

S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A
R E C O R D O F P R O C E E D I N G S

SUO MOTO WRIT PETITION(CIVIL) No(s). 8/2026

IN RE: PROTECTION OF TREES AND GREEN COVER IN THE TAJ TRAPEZIUM ZONE

1. I.A. NO.64235 and 64237 OF 2024 (PERMISSION FOR FELLING OF TREES AND INTERVENTION), 2. I.A. NO. 28613 AND 28614 OF 2024 (IMPLEADMENT AND PERMISSION FOR FELLING OF TREES), 3. I.A. NO. 31946 OF 2024 (PERMISSION FOR FELLING OF TREES), 4. I.A. NO. 147510 OF 2025 (PERMISSION FOR FELLING OF TREES), 5. I.A. NO. 130769 AND 130771 OF 2024 (PERMISSION FOR FELLING OF TREES AND OT), 6. I.A. NO. 244381 OF 2025 (PERMISSION FOR FELLING OF TREES), 7. I.A. NO. 108684 AND 108685 OF 2023 (PERMISSION FOR FELLING OF TREES AND OT) 8. I.A. NO.274798 AND 285501 OF 2025 (PERMISSION FOR FELLING OF TREES AND OT) 9. I.A. NO. 68823 AND 68824 OF 2025 (PERMISSION FOR FELLING OF TREES AND OT), 10. I.A. NO.42302 AND 42307 OF 2026 (PERMISSION FOR FELLING OF TREES AND OT) IN W.P. (C) NO. 13381/1984. NAMES OF THE FOLLOWING ADVOCATES MAY BE TREATED TO HAVE BEEN SHOWN IN THE LIST. PETITIONER-IN-PERSON MR. LIZ MATHEW, SR. ADV. (A.C.) MR. SIDDHARTHA CHOWDHURY, ADV. (A.C.) MS. AAKASHI LODHA, AOR MR. KAMLENDRA MISHRA, ADV. MS. RASHMI SINGH, ADV. MR. AMRISH KUMAR, ADV. M/S. M.V. KINI AND ASSOC., ADVS.

Date : 27-05-2026 This petition was called on for hearing today.

CORAM : HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE JOYMALYA BAGCHI
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE VIPUL M. PANCHOLI

For Petitioner(s) : By Courts Motion

For Respondent(s) : Mr. Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General
Ms. Aishwarya Bhati, ASG
Ms. Neetika Sharma, Adv.
Ms. Saloni J., Adv.
Mr. Tavinder Sidhu, Adv.
M/s. M.V. Kini & Associates, AOR

UPON hearing the counsel the Court made the following

O R D E R

[1] I.A. Nos. 64235 and 64237/2024

1. These applications have been filed on behalf of the National Highways Authority of India, seeking permission for felling and

relocation of trees to facilitate the development of a four-lane highway section near Khandauli Village, Agra.

2. We have received and considered the CEC's Report No. 68/2025 dated 04.12.2025, whereby the CEC has recommended that, subject to the conditions contained in Paragraph 24 thereof, the Applicant be permitted to cut 1963 trees and translocate 53 trees. The aforesaid conditions include provisions for necessary approvals for diversion of forest land, compensatory afforestation, and avenue plantation along the highway.

3. Given the public interest involved in the highway project of the NHAI, the detailed report of the CEC, and the fact that the Applicant has already deposited the necessary amount for compensatory afforestation and undertaken to comply with all directions, the NHAI is permitted to cut the 1963 identified trees and relocate 53 trees. This shall, it goes without saying, be strictly subject to the conditions imposed by the CEC in Paragraph 24 of its report, which shall be read as part of this order.

4. The CEC shall monitor the compliance of these conditions, and the Applicant shall report the same to the CEC. The CEC, after verification, shall place an appropriate compliance report before this Court, which shall be registered as a fresh I.A.

5. These applications, accordingly, stand disposed of.

[2] I.A. Nos. 28613 and 28614/2024

6. These applications have been filed on behalf of the National Highways Authority of India, seeking permission for felling and relocation of trees to facilitate the development of a six-lane access-controlled highway between Agra and Gwalior.

7. The CEC has submitted Report No. 1/2025 dated 21.01.2025, whereby it has recommended that, subject to the conditions contained in Paragraph 7 thereof, the Applicant be permitted to cut 650 trees and translocate 109 trees. The aforesaid conditions

include compensatory afforestation, provisions for green belt along the highway, and dust mitigation measures. There is also a recommendation that the efforts taken by the CEC to save some trees may be replicated for the entire stretch of the proposed Highway, including the sections lying outside the TTZ.

8. The CEC's report was considered by this Court on 11.02.2025, whereupon it was directed that compensatory afforestation be completed by the Applicant. Now, the Applicant has filed an affidavit dated 13.10.2025, showcasing compliance with the recommended requirements for compensatory afforestation.

9. Given the public interest involved in the highway project of the NHAI, the detailed report and recommendations of the CEC, and the fact that the Applicant has complied with the requirements of compensatory afforestation and undertaken to comply with all other directions, the NHAI is permitted to cut the 650 identified trees and relocate 109 trees. This shall, it goes without saying, be strictly subject to the conditions imposed by the CEC in Paragraph 7 of its report, which shall be read as part of this order.

10. The CEC shall monitor the compliance of the remaining conditions, and the Applicant shall report the same to the CEC. The CEC, after verification, shall place an appropriate compliance report before this Court, which shall be registered as a fresh I.A.

11. These applications, accordingly, stand disposed of.

[3] I.A. No. 31946/2024

12. This application has been filed on behalf of the North Central Railway, seeking permission for felling of trees to facilitate the laying down of railway tracks between Agra Fort and Bandikul.

13. We have received and considered the CEC's Report No. 53/2025 dated 29.10.2025, whereby the CEC has recommended that, subject to the conditions contained in Paragraph 23 thereof, the Applicant be permitted to cut 1571 trees standing on railway land and 52 trees

standing on private land. The aforesaid conditions include provisions for compensatory afforestation as well as greening of vacant lands belonging to the railways.

14. Given the public interest involved in the rail project of the North Central Railway, the detailed report of the CEC, and the fact that the Applicant undertakes to comply with all the recommendations, the Applicant is permitted to cut the 1623 identified trees. This shall, it goes without saying, be strictly subject to the conditions imposed by the CEC in Paragraph 23 of its report, which shall be read as part of this order.

15. The CEC shall monitor the compliance of these conditions, and the Applicant shall report the same to the CEC. The CEC, after verification, shall place an appropriate compliance report before this Court, which shall be registered as a fresh I.A.

16. This application, accordingly, stands disposed of.

[4] I.A. No. 147510/2025

17. This Application is filed on behalf of the North Central Railway, seeking permission to fell 67 trees to facilitate the construction of an integrated three two-lane Road Over Bridges and two Road Under Bridges in Agra City.

18. The CEC is directed to consider the prayers made in this Application and file an appropriate report, including its recommendations.

19. List this matter after receipt of the said report from the CEC.

[5] I.A. Nos. 130769 and 130771/2024

20. These applications have been filed on behalf of the State of Uttar Pradesh (Department of Civil Aviation), seeking permission for felling of trees to facilitate the development of a new airport terminal building at Agra, along with a new Civil Enclave and

extension of the runway.

21. The CEC has submitted Report No. 23/2024 dated 10.10.2024, whereby it has recommended that, subject to the conditions contained in Paragraph 17 thereof, the Applicant be permitted to cut 286 trees and translocate 121 trees. The aforesaid conditions include compensatory afforestation and provisions for greening along the approach roads to the airport.

22. The CEC's report was considered by this Court on 14.10.2024, whereupon it was directed that compensatory afforestation be completed by the Applicant. Now, the Applicant has filed an affidavit dated 07.07.2025, showcasing compliance with the recommended requirements for compensatory afforestation.

23. Given the public interest involved in the airport expansion project of the State Government, the detailed report and recommendations of the CEC, and the fact that the Applicant has complied with the requirements of compensatory afforestation and undertaken to comply with all other directions, the Applicant is permitted to cut the 286 identified trees and relocate 121 trees. This shall, it goes without saying, be strictly subject to the conditions imposed by the CEC in Paragraph 17 of its report, which shall be read as part of this order.

24. The CEC shall monitor the compliance of the remaining conditions, and the Applicant shall report the same to the CEC. The CEC, after verification, shall place an appropriate compliance report before this Court, which shall be registered as a fresh I.A.

25. These applications, accordingly, stand disposed of.

[6] I.A. No. 244381/2025

26. This Application is filed on behalf of the Public Works Department, Mathura, seeking permission to fell 177 trees to facilitate the widening and strengthening work on Sadabad Road to Brahmand Ghat via Gokul, Rakshan Samadhi Road.

27. The CEC is directed to consider the prayers made in this Application and file an appropriate report, including its recommendations.

28. List this matter after receipt of the said report from the CEC.

[7] I.A. Nos. 108684 and 108685/2023

29. These applications have been filed on behalf of the State of Uttar Pradesh (National Highway Division, Public Works Department, Etawah), seeking permission for felling of trees to facilitate the rehabilitation, upgradation, and widening of National Highway 321G, portions of which lie in Agra and Etah.

30. The CEC had submitted Report No. 8/2024 dated 08.07.2024, whereby it has recommended that, subject to the conditions contained in Paragraph 6 thereof, the Applicant be permitted to cut 2818 trees and translocate 229 trees. The aforesaid conditions include compensatory afforestation, provisions for greening along the highway, and dust mitigation measures.

31. The CEC's report was considered by this Court on various occasions, whereupon it was directed that compensatory afforestation be completed by the Applicant. After the Applicant submitted its compliance affidavit dated 14.12.2024, the CEC submitted an additional Report No. 14/2025. In Paragraph 7 thereof, the CEC has made a further recommendation that the felling in Etah may only be started after the encroachments present on the land earmarked for compensatory afforestation are removed. Vide order dated 08.04.2025, this Court has already directed the Applicant to comply with the said conditions.

32. Given the public interest involved in the highway upgradation by the State Government, the detailed report and recommendations of the CEC through its multiple reports, and the fact that the Applicant has complied with the requirements of compensatory afforestation and undertaken to comply with all other directions,

the Applicant is permitted to cut the 2818 identified trees and relocate 229 trees. This shall, it goes without saying, be strictly subject to the conditions imposed by the CEC in Paragraph 6 of its report dated 08.07.2024 as well as in Paragraph 7 of the subsequent Report No. 14/2025, which shall be read as part of this order.

33. The CEC shall monitor the compliance of the remaining conditions, and the Applicant shall report the same to the CEC. The CEC, after verification, shall place an appropriate compliance report before this Court, which shall be registered as a fresh I.A.

34. These applications, accordingly, stand disposed of.

[8] I.A. No. 274798 and 285501/2025

35. These Applications are filed on behalf of the Public Works Department, Mathura, seeking permission to fell 14 trees to facilitate the construction of Service Road on both sides of Existing 4 Lane ODR (Ch. 0.000 - 3.500) (Expressway to Vrindavan Pagal Baba Temple) in Mathura.

36. The CEC is directed to consider the prayers made in these Applications and file an appropriate report, including its recommendations.

37. List this matter after receipt of the said report from the CEC.

[9] I.A. Nos. 68823 and 68824/2025

38. These applications have been filed on behalf of the State of Uttar Pradesh (Public Works Department), seeking permission for felling of trees to facilitate the four-lane work of Kosi-Nandgaon-Barsana-Govardhan Road and Sonkh-Mathura-Raya Road.

39. We have received and considered the CEC's Report No. 66/2025 dated 04.12.2025, whereby the CEC has recommended that, subject to the conditions contained in Paragraph 19 thereof, the Applicant be permitted to cut 2777 trees. The aforesaid conditions include

provisions for compensatory afforestation and greening along the road.

40. Given the public interest involved in the highway project of the State, the detailed report of the CEC, and the fact that the Applicant has undertaken to comply with all directions of this Court, the State is permitted to cut the 2777 identified trees. This shall, it goes without saying, be strictly subject to the conditions imposed by the CEC in Paragraph 19 of its report, which shall be read as part of this order.

41. The CEC shall monitor the compliance of these conditions, and the Applicant shall report the same to the CEC. The CEC, after verification, shall place an appropriate compliance report before this Court, which shall be registered as a fresh I.A.

42. These applications, accordingly, stand disposed of.

[10] I.A. No. 42302 and 42307/2026

43. These Applications are filed on behalf of the Public Works Department, Mathura, seeking permission to fell 437 trees to facilitate the widening and strengthening of Kosi Goverdhan Sonkh Farah Road (SH-142) (from Ch. 49.620 to 85.240) in Mathura.

44. The CEC is directed to consider the prayers made in these Applications and file an appropriate report, including its recommendations.

45. List this matter after receipt of the said report from the CEC.

(NITIN TALREJA)
ASTT. REGISTRAR-cum-PS

(PREETHI DILEEP KUMAR)
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR