**PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PUNJAB**

**Bill No. 13 of 2016**

**THE PUNJAB FOREST (AMENDMENT) BILL 2016**

A

Bill

*further to amend the Forest Act, 1927.*

It is necessary to amend the Forest Act, 1927 *(XVI of 1927)* to make appropriate provisions for the use of reserved or protected forest land, where inevitable, for national projects of strategic importance.

Be it enacted by Provincial Assembly of the Punjab as follows:

**1. Short title and commencement**.– (1) This Act may be cited as the Punjab Forest (Amendment) Act 2016.

(2) It shall come into force at once.

**2. Amendment in section 27 of Act XVI of 1927**.– in the Forest Act, 1927 *(XVI of 1927)*, for brevity cited as ‘the said Act’, in section 27, after subsection (2), the following subsection (3) shall be inserted:

“(3)Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, the Government, with the approval of the Provincial Cabinet, may, by notification in the official Gazette, declare a reserved forest or any part of a reserved forest as no longer reserved forest, if:

1. the agency or the institution requiring reserved forest land satisfies the Government with cogent reasons in writing that there is no other option but to use the proposed reserved forest land for purposes of a national project of strategic importance;

(b) a substitute land, equal to or bigger than the said forest land, is declared as a reserved forest;

(c) the substitute land is in a compact form and is, as far as possible, situated close to the said forest land; and

(d) appropriate funds are allocated for immediate afforestation of the substitute land.”.

**3. Amendment in section 34-A of Act XVI of 1927**.– In the said Act, in section 34-A, after subsection (2), the following subsection (3) shall be inserted:

“(3)Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, the Government, with the approval of the Provincial Cabinet, may, by notification in the official Gazette, declare a protected forest or any part of a protected forest as no longer protected forest, if:

(a) the agency or the institution requiring protected forest land satisfies the Government with cogent reasons in writing that there is no other option but to use the proposed protected forest land for purposes of a national project of strategic importance;

(b) a substitute land, equal to or bigger than the said protected forest land is declared as protected forest;

(c) the substitute land is in a compact form and is, as far as possible, situated close to the said forest land; and

(d) appropriate funds are allocated for immediate afforestation of the said substitute land.”.

**4. Repeal.–** The Punjab Forest (Amendment) Ordinance, 2016 (IX of 2016) is hereby repealed.

 **MINISTER INCHARGE**

**Lahore: RAI MUMTAZ HUSSAIN BABAR**

**1st February 2016 Secretary**