



D.O. No.2411/5/2022-GC

November 7, 2022.

Dear Sir,

The following were the main activities of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change during the month of October, 2022.

1. Special Swachhta Campaign 2.0

During the special drive, 174 tons of scrap and 8500 items of e-waste were disposed of from 73 campaign sites of attached/ subordinate offices under this Ministry. 41,000 sq. ft. of office space was freed as a result. Non-biodegradable waste in the form of plastic, wrappers and glass was recycled into Eco-Bricks at GB Pant Institute, Almora.

2. Environment Clearance

As part of the systemic reforms, a number of measures related to delegation, streamlining, simplification of rules, etc. have been initiated by the Ministry. In this endeavor, an OM dated 11/04/2022 was also issued outlining the procedure for expansion in production capacity up to 50% in a phased manner. Subsequently, vide OM dated 07/05/2022, a special dispensation was given with respect to coal mining projects, for enabling them to expand up to 50% in a phased manner without the requirement of EIA and Public Hearing. Consequently, 12 coal mining projects were allowed capacity expansion totaling 15.65 MTPA between May and October, 2022.

The abovementioned OMs dated 11/04/2022 and 07/05/2022 were challenged before the Hon'ble NGT Principal Bench in OA no. 462 of 2022 titled Rajeev Suri vs. Union of India. The Ministry strongly defended the

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matter, and NGT disposed of the case vide order dated 18/10/2022 in favour of the Ministry, while upholding the OMs.

3. Training and Capacity Building

An initiative has been undertaken to implement Mission Karmyogi for officers of the Forest wing, as well as for the Scientists working in the Ministry. For the first time, a systematic training programme was launched for the scientists in batches of 25 to 30. The training schedule includes field exposure and the participants are being evaluated as well. The first batch of 25 scientists have already undergone this three-phase training programme and a programme has also been chalked out for the capacity building of the remaining scientists.

The Ministry is working closely with the Capacity Building Commission (CBC) and as well as with Karmyogi Bharat for undertaking the Framework of Role, Accountability and Competencies (FRAC)ing exercise as well as the preparation of digital content for uploading on iGOT platform. The (FRAC)ing exercise is expected to be completed in the month of November.

4. Bio-diversity

On 25.10.2022, the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) approved the environmental release of India's first indigenously developed Genetically Modified (GM) mustard hybrid (DMH-11) and its parental lines.

In addition to environmental release of GM mustard, GEAC in its 147th meeting held on 18.10.2022 also gave approval for confined field trials of other GM food crops, namely, GM banana, GM potato, GM mustard; as well as GM commercial crops, namely, GM cotton and GM rubber. This will

further contribute to research in the field of agricultural biotechnology in India.

5. International Cooperation

I participated in the 9th meeting of the Indo-Norwegian Joint Working Group on Environment, which was held on 6-7 October, 2022 in Oslo, Norway. Major takeaways from the JWG-e included technical cooperation in circular economy and exploring cooperation at the global level on issues of biodiversity and plastics. The delegation made a field visit to the Port of Borg, a dedicated center for recycling all manner of scrap such as glass bottles, steel products, batteries etc., which can be a good model for promoting Circular Economy in the country.

Regards,

Yours sincerely,



(Leena Nandan)

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