

E-payment module launched to collect fund for increasing green cover

[Vishwa Mohan](#), TNN | Aug 27, 2015

NEW DELHI: Government on Thursday launched an e-payment module to accept compensatory amount for diversion of forest land in the country. It will cut delays and bring transparency in the system which is meant for collecting fund from user agencies which divert forest land for 'non-forest' purpose.

Any user agency which diverts forest land for non-forest purpose is, at present, required to deposit prescribed amount to the government body. This amount - managed by an ad-hoc body, Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) - is supposed to be utilized to mitigate impact of diversion of forest land.

The verification of receipt of compensatory levies in the ad-hoc CAMPA has, till now, been done manually. The current system, however, involves various steps, making it a time-taking process. The launch of e-payment module will now end such delays.

Launching the new system, Union environment ministry Prakash Javadekar said the technology must be used to the advantage of all. "The government's endeavour has been to simplify administrative procedures, without compromising on environmental safeguards," he said.

The deposit of compensatory levies through the e-portal will be optional till August 31. The payment will, however, be accepted only through the e-module from September 1.

The CAMPA was created by the government under the Supreme Court order of October, 2002. So far, Rs 38,000 crore has been accumulated with the ad-hoc CAMPA.

This fund is meant for carrying out reforestation and other related activities including protection of forest area and wildlife conservation. The collected amount, however, remains unspent in absence of an institution mechanism to disburse the money to states.

The government had introduced the Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAF) Bill in Lok Sabha during the budget session in May. The proposed legislation seeks to pave the way for expeditious utilization of the fund, which has been kept unused for years, for increasing forest cover in the country.

The Bill, once passed by the Parliament, will also create an institutional mechanism for use of fresh accrual of the money that would be collected in future for diversion of forest land for non-forest use.

The purpose of the proposed legislation is, therefore, to provide safety, security and transparency in utilization of these amounts.

Source:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/E-payment-module-launched-to-collect-fund-for-increasing-green-cover/articleshow/48700398.cms>