

**Minutes of 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Maharashtra State Tree Authority held on 17<sup>th</sup>  
January 2022**

The first meeting of the Maharashtra State Tree Authority was held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 12.30 pm under the Chairmanship of Principal Secretary, Environment and Climate Change, GoM through video conferencing. List of Members present for the said meeting is as follows:


1. Mrs. Vidya Hampyya, Deputy Secretary, Urban Development Dept, GoM
2. Mr. Gajendra Narvane, Deputy Secretary, Revenue & Forest Dept, GoM
3. Mr. Vaibhav Raje, Expert Member, State Tree Authority
4. Mr. Narendra Toke, Member Secretary, State Tree Authority

The Director, Environment & Climate Change Dept, GoM and Member Secretary of the Maharashtra State Tree Authority welcomed all members of the Authority for 1<sup>st</sup> meeting the State Tree Authority constituted under sub-section (A-1) of section 3 of the Maharashtra (Urban areas) protection and preservation of Trees Act, 1975

The Member Secretary briefed members about the amendment dated 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021 to Maharashtra (Urban areas) protection and preservation of Trees Act, 1975. He further explained that the authority has received several proposals for tree cutting/transplant from urban local bodies, which are not in consonance with the amended provisions of the Tree Act, 1975. In order to ensure that each proposal is in accordance with the provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975, following Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is now proposed:

1. Project proponent shall present the live google map of the location/locations concerning with tree felling proposal.
2. Tree Census of the plot concerning tree felling shall be carried out considering the following:
  - a) Tree census to include, the name, age, species, status (to be cut / transplanted / retained).
  - b) Work out age of each tree proposed to be cut / transplanted. Estimate approx. age of tree to be worked out in consultation / coordination with Forest official / social forestry official, wherever required.

  
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- c) Total number of heritage trees shall be clearly specified in the tree census.
  - d) Age of Heritage to be estimated by local tree Authority
3. The tree census prepared shall be attested / verified by the concerned tree officer / forest officer.
  4. The proposal referred to Maharashtra Tree Authority by the concern Planning Authority/local Tree Authority shall include details of public notice issued by Planning Authority, suggestions/ objections received, Mitigation measures along with opinion of concerned tree officer on the objections and/or suggestions received.
  5. The proposal shall consist of cumulative age of trees to be cut/transplanted along with detailed plan for compensatory plantation. Such plan shall include details of land where the compensatory plantation will be carried out.
  6. The project proponent shall provide details of alternative plans for proposed activity with details of trees to be felled for each of the alternative options. The proponents shall prepare alternative site analysis matrix and submit the same along with proposal for finalizing the best suitable option.


After deliberation the Authority decided to approve the above said SOP as per provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975. It was further decided that project proponent should submit their proposal in accordance with above said SOP to the Authority through the concerned Planning Authority/ local Tree Authority.

The deliberations of the received proposals are as follows:

**Sr. No. 1: Proposal of Construction of Sewri- Worli Elevated Connector by MMRDA submitted through MCGM**

The MMRDA official Mr. Bhangre presented the proposal before the Authority. The proposal is submitted for the permission of tree cutting & transplantation in F-south and G-south ward for the construction of Sewri-Worli 4 lane elevated Connector Bridge. Total number of trees falling in proposed alignment

  
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of project is 833. Number of trees to be cut is 305 and number of trees to be replanted are 104 and number of trees to be retained are 424.

The Authority heard the presentation made by MMRDA and explained the SOP formulated as per provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975 for submission of the proposal before the State Tree Authority. The Authority observed that the project proponent need to submit the proposal within the framework of the above finalized SOP. Accordingly, the Authority decided to refer the case back for compliance as per SOP. Hence, the matter was deferred.

**Sr. No. 2: Proposal for cutting of unsafe trees at Balasaheb Thackrey Smurti Van, submitted by Aurangabad Mahanagar Palika.**

The Garden Superintendent, Mr. Vijay Patil presented the proposal before the Authority. The proposal is submitted for the permission to cut/transplant 4368 trees which are located at Shri Balasaheb Thackrey Smurti Van, Aurangabad.

The Authority heard the presentation made by the Garden Superintendent and explained the SOP formulated as per provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975 for submission of the proposal before the State Tree Authority. The Authority observed that the project proponent need to submit the proposal within the framework of the above finalized SOP. Accordingly, the Authority decided to refer the case back for compliance as per SOP. Hence, the matter was deferred.


The Authority observed that in future Municipal Commissioner, Aurangabad shall be present before the Authority for deliberations on the proposal.

**Sr. No. 3 & 4: Proposal for construction of Intermodal station at Ajni Nagpur, submitted by the Nagpur Municipal Corporation**

The Municipal Commissioner, Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC) presented the proposal before the Authority. The proposal is submitted for the permission to cut/transplant 4930 trees that are blocking construction of the "Inter Modal Station Building" at Ajni Railway station in Nagpur.

It was further informed that public notice was issued by the NMC. The NMC has received around 7791 suggestions / objections on the proposal from the public domain. The Public Interest Litigation (PIL No. 09/2021) has been filed objecting

  
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the proposal by Shweta D/o Dipendra Burbure against Nagpur Municipal Corporation.

It was further presented that considering said suggestions / objections, proposal was re-worked and alternative plans / options were exhaustively studied. However, no other site was found to be suitable for the project.

The Authority deliberated the proposal and it was suggested that alternative site analysis with matrix should be submitted by the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI). The NHAI shall submit the undertaking confirming the best suitable site based on site analysis matrix.

The Authority heard the presentation made by the Municipal Commissioner and explained the SOP formulated as per provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975 for submission of the proposal before the State Tree Authority. The Authority observed that the project proponent needs to submit the proposal within the framework of the above said SOP. Additionally, alternative site analysis with matrix along with undertaking confirming the best suitable site should be submitted by the NHAI. The Municipal Commissioner accepted that as per the amended Tree Act, the proposal need to be reworked considering the tree census and the age of tree, since the proposal was proposed by the Nagpur Mahanagar Palika as per earlier Tree Act 1975. It was further informed that the said facts will be brought to the notice of Hon'ble High Court by NMC.

Accordingly, the Authority decided to refer the case back for compliance as per SOP and alternative site analysis matrix and undertaking by NHAI as stated above. After receipt of said compliance, the matter would be taken up for deliberation. Nagpur Municipal Commissioner to appraise the matter to Hon'ble High Court. Accordingly, the matter was deferred.

**Sr. No. 5: Proposal for construction of Super Specialty Hospital by Bharat Ratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Hospital submitted through MCGM.**

The MCGM official Mr Pardesi, Garden Superintendent presented the proposal before the Authority. The proposal is submitted for the permission to

  
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cut/transplant 518 trees coming under the construction of Super Specialty Hospital at Babasaheb Ambedkar Hospital, Kandivali, Mumbai.

The Authority heard the presentation made by the Mr. Pardesi and explained the SOP formulated as per provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975 for submission of the proposal before the State Tree Authority. The Authority observed that the project proponent needs to submit the proposal within the framework of the above said SOP. Accordingly, the Authority decided to refer the case back for compliance as per SOP. Hence, the matter was deferred.

**Sr. No. 6: Proposal for construction of Medical college at Talegaon Dabhade by MIMER medical College submitted by Talegaon Dabhade Nagar Parishad.**

The Talegaon Dabhade Nagar Parishad official Vijay Patil, Garden Superintendent presented the proposal before the Authority. The proposal is submitted for the permission to cut/transplant 60 trees which are obstructing the construction of medical college at Talegaon Dabhade out of which 17 trees are more than 50 years old.


The Authority heard the presentation made by the Garden Superintendent and explained the SOP formulated as per provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975 for submission of the proposal before the State Tree Authority. The Authority observed that the project proponent needs to submit the proposal within the framework of the above said SOP. Accordingly, the Authority decided to refer the case back for compliance as per SOP. Therefore, the matter was deferred.

The Authority observed that in future Chief Officer, Talegaon Dabhade Nagar Parishad shall be present before the Authority for deliberations on the proposal.

**Sr. No.7: Proposal for construction of 400KV transmission line from Kharghar to Vikhroli submitted by the Adani Power Pvt Ltd.**

Representatives of M/s Adani Power Pvt Ltd presented the proposal before the authority. The project is critical to the Mumbai City as the existing capacity of the transmission corridor is not sufficient to carry further power in the city, this project would enable the additional power to be brought into Mumbai city and would

  
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thus help us to meet the future demand of the city. The proposal was regarding cutting of 743 trees which are causing obstruction in construction of 400 KV transmission line having a length of 22.5 Km connecting the MSETCL substation at Kharghar to GIS substation at Vikhroli. Further he informed that CIDCO/ concerned local body will carry out entire procedure as per Tree Act, 1975 amended thereof and forward the proposal to the Authority.

The Authority heard the presentation made by the officials from Adani Power Pvt Ltd and explained the SOP formulated as per provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975 for submission of the proposal before the State Tree Authority. The Authority observed that the project proponent need to submit the proposal within the framework of the above finalized SOP. Accordingly, the Authority decided to refer the case back for compliance as per SOP. Hence, the matter was deferred.

**Sr. No.8: Proposal for cutting 208-year-old tree for construction of residential building at Sitabuldi, Nagpur submitted by the Nagpur Mahanagar Palika.**

The Municipal Commissioner, Nagpur Municipal Corporation presented the proposal before the Authority. The proposal is submitted for the permission to cut a 208-year-old Pipal tree which is located at property owned by Mr. Ghanshyam Purohit in Sitabuldi. It was further presented that alternative plan for the said proposal is under consideration, taking into account the protection of Heritage Tree.

The Authority discussed the necessity of protection of Heritage Trees and suggested that project proponent need to explore various alternative plan/designs for construction of a building in consultation with Architect and Town Planning officials, with an objective to preserve Heritage Tree. Municipal Commissioner also concurred on the same.

The Authority heard the presentation made by the Municipal Commissioner and explained the SOP formulated as per provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975 for submission of the proposal before the State Tree Authority. The Authority observed that the project proponent need to submit the proposal within the framework of the above finalized SOP. Various alternative plan/designs for construction of a building should be explored for preservation of Heritage tree, as stated above. Accordingly,

  
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the Authority decided to refer the case back for compliance as per SOP. Hence, the matter was deferred.

**Sr. No.9: Proposal for widening of the road at Jogeshwari-Vikhroli Link road submitted by MCGM.**

The MCGM officials presented the proposal before the Authority. The proposal is submitted for the permission to cut / transplant 550 trees which are causing obstruction in widening of the road at Jogeshwari-Vikhroli Link road from western express highway to K east ward boundary.

The Authority heard the presentation made by the MCGM officials and explained the SOP formulated as per provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975 for submission of the proposal before the State Tree Authority. The Authority observed that the project proponent needs to submit the proposal within the framework of the above finalized SOP. Accordingly, the Authority decided to refer the case back for compliance as per SOP. Hence, the matter was deferred

**Sr. No.10: Proposal for construction of elevated viaduct of Mumbai Metro Project from ESIC Nagar to Nanavati Hospital submitted by the MMRDA.**

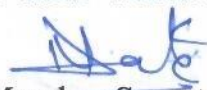
The MMRDA officials presented the proposal before the Authority. The proposal is submitted for the permission to cut / transplant 233 trees for the construction 11 substation from ESIC Nagar to Nanavati Hospital.

The Authority heard the presentation made by the MMRDA officials and explained the SOP formulated as per provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975 for submission of the proposal before the State Tree Authority. The Authority observed that the project proponent need to submit the proposal within the framework of the above finalized SOP. Accordingly, the Authority decided to refer the case back for compliance as per SOP. Hence, the matter was deferred.

**Sr. No.11: Proposal for removal of trees causing obstruction in construction of metro line 2 from Kalanagar to BKC, submitted by MMRDA.**

The MMRDA officials presented the proposal before the Authority. The proposal is submitted for the permission to cut / transplant 344 trees which are

  
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causing obstruction in the construction of metro line 2 from Kalanagar to BKC, Mumbai.

The Authority heard the presentation made by the MMRDA officials and explained the SOP formulated as per provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975 for submission of the proposal before the State Tree Authority. The Authority observed that the project proponent need to submit the proposal within the framework of the above finalized SOP. Accordingly, the Authority decided to refer the case back for compliance as per SOP. Hence, the matter was deferred.

**Sr. No.12: Proposal for removal of trees for the construction of seven elevated viaduct for Mumbai Metro Line-4 at N ward from 90 feet road, Ghatkopar(east) to Surya Nagar, Ghatkopar(west).**

The MMRDA officials presented the proposal before the Authority. The proposal is submitted for the permission to cut / transplant 241 trees which are causing obstruction in the construction of elevated via-ducts of Mumbai Metro line 4 project. The project shall provide interconnectivity among the existing Eastern Express Roadway, Central Railway, Mono Rail, the ongoing Metro line 2B and the proposed Metro Line 5, Metro Line 6 and Metro Line8.

The Authority heard the presentation made by the MMRDA officials and explained the SOP formulated as per provisions of amended Tree Act, 1975 for submission of the proposal before the State Tree Authority. The Authority observed that the project proponent need to submit the proposal within the framework of the above finalized SOP. Accordingly, the Authority decided to refer the case back for compliance as per SOP. Hence, the matter was deferred.

**Discussion Items:**

**Item No.1:** The Member Secretary briefed the Authority about the PIL no 09/2021 Shweta D/o Dipendra Burbure and another V/s Nagpur Municipal Corporation in Hon'ble High Court Nagpur. As mentioned above in the proposal of Nagpur Municipal Corporation for the construction of intermodal station at Ajni, the proposal is deferred, since it needs to be reworked by National Highways Authority of India and Nagpur Municipal Corporation in consonance with the amended Tree Act 1975.

  
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The Authority took note of the same and decided to bring the fact to the notice of the Hon'ble High Court.

**Item No.2:** The Authority noted that grievances/ complaints are received before Hon'ble Minister, Env &CC and Principal Secretary, Env &CC that Planning Authorities / local tree Authorities are issuing tree cutting permissions based on the earlier provisions of Tree Act, disregarding the amended Maharashtra (Urban areas) protection and preservation of Trees Act, 1975 published on 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2021. The State Tree Authority requested the member from Urban Development Department (UDD) that a circular along with a brief should be issued by the UDD, GoM to all Planning Authorities / local tree Authorities with instructions to follow the amended Maharashtra (Urban areas) protection and preservation of Trees Act, 1975 dated 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 and submit the proposals attracting the said amended Tree Act to State Tree Authority for necessary permission

**Item No. 3:** The Authority discussed that determination of age of Tree and valuation of Tree are two important concepts which needs to be clarified for better implementation of Tree Act. Valuation of tree is linked with age of tree.

Presently, there are no precise scientific methods/ tools available for determination of age of tree. However, in the meantime, methods based on girth of tree/ growth factor could be employed to roughly estimate the age of tree. The Environment & Climate Change, GoM has issued a Notification dated 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2021 specifying the methodology of the determining age of tree based on growth factor. Growth factor of sal and teak trees are stipulated in the said GR. For knowing growth factor of other trees, the Forest Department / local Tree Authority need to assist the State Tree Authority, so that age of tree could be calculated based on growth factor.

Based on the age of tree and other important characteristics of tree, valuation of tree could be worked. An exercise for finding out methodology for calculating valuation of tree need to be carried out in

  
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consultation with subject experts. The Tree expert and the Forest Department to work on the said details and submit it to the Authority.

*The meeting ended with vote of thanks.*

  
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