

CENTRAL VISTA PROJECT

Ticked off for breach, CPWD seeks nod to transplant trees near Badarpur

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CLAIMING THAT the transplantation of trees from the Parliament complex to the Central Vista Avenue location would have disturbed the proposed Central Vista redevelopment project, the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) has sought permission from Delhi government's forest department for the trees to be transplanted at the NTPC Eco Park in Badarpur.

The CPWD was given permission by the department on October 21 to transplant 404 trees from the site of the new Parliament building, adjacent to the current Parliament House, to eight pockets in the Central Vista area, and was directed to do additional compensatory afforestation of 4,040 tree saplings of indigenous species of 6-8 feet height in the same area.



Forest dept granted permission for transplantation on Oct 21

The trees were however being sent to the National Thermal Power Corporation in Badarpur, close to Delhi's border with Haryana, in violation of the conditions. After this was brought to their notice, the forest department threatened to act as per Delhi Preservation of Trees Act, 1994.

In a reply to the forest department on December 3, CPWD said that a "comprehensive scheme for redevelopment of Central Vista Avenue including plantation scheme with selected species... is being finalised. Carrying out transplantation at this moment in Central Vista Avenue without finalising the plan will disturb the

EXPLAINED E The plan so far

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The *Indian Express* reported in July that trees in the Rajpath area will be brought back to Lutyens' original design of planting jamun and ficus (Peepal, Banyan and the Wild Ficus) trees only, and that other trees of the area shall be replaced as per this design.

The CPWD initially sought to

transplant the trees to their holding nursery at Vanasthali, near Simon Bolivar Marg, but it was not found suitable "due to hard or rock surface encountered in the area", as per the CPWD's reply. The NTPC Eco Park was also seen as the possible location for the compensatory afforestation of the 4,040 trees, even though the direction had been to do so at eight pockets in the Central Vista Area.

Around 130 trees have been transplanted to the existing Parliament complex, and 274 trees to the NTPC Eco Park.

The CPWD has asked permission to transplant the 4,040 trees to the NTPC Eco Park and asked for an extension of the deadline from January 31, 2021 to January 31, 2022.

"We will study their proposal, and also do the field visits to determine the number of trees that have been transplanted elsewhere," said an official from the forest department.