the 2017 version. It lays out technology-specific targets, promotes public-private participation, and introduces a comprehensive incentive framework to facilitate investments across solar, wind, hydro, biomass, energy storage, green hydrogen, and other emerging RE technologies. The Policy remains in force for 5 (five) years from its notification and provides benefits for projects commissioned during this period for up to 25 (twenty-five) years.

Salient features

1. **Targets and scope:** The Policy sets cumulative targets of 23,968 (twenty-three thousand nine hundred and sixty-eight) Megawatt (“**MW**”) for RE and 6,100 (six thousand one hundred) MW-hour for energy storage systems by FY 2029–30. These span utility-scale, distributed, and off-grid RE categories, including solar (ground-mounted, floating, agrivoltaics, canal-top), wind, biomass, small hydro, and waste-to-energy technologies.
2. **Energy storage promotion:** The Policy recognises energy storage as a standalone category and targets 4,500 (four thousand five hundred) MW-hour of grid-level battery storage and 1,600 (one thousand six hundred) MW-hour of pumped storage. Additional exemptions and longer incentive periods are granted to RE+storage projects.
3. **Nodal agencies:** Bihar Renewable Energy Development Agency (“**BREDA**”) is designated as the nodal agency for most RE technologies. Bihar State Power Generation Company Limited (BSPGCL) and Bihar State Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited (BHPC) will lead pumped storage and hydro power development, respectively.
4. **Incentive framework:**
 - a) Electricity duty: 100% exemption for captive/open access consumers for 15 (fifteen) years.
 - b) SGST: 100% reimbursement for RE materials for 5 (five) years.
 - c) Stamp duty and land conversion charges: 100% reimbursement.
 - d) Transmission, wheeling and state transmission utility charges: 100% exemption for intra-state use; extended to 20 (twenty) years for RE+ storage projects.
 - e) Banking: Permitted year-round, subject to BERC regulations.
5. **Tariff mechanisms:** Feed-in tariffs for sub-5 (five) MW projects, green tariff options for voluntary consumers, and enabling frameworks for group and virtual net metering are included. Distribution companies are also encouraged to procure power via competitive bidding or through solarisation of agriculture feeders.
6. **Single window clearance:** BREDA will operate a single window cell for time-bound project approvals (within 60 (sixty) days), clearance facilitation, and inter-departmental coordination.
7. **Land and resource allotment:** The Government land may be leased at concessional rates (e.g., for EV charging stations), and private land purchases

are permitted. A dedicated committee, Bihar Renewable Energy Resource Allotment Committee (BRERAC), is set up for land/resource allotments.

8. **Industry and manufacturing promotion:** RE projects are granted 'industry' status, with incentives aligned to Bihar's industrial policy. Dedicated RE manufacturing zones and equipment incentives (custom duty, State goods and services Tax, electricity duty waivers) are introduced.
9. **Research and Development ("R&D"):** A minimum of 5% of the RE budget will be dedicated to R&D, innovation, and skilling. BREDA will collaborate with IITs, NITs, and international agencies to establish RE research centers.
10. **EV charging and green mobility:** 50% concessional land rates for the first 1000 (one thousand) RE-based EV charging stations, alongside 25 (twenty-five) year exemptions from transmission and wheeling charges for captive RE use.
11. **'Must Run' and compensation:** RE projects are granted 'Must Run' status, with provisions for minimum generation compensation in case of grid failure or non-compliance by utilities.
12. **RE development fund:** A Bihar Renewable Energy Development Fund is established for disbursing incentives, infrastructure support, skill development, and innovation grants.

Conclusion

The Policy establishes an ambitious and multi-faceted roadmap to scale up clean energy adoption in the State. By combining sector-specific targets, robust fiscal and non-fiscal incentives, and institutional mechanisms for implementation and dispute resolution, the Policy positions Bihar to become a leading state in India's energy transition. Stakeholders planning to develop or invest in RE and energy storage in Bihar should evaluate opportunities under the Policy and prepare for participation within its operative window.



Haryana State Pollution Control Board

Third party/self certifications for dealing the cases of first consent to operate for green categories of industries covered under consent management of Haryana SPCB

The Haryana SPCB, *vide* notification dated November 12, 2025, introduced a revised procedure for obtaining the first consent to operate for green category industries, distinguishing the requirements based on the industry's scale.

1. Green Category (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises ("**MSMEs**")): units falling under the MSMEs category are processed on the basis of a self-declaration.
2. Green Category (Large Scale): industrial units/projects under this category require an inspection-cum-audit report prepared by a third party (an empaneled Environmental Engineer or authorised laboratory).

Kerala State Pollution Control Board

Treated effluent standards for sewage treatment plants

The Kerala SPCB ("**Kerala Board**"), *vide* notification dated November 19, 2025, modified the treated sewage quality standards issued *vide* circular September 20, 2025.

Clarification on distance criteria for M sand, rock dust, rock sand godown

Kerala Board, *vide* notification dated November 29, 2025, mandated the following pollution control measures for all M sand, rock dust, rock sand godowns irrespective of storage capacity:

1. loading and unloading activities shall be carried out in an area enclosed by a suitable material to mitigate dust and noise pollutions;
2. sprinkler facility shall be installed for controlling dust during loading and unloading operations;
3. details of the material handled (such as name, quantity) should be recorded daily in the log book;

4. the roads inside the compound wall shall be tarred or concreted and necessary arrangements shall be made to drain off wastewater from washing of vehicle tyres; and
5. the material must be transported in properly covered vehicles.

All M sand, rock dust, rock sand godowns, irrespective of storage capacity, must obtain consent of the Kerala Board under the Green Category.



Other developments

Rio de Janeiro Declaration-Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a more Inclusive and Sustainable Governance

The Prime Minister's Office, *vide* press release dated July 7, 2025, announced that the leaders of BRICS countries met in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on July 6 and July 7, 2025, for the XVII BRICS Summit held under the theme: 'Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a more Inclusive and Sustainable Governance'. Key environmental outcomes included the adoption of the BRICS Leaders' Framework Declaration on Climate Finance and endorsement of inclusive approaches to climate action, reflecting a shared vision for climate justice. The bloc also addressed the governance of emerging technologies, notably with the BRICS Leaders' Statement on the Global Governance of Artificial Intelligence, which emphasised responsible and ethical artificial intelligence development with equitable access and safeguards, especially for developing countries.

Cabinet approves enhanced delegation of power to NTPC Limited for investing in NTPC Renewable Energy Limited and its other joint ventures/ subsidiaries to set up renewable energy capacity

MoP, *vide* press release dated July 16, 2025, announced that the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has granted enhanced delegation of power to NTPC Limited from the extant guidelines of delegation of power to Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprises for making investment in NTPC Green Energy Limited ("NGEL"), a subsidiary company and subsequently, NGEL investing in NTPC Renewable Energy Limited and its other joint ventures/ subsidiaries beyond earlier approved prescribed limit of INR 7,500 crore (Indian Rupees seven thousand five hundred crore) upto an amount of INR 20,000 crore (Indian Rupees twenty thousand crore) for renewable energy capacity addition to achieve 60 (sixty) GW renewable energy capacity by 2032. The enhanced delegation given to NTPC and NGEL will facilitate accelerated development of renewable projects in the country. This move will also play a vital role in strengthening power infrastructure and ensuring investment in providing reliable, round-the-clock electricity access across the nation.

Commission for Air Quality Management sets up dedicated cell in SAS Nagar(Mohali), Punjab for year-round monitoring and coordination of paddy stubble management

MoEFCC, *vide* press release dated July 29, 2025, announced that the Commission for Air Quality Management ("CAQM") has established a dedicated CAQM Cell at SAS Nagar (Mohali), Punjab to ensure comprehensive and sustained efforts for the management of paddy stubble in Punjab and Haryana. The newly established cell will function throughout the year, overseeing the entire ecosystem of paddy stubble management, from planning and farmer engagement to coordinating with stakeholders and monitoring the supply chain for continuous and assured delivery of paddy straw to end-users. In addition to its core mandate of managing paddy stubble, the cell will also monitor and coordinate air pollution control measures in identified thermal power plants, particularly focusing on biomass co-firing initiatives.

India's resolution to the Ramsar Contracting Parties on 'Promoting Sustainable Lifestyles for the Wise Use of Wetlands', adopted at RamsarCoP15 in Zimbabwe

MoEFCC, *vide* press release dated July 30, 2025, announced that at the Ramsar 15th Conference of Parties being held at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, India introduced a resolution on 'Promoting Sustainable Lifestyles for the Wise Use of Wetlands'. The resolution received overwhelming support from the 172 (one hundred seventy-two) Ramsar contracting parties, 6 (six) International organisation partners and other observers and was formally adopted at the plenary session on July 30, 2025. Representing India, the Minister highlighted the country's significant strides in wetland protection, including the expansion of its Ramsar network by 250% over the past decade.

Among the most notable outcomes was the adoption of a resolution on wetland restoration. Parties committed to developing or improving national legislation and policies for the restoration of degraded freshwater ecosystems, in addition to protection and sustainable management.

India's mineral sector to benefit from the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement

The Ministry of Mines, *vide* press release dated August 12, 2025, outlined the key points addressed in the webinar organised on 'India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement ("CETA") and benefits to the Indian mineral sector'. The webinar was held with the objective of bringing together Indian mineral industry to discuss potential benefits and opportunities arising from India-UK CETA. In his address, Secretary (Mines) Shri V L Kantha Rao, highlighted the opportunities for the Indian mineral sector, particularly the aluminium industry, in terms of enhanced market access and competitiveness in the free trade agreement partner country. Towards making good use of the CETA provisions, he emphasised the need to understand product demand in UK through roadshows. He also cited opportunities in research and development collaboration between the 2 (two) countries.



Ministry of Coal successfully launches the 13th Round of Commercial Coal Mine Auctions

The Ministry of Coal, *vide* press release dated August 21, 2025, announced that it has successfully launched the 13th round of Commercial Coal Mine Auctions in New Delhi. Shri G. Kishan Reddy highlighted that the coal sector is emerging as a key champion of Atmanirbhar Bharat, with a transparent and inclusive auction system attracting new companies and junior mining firms, providing them fresh opportunities to enter the industry. He further stated that with 134 (one hundred thirty four) mines auctioned across 12 (twelve) rounds, attracting investments worth INR 41,600 crore (Indian Rupees forty one thousand crore) and generating over 3,50,000 (three lakh fifty thousand) jobs, we are reshaping India's energy landscape. The 13th round introduces 14 (fourteen) coal blocks, further reducing reliance on imports and conserving foreign exchange. The transparent auction process has fostered healthy competition, compelling public sector undertakings to innovate and compete with private players, thereby enhancing operational efficiency and global competitiveness.

India and Japan strengthen energy cooperation through Ministerial dialogue

MoP, *vide* press release dated August 25, 2025, announced that India and Japan have been deepening their partnership in the energy sector under the Japan-India Clean Energy Partnership, with a focus on energy security, clean energy transition, and addressing climate change. Both sides have institutionalised this cooperation through the India-Japan Energy Dialogue and sectoral Joint Working Groups. A Ministerial-level India-Japan energy dialogue was held through video

conferencing, and the Ministers from India and Japan reaffirmed commitment to energy security and inclusive growth and agreed to expand cooperation on carbon capture, utilisation, and storage green chemicals, biofuels, and advanced technologies in energy sector.



India and Japan sign Memorandum of Cooperation Joint Crediting Mechanism under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change

MoEFCC, *vide* press release dated August 29, 2025, announced that India and Japan have signed a Memorandum of Cooperation on Joint Crediting Mechanism (“JCM”) under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The development demonstrates India’s firm commitment to climate action and marks yet another milestone in the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The JCM will encourage the flow of investment, technology assistance, including technology transfer and capacity building support for the implementation of projects involving these low carbon technologies. It will also develop domestic ecosystem and partnerships to localise low carbon technologies and associated high technology interventions related to equipment, machinery, products, systems and infrastructure, paving the way for their large-scale deployment.

Goods and Services Tax reforms in mining sector to boost housing and small-scale enterprises

The 56th meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (“GST”) Council was held in New Delhi on September 11, 2025, under the chairpersonship of the Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman.

Recommendations were made relating to changes in GST tax rates and slabs for items related to mining sector which will have a positive impact on housing industry and small-scale enterprises. Under the new rates, marble and travertine blocks and granite blocks will now attract GST rate of 5% compared to the earlier rate of 12%. This reduction in GST rates will benefit the housing sector as these marble and granite are used largely in housing industry. Granite and marble extraction are happening in States like Rajasthan, Gujarat and Karnataka. In addition to this, reduction of GST rates on sand lime bricks or stone inlay work will help lower the construction cost of low-cost housing, especially in rural areas. The GST rates of such items are also being brought down to 5% from 12%.

HCL and OIL sign Memorandum of Understanding for collaboration in exploration and development of critical and strategic minerals

To strengthen India's self-reliance in critical and strategic mineral sourcing, Oil India Limited (“OIL”) and Hindustan Copper Limited (“HCL”) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (“MoU”) on September 19, 2025, to co-operate and collaborate for exploration and development of critical and strategic minerals including copper and associated minerals. HCL, a Miniratna Public Sector Undertaking (“PSU”) under the Ministry of Mines, is engaged in mining, production, processing, and marketing of copper and related products. The company is currently focused on mining and beneficiation of copper ore and the sale of copper concentrate. OIL, a Maharatna PSU under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, is a premier integrated oil and gas company with proven expertise in exploration, development, production, and transportation of crude oil and natural gas. Recognising the growing importance of critical minerals, OIL has diversified into this sector to complement its core energy portfolio. The MoU between HCL and OIL represents a crucial milestone in India’s pursuit of mineral security. Aligned with the objectives of the Government of India’s National Critical Mineral Mission, this partnership will play a pivotal role in securing strategic mineral resources essential for the nation’s energy security, industrial growth, and technological advancement.

3 major ports recognised as green hydrogen hubs under National Green Hydrogen Mission

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has recognised the following 3 (three) major ports as green hydrogen hubs under National Green Hydrogen Mission:

1. Deendayal Port Authority (Gujarat);
2. V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority (Tamil Nadu); and
3. Paradip Port Authority (Odisha).

This move marks a significant step towards creating an integrated hydrogen ecosystem and advancing India's transition towards clean energy. Recognised under the revised guidelines for Hydrogen Valley Innovation Clusters and Green Hydrogen Hubs, these ports aim to serve as key centres for clean energy development, attracting green investments and facilitating access to Government incentives. The initiative supports India's clean energy transition and its goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070.



Ministry of Mines recognises two more centres of excellence under the National Critical Mineral Mission

The Ministry of Mines recognised the following 2 (two) institutes besides 7 (seven) institutes recognised earlier, as Centres of Excellence under the National Critical Mineral Mission:

1. Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore; and
2. Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (C-MET), Hyderabad.

India's expanding green footprint

India has achieved a significant milestone in global forest statistics by advancing to the 9th position

worldwide in terms of total forest area, according to the Food and Agriculture Organisation's Global Forest Resources Assessment ("GFRA") 2025 released on October 22, 2025. Some of the key highlights are as follows:

1. India has moved up to 9th position globally in terms of total forest area as per GFRA 2025;
2. India continues to maintain 3rd position worldwide in terms of net annual forest area gain;
3. India ranked 5th among the top global carbon sinks, with its forests removing 150 (one hundred fifty) metric tons of CO₂ per year during 2021-2025;
4. Total global forest area is 4.14 billion (four point one four billion) hectares, covering 32% of Earth's land area; and
5. The annual rate of net forest loss fell from 10.7 million (ten point seven million) hectares (1990–2000) to 4.12 million (four point twelve million) hectares (2015–2025).

Review of the Incentive Scheme for critical mineral recycling

The Incentive Scheme is a key component of the National Critical Mineral Mission, aimed at developing the recycling capacity in the country for extraction of critical minerals from secondary sources such as E-waste, spent lithium-ion batteries and other scrap. During the review by the Secretary (Ministry of Mines), Jawaharlal Nehru Aluminium Research, Development and Design Centre ("JNARDDC"), was asked to conduct such consultations and engagement sessions throughout the implementation phase to support stakeholders and ensure the successful implementation of the Scheme. JNARDDC also reaffirmed its commitment to extend continuous support through helpdesk assistance and clarificatory responses.

India welcomes key outcomes at UNFCCC CoP30; reaffirms commitment to equity, climate justice and global solidarity

India expressed strong support for the inclusive leadership of the CoP30 Presidency and welcomed several significant decisions adopted at the conference, in the High-level Statement ("Statement") at the

Closing Plenary of the UNFCCC CoP30 in Belém, Brazil. Reiterating India's principled approach to climate action, the Statement highlighted that it must be ensured that the burden of Climate Change Mitigation is not shifted onto the shoulders of those who have the least responsibility in causing the problem. The need for greater global support to vulnerable populations, a large majority of whom are in the global South, was stressed upon so that they may protect themselves from the escalating impacts of climate change. India reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to science-based and equitable climate action. It was observed that India remains committed to a global order that is rules-based, equitable and respectful of national sovereignty. In conclusion, the Statement reaffirmed India's support and gratitude to Brazil and the international community in the road ahead. It called on all parties to put in collective effort to ensure that the road from Belém leads to a future defined by fairness, solidarity and shared prosperity for all.



Supreme Court judgments/orders

Acquisition of land does not violate any constitutional/fundamental right of the displaced persons

The Supreme Court of India ("Supreme Court"), in its judgment dated July 14, 2025, in the case of *Estate Officer, Haryana Urban Development Authority and Ors. vs. Nirmala Devi*,¹ held that in cases of land acquisition a plea based on deprivation of the right to livelihood under Article 21 of the Constitution will not legally sustainable. It observed that the oustees will be entitled to resettlement and rehabilitation as per the policy framed for the oustees of the project concerned. Furthermore, when land is acquired for any public purpose the person whose land is taken away is

entitled to appropriate compensation in accordance with the settled principles of law. It is only in the rarest of the rare case that the Government may consider floating any scheme for rehabilitation of the displaced persons over and above paying them compensation in terms of money. It further stated that a grant of mandatory injunction under Section 39 of the Specific Relief Act, 1963 is discretionary, and can be granted only upon the breach of an enforceable legal obligation. For granting a mandatory injunction under Section 39 of the Specific Relief Act, 1963, as developed over time by a catena of decisions of the court, the following conditions must be satisfied:

1. **Obligation:** There must be a clear obligation on the part of the defendant.
2. **Breach:** A breach of that obligation must have occurred or be reasonably apprehended.
3. **Necessity:** It must be necessary to compel the performance of specific acts to prevent or rectify the breach.
4. **Enforceability:** The court must be able to enforce the performance of those acts.
5. **Balance of convenience:** The balance of convenience must be in favour of the party seeking the injunction.
6. **Irreparable injury:** The injury or damage caused by the breach must be irreparable or not adequately compensable in monetary terms.

Supreme Court sets aside the National Green Tribunal's orders

The Supreme Court, in its judgment dated September 1, 2025, in the case of *M/S. Triveni Engineering and Industries Ltd. vs. State of Uttar Pradesh And Ors.*,² has set aside the National Green Tribunal ("NGT"), Principal Bench, New Delhi ("NGT Delhi") orders imposing environmental compensation of INR 18,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees eighteen crore) for alleged illegal discharge of untreated effluents, due to non-compliance with proper procedure. Emphasising the importance of the principles of natural justice and statutory procedure, the Supreme Court held that NGT Delhi cannot delegate its investigative and adjudicatory functions to administrative committees or bypass legal safeguards. The Supreme Court

¹ 2025 INSC 843

² 2025 INSC 1060

reinforced the need to adhere to the procedure for investigation prescribed under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, as well as compliance with the principles of natural justice. Given the procedural lapses, the Supreme Court declared the NGT Delhi orders illegal. Separately, it granted liberty to the Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board to inspect and take remedial action against the appellant, in accordance with applicable law.

Supreme Court upheld Bombay High Court's decision on Futala Lake

The Supreme Court, in its judgment dated October 7, 2025, in the case of *Swacch Association, Nagpur vs. State of Maharashtra and Ors.*³, dismissed the appeal by Swacch Association, Nagpur, and upheld the Bombay High Court's decision to allow specific constructions around Futala Lake in Nagpur. The case put forward by the appellant was that the said Futala Lake was a 'wetland' and it ought to be protected for its environmental value and that the constructions which were made there were of permanent nature. The Supreme Court dismissed the appeal and affirmed the Bombay High Court's judgment, finding that the Futala Lake was created in 1799 for irrigational needs and ruled that the lake is a man-made body that does not fall under the statutory definition of a 'wetland' as per the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017. Further, the Supreme Court stated that it is only proper that this waterbody in the city of Nagpur continues to exist with twin objectives, namely to bring public good for the citizens of the city of Nagpur and also contribute to maintain environment friendliness without causing any ecological damage, both to the waterbody itself as well as to the quality of aqua life. The Supreme Court expressly held that the public trust doctrine would extend in respect of man-made or artificially created natural objects, waterbodies, lakes, wetlands, etc. which are drawn and created from the nature or natural resources. This would in ultimate analysis pave way to extend to ensure the availment of right of healthy environment and ecological balance recognised for the citizens under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. At the same time, promoting sustainable development for public good is not alien to it.



Supreme Court directions on tiger safaris: eco-sensitive zones and silence zones for all tiger reserves and bans tiger safaris in core/critical tiger habitats

The Supreme Court, in its judgment dated November 17, 2025, in the case of *T. N. Godavarman Thirumulpad vs. Union of India and Ors.*⁴, issued significant directions on tiger reserve governance. Some of the key findings are as follows:

1. with respect to Corbett Tiger Reserve, the Central Empowered Committee will monitor and supervise the implementation of the ecological restoration plan developed by the State of Uttarakhand;
2. with respect to tiger reserves where roads traverse the core/critical tiger habitat, strict night regulation (no traffic from dusk to dawn except ambulances/emergency) needs to be exercised. Further, all the States are directed to notify the buffer and core areas of the tiger reserves within 6 (six) months from the date of this judgment; and
3. all State Governments are directed to notify eco-sensitive zones around all tiger reserves within 1 (one) year from the date of this judgment. Further, it is clarified that the minimum eco-sensitive zones extent will be the entire buffer/fringe area; where buffer is disjunct/absent, a radial cushion of 1 (one) km from the critical habitat must be included and there will be a complete ban on mining activities.

³ 2025 INSC 1199

⁴ 2025 INSC 1325

Supreme Court review decision on projects commenced/expanded without EC case

The Supreme Court, in its judgment dated November 18, 2025, in the case of **Confederation Of Real Estate Developers Of India (“CREDAI”) vs. Vanashakti and Anr.**⁵, addressed the review petition revisiting the Supreme Court’s earlier judgment dated May 16, 2025 in *Vanashakti v. Union of India*⁶ (“JUR”), which had struck down the notification of MoEFCC dated March 14, 2017 permitting a one-time route to process ‘violation’ cases and its July 7, 2021 office memorandum laying down a standard operating procedure to handle such cases. The JUR had also adopted an uncompromising remedial consequence demolition/closure for projects commenced/expanded without prior EC, even where penalties were paid. CREDAI sought review, supported by public-sector project proponents including the Steel Authority of India Limited (through its subsidiary) and the State of Karnataka (for an already-constructed greenfield airport). They contended that the JUR overlooked binding coordinate-bench precedent, misapplied Section 15 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, and would cause disproportionate and counterproductive demolition of public-interest infrastructure.

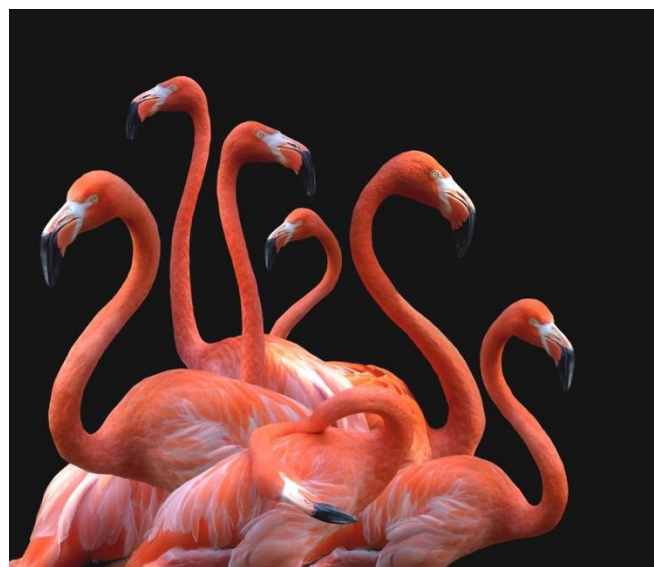
Through this review judgment, Supreme Court recalled its earlier judgment that banned ex post facto (retrospective) ECs, ruling by a 2:1 majority that such clearances could be allowed in exceptional cases with heavy penalties, to prevent devastating demolition of public projects.

Supreme Court clarifies the rules for calculating the limitation period for challenging an EC appeals

The Supreme Court, in its judgment dated November 19, 2025, in the case of **Talli Gram Panch vs. Union of India and Ors.**⁷, dismissed the appeal and laid down the rules for calculating the limitation period for challenging an EC before NGT. The Supreme Court stated that “Where multiple statutory “duty bearers” are obliged to communicate the grant of an EC to “any person aggrieved”, the limitation period under Section

16(h) of the NGT Act, 2010 starts from the earliest date on which the EC is clearly and completely communicated to the public by any of those duty bearers”. Further, the Supreme Court clarified that:

1. ‘Communication’ in this context is in rem, not merely in personam;
2. publication of the fact of grant of EC and an indication where full details can be accessed is sufficient; publication of the entire EC document in newspapers is not required; and
3. once the earliest effective communication occurs, a person aggrieved cannot rely on later communications (such as Right to Information replies) to extend or reset the limitation period.



Supreme Court directions on endangered birds: Great Indian Bustard and the Lesser Florican and scaling up of renewable energy

The Supreme Court, in its judgment dated December 19, 2025, in the case of **M.K. Ranjitsinh & Ors. vs. Union of India and Ors.**⁸, has endorsed the Expert Committee’s⁹ recommendations for both Rajasthan and Gujarat for long-term monitoring of Great Indian Bustard and Lesser Florican populations and habitats, including climate change impacts. The Supreme Court took an ecocentric worldview, as opposed to a purely anthropocentric one. Drawing on the Bishnoi community’s ethos, it endorsed the perspective that: “By practising ecocentric living, they honour the intrinsic

⁵ 2025 INSC 1326

⁶ 2025 SCC OnLine SC 1139

⁷ 2025 SCC OnLine SC 2497

⁸ 2025 INSC 1472

⁹ which was constituted by the Order dated March 21, 2024

value of every living being sustaining a delicate harmony that thrived long before we were told that we can conquer nature and overrule it."

Further, the Supreme Court underlined the necessity of solar and wind power for India's energy needs but stressed that infrastructure development must be environmentally sensitive. The Supreme Court directed the Inspector General, Wildlife Division, MoEFCC, for overseeing and implementing the approved recommendations of the Committee within 2 (two) years from the date of this judgment which include completing mitigation measures such as undergrounding, re-routing, and corridor optimisation, including undergrounding 250 (two hundred and fifty) kms of critical lines identified by Director, Wildlife Institute of India in Rajasthan.

Supreme Court defines the area of 'Aravali Hills' and 'Aravali Ranges'

The Supreme Court, in its judgment dated December 20, 2025, in the case of **T. N. Godavarman Thirumulpad vs. Union of India and Ors.**¹⁰, addressed the legal operative definition of Aravalli Hills and Ranges. The Supreme Court accepted the operational definition recommended by a committee constituted by its order dated May 9, 2024. Accordingly for the purposes of mining, it has defined 'Aravalli Hill' as any landform in identified Aravalli districts with an elevation of 100 (hundred) metres or more above the local relief (measured from the lowest contour line encircling the landform). The entire landform within that lowest contour, including the hill, its supporting slopes and associated landforms. Further, the 'Aravalli Range' is defined as a range where 2 (two) or more Aravali Hills are located within 500 (five hundred) metres of each other (measured between the boundaries of their lowest contour lines), the entire intervening area, along with associated slopes, hillocks etc. Further, the Supreme Court clarified that mining activities already being undertaken in the Aravali Hills and Ranges must be carried out strictly in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee's Report.



National Green Tribunal judgments/orders

NGT grants 4 weeks for removing the encroachments from the flood plain of River Hindon

NGT Delhi, *vide* order dated July 23, 2025, in the case of **Shri Krishan Kashyap vs. State of Uttar Pradesh**, has granted the Irrigation Department and Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority, 4 (four) weeks' time to file the progress report on removing the encroachments from the flood plain of River Hindon.

NGT grants 2 months for demolition of illegally constructed promenade on Aksa Beach

NGT, Western Zone Bench, Pune ("**NGT Pune**"), *vide* order dated September 16, 2025, in the case of **Banda Nagaraj Kumar and Anr. vs. Maharashtra Maritime Board and Ors.**¹¹, ordered the demolition of a concrete promenade constructed by the Maharashtra Maritime Board ("**MMB**") on Aksa Beach in Mumbai, finding it to be in violation of the Coastal Regulation Zone ("**CRZ**") Notification, 2011 ("**CRZ Notification**"). NGT Pune observed that in terms of the CRZ Notification, 2011 and the CRZ clearance granted to the project, the MMB was only permitted to construct an anti-sea erosion bund, beyond which, no permanent construction could have been erected at the site, which falls within the CRZ area. Accordingly, NGT Pune, while noting that the construction of the promenade exceeded the authority conferred on the Board by the Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority, directed its removal within 2 (two) months.

¹⁰ 2025 INSC 1338

¹¹ Original Application No.77 of 2023 (WZ)

NGT disposes of the illegal mining case against the State in Uttar Pradesh

NGT, Principal Bench, *vide* order dated October 28, 2025, in the case of **Satish vs. MoEFCC and Ors.**¹², disposed of the case stating that no illegal mining had occurred outside the demarcated area and concluded that no further action was required in the original application.

In this case, the allegation was that the area advertised in the advertisement dated June 20, 2021, had different geo-coordinates contrary to the area for which the mining plan was approved, EC was issued and lease deed was executed. Therefore, the applicant had taken the plea that illegal mining was done by the District Magistrate, Siddharthnagar. NGT had directed the State

Level EIA Authority, Uttar Pradesh (“SEIAA”), to investigate and disclose if any mining had taken place in the unadvertised area before the EC was put on hold. The SEIAA in its reply stated to NGT that while there were incorrect coordinates in the initial EC, no mining was conducted outside the officially demarcated lease area. Further, it was also disclosed that the lessee applied for the surrender of the lease, and the lease was cancelled by an order dated January 2, 2025. In light of the lease cancellation and the clarification that no illegal mining occurred outside the demarcated area, NGT concluded that no further action was required in the original application, and accordingly, the case was disposed of.



¹² Original Application No. 591/2023 (I.A. Nos. 744/2023 & 745/2023)

Environment, ESG and Climate Change Practice

JSA advises and represents clients in environmental disputes before the National Green Tribunal, High Court(s) and the Supreme Court. We also advise clients on ESG issues and assist them in ensuring compliance with the relevant laws. The Firm has been regularly advising clients in matters relating to climate change and energy transition.

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19 Practices and
40 Ranked Lawyers



7 Ranked Practices,
21 Ranked Lawyers



15 Practices and
20 Ranked Lawyers



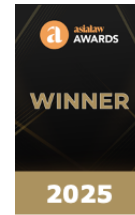
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