



State hopeful of more early approvals, more funding for forest, green projects

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Jaipur: With two elected representatives from the state in key central ministries such as forest and environment and jal shakti, the desert state can now look forward to some major projects coming its way in the future.

The major rejig of the council of ministers at the Centre saw Rajya Sabha member from the state Bhupendra Yadav take charge of ministry of forests, environment and climate change (MoEFCC) on Thursday. Sources in the forest department are hopeful that proposals of new sanctuaries and tiger reserves will get an extra push.

Recently, the MoEF had approved the conversion of Ramgarh Vishdhari Sanctuary in Bundi district as the fourth tiger reserve in the state. Forest department officials are expecting that Yadav will clear the proposal for the fifth tiger reserve in Rajasthan as a priority.

A proposal for upgrading the Kumbalgarh wildlife sanctuary into a tiger reserve is pending since 2019. The proposed reserve is spread over 1280.49 sqkm, of which 355.25 sqkm will be the core area and 925 sqkm as buffer area in phase I.

This apart, the state is at the fore of facing the impact of climate change on its environment and the state government is keen on Centre's intervention in helping the state combat and fund projects related to desertification and climate change migration.

Already a beneficiary of the Union environment ministry's schemes like the national action plan to combat desertification, the national river conservation programme and the national action plan for climate change, the state is hoping for a stronger push to related projects.

"Being a desert state, these factors impact us much more. The state has its own Action Plan on Climate Change on the lines of the National Action Plan on Climate Change. The plan involves 14 departments but more funds will help ensure better implementation," said a senior official. With Yadav representing the desert state, a better understanding of the issues and thrust on these projects is anticipated.

On the other hand, Union minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has been incharge of jal shakti since 2019. With the central government expected to focus more on strengthening its flagship and development programmes, a better implementation of the Jal Jeevan mission is expected in the near future.

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