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Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change/ पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय
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No. 5-ORA-393/2019-BHU **SPEED POST**

Date: 18.10.2019

To

Shri Sandeep Sharma
Asst. Inspector General of Forests (FC)
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bagh Road, Alliganj, New Delhi – 110 003.

Sub: Site inspection report in respect of diversion of 1243.270 ha of forest land involved in the mining lease area over 1322.019 ha. of Dubna-Sakradihi iron and manganese ore mines of M/s Odisha Mining Corporation Limited in Keonjhar District, Odisha – reg.

Ref.: Ministry's letter No.8-26/2019-FC dated 20th Sept., 2019

महोदय,

उपरोक्त विषय के सन्दर्भ में, मुझे आपको यह सूचित करने का निर्देश हुआ है की क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय द्वारा 14th अक्टूबर, 2019 के दौरान उपरोक्त परियोजना का निरीक्षण की गई है। निरीक्षण रिपोर्ट आप के अबलोकन एबमं आवश्यक कारबाई हेतु सलग्न है।

संलग्नक: उपरोक्तानुसार

भवदीय,

ए.के.जेना
18.10.19
(ए के जेना)

तकनीकी अधिकारी

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Site inspection report in respect of diversion of 1243.270 ha of forest land involved in the mining lease area over 1322.019 ha. of Dubna-Sakradih iron and manganese ore mines of M/s Odisha Mining Corporation Limited in Keonjhar District, Odisha.

The site inspection of the above diversion proposal was conducted by me on 14th October, 2019. The site inspection was carried in presence of Shri Manorajan Mishra, ACF, Keonjhar Division, Shri Jatindra Kumar Sahu, Forester, Bamebari Section, Champua Range. DFO, Keonjhar and Range Officer, Champua could not attend site visit due to visit of Principal Secretary, Forest Department, Govt. of Odisha. From the user agency (M/s OMC) Shri K. Pradeep, ED, OMC, Shri B K Pattanaik, GM (Geo.), OMC, Shri Shyam Sundar Barik, Regional Manager (Barbil Region), Shri Arun Balabantroy, Mines Manager (Dubuna-Sakradih) and Shri Chologangdev Nayak, Geologist were present.

1. Legal status of the forest land proposed for diversion

Legal status	Area in Ha.
Reserve Forest	773.336
Revenue Forest	28.992
Forest as per DLC	402.743
Non-forest area recorded as forest as on and after 25.10.1980	38.199
Total	1243.27

2. Item-wise break-up details of the forest land proposed for diversion (in ha):

Sl. No.	Pattern of utilisation	R.F.	Revenue Forest	DLC forest	Non-forest area recorded as Forest as on 25.10.1980	Total
1	Mining	718.1819	21.1457	272.9921	12.8616	1025.1813
2	OB Dump	25.9233	0.7065	46.5932	5.2735	78.4965
3	Mineral processing	0	0	5.000	0	5.000
4	Mineral Storage	19.4473	3.5135	71.3127	13.0181	107.2916
5	Infrastructure	0	0.0961	2.3144	0.7087	3.1192
6	Green belt	0	0.6976	0	0.6502	1.3478
7	Road	0.4783	0	0.0594	0.9752	1.5129
8.	Safety zone	9.3052	2.8326	4.4712	4.7117	21.3207
	TOTAL	773.336	28.992	402.743	38.199	1243.27

3. **Whether proposal involves any construction of buildings (including residential) or not. If yes, details thereof:**

As per the information submitted by the user agency, the project does not involve construction of buildings (including residential).

4. **Total cost of the project at present rates:**

As per the information submitted by the user agency the total cost of the project is Rs.132.63 Crores.

5. **Wildlife:**

Whether forest area proposed for diversion is important from wildlife point of view or not:

The applied area does not form part of any National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve, Elephant Corridor, etc. Movement of wild elephants is often witnessed in the applied forest land. The applied site falls under elephant habitat zone-2 as mentioned by ORSAC, Bhubaneswar.

Existence of no rare or endangered species have been reported in the applied area for diversion till date. As per RCCF, Rourkela Circle wild animals like Barking Deer, Wild Pig, Sloth Bear, Indian Hare and Peacock, etc. in addition to the migratory elephants are seen in the area.

6. **Vegetation:**

Major portion of the forest area applied for diversion falls within Pedipokhari RF and Naibuga RF. Eco-value class of the applied forest has been taken as Eco value class-III, based on the Eco value class of Pedipokhari RF and Naibuga RF falling within the lease area. The canopy density of the applied area varies from 0.3 to 0.7 and the average canopy density is taken as 0.5.

Tree species present in the area are Sal (*Shorea robusta*), Piasal (*Pterocarpus marsupium*), Asan (*Terminalia alta*), Kusum (*Schleichera oleosa*), Dhaura (*Anogeisus latifolia*), Kurum (*Adina cordifolia*), Bahada (*Terminalia belerica*), Jammu (*Syzygium cumini*), Semul (*Bombax ceiba*), Aonla (*Emblica officinalis*),

Sunari (*Cassia fistula*), Mango (*Mangifera indica*), Kendu (*Diospyros melanoxylon*), etc.

Total number of trees to be felled.

(a)

As per the sample enumeration in 99 plots and extrapolation to the total area the total number of trees to be felled is 2,87,382. There are 1,57,761 number of sound and 86,571 number of unsound trees on the virgin forest land over 984.671 ha. and 22,481 number of sound 20,569 number of unsound trees in the broken up forest land over 258.599 ha.

Effect of removal of trees on the general ecosystem in the area:

Felling of the trees from the forest area will induce soil erosion. Tree felling should be done in a phased manner.

Important species:

(b)

Tree species present in the area are Sal (*Shorea robusta*), Piasal (*Pterocarpus marsupium*), Asan (*Terminalia alta*), Kusum (*Schleichera oleosa*), Dhaura (*Anogeisus latifolia*), Kurum (*Adina cordifolia*), Bahada (*Terminalia belerica*), Jammu (*Syzygium cumini*), Semul (*Bombax ceiba*), Aonla (*Emblica officinalis*), Sunari (*Cassia fistula*), Kendu (*Diospyrus melanoxylon*), Mango (*Mangifera indica*) etc.

Number of trees of girth below 60 cm.

Around 2,14,254 nos. of less than 60 cm trees (poles- below 30 cm- 27,604 numbers)

Number of trees of girth above 60 cm.

Around 73,129 numbers.

7. Background note on the proposal:

Odisha Mining Corporation Ltd., a public sector undertaking of Govt. of Odisha, which is engaged in the field of mining to supply exploited minerals like iron and

Manganese, Chromite, Aluminum & other minerals to the mineral based industries of the State and trade on minerals. Among several mining leases, the OMC Ltd. has Dubna-Sakradihi iron and manganese mine in Keonjhar District.

Dubna manganese mining lease was executed on 08.09.1971 for a period of 20 years over 1135.419 ha. and Sakradihi iron ore mining lease executed on 28.12.1959 for a period of 30 years over 564.55 ha in favour of M/s OMC Ltd. The State Govt. of Odisha Steel & Mines Department has amalgamated the two mining leases into one compact block over 1332.019 ha (Comprising Dubna ML for manganese ore over an area of 1135.419 ha. in village Dubna, Naibuga, Pedipokhari, etc. and Sakradih ML for iron ore over reduced area over 196.60 in village Naibuga, Pedipokhari, etc.) vide Steel & Mines Department letter No.3607/SM dated 18.02.2006 and the period of renewal of both the mining leases will be counted w.e.f 28.12.1989. The amalgamated ML area over 1332.019 ha comprises 773.336 ha. Reserved Forest (Pedipokhari RF-725.158 ha.+Naibuga RF-48.178 ha), 402.743 ha of DLC forest, 28.992 ha. of Revenue forest, 38.199 ha of Sabik forest, 30.161 ha of non-forest Government land and 58.588 ha of tenanted land as certified by Tahasildar, Barbil vide letter No.5121 dated 26.11.2016 and Tahasildar, Jhumpura vide letter No.2451 dated 05.11.2016. The Director of Mines-cum-Special Secretary to Government, Steel & Mines Department intimated vide letter No.6563/DM dated 19.09.2018 that the extension validity of the mining lease up to 26.12.2029(70 years from year 1959) pertaining to Dubna-Sakradihi mining lease over 1332.019 ha is under active consideration of the State Government under provision of Section-8A(8) of MMDR Act, 1957 and Rule-3 of Mineral (Mining by Government Company) Rules, 2015).

The present mining lease area is located within the latitudes N21⁰ 51' 52.019" to N21⁰ 48' 37.356" and longitudes E85⁰ 22' 17.839" to E 85⁰24' 26.478". The instant proposal has been submitted by the OMC Ltd. over 1243.27 ha (773.336 ha. RF, 28.992 ha. Revenue forest, 402.743 ha. of DLC forest and 38.199 ha of non-forest land recorded as forest as on 25.10.1980) of forest land including safety zone area over 21.3207 ha of forest land.

8. **Compensatory afforestation:**

The requirement of non-forest land for the project is as follows:

1.	Total forest land involved in the project	1243.270 ha
2.	Forest land covered under safety zone	10.6854 ha
3.	Broken up forest land involved in the mining lease area	258.599 ha
	Balance land required for CA	973.9856 ha.

As per Para 2.4 (iv) of the Hand Book of Guidelines and clarifications of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and FC Rules 2003 issued by MoEF&CC dated 28.03.2019, "Provisions of compensatory afforestation applicable for renewal of a mining lease, including the area broken up prior to 25.10.1980, if the same was not applied earlier". Therefore another Non- forest land of 258.599 need to be identified for CA. For the time being in order to save delay in processing of forest diversion proposal the user agency has submitted an undertaking to provide the CA land against pre-1980 broken up forest land if decided by FAC.

To meet the above requirement of land for Compensatory Afforestation, Govt. Non-forest land over an area of 979.376 ha has been identified by the UA and allotted by the Collector, Kalahandi vide order No. 341 dt. 04.04.2014 and 486 dt. 06.04.2017, in village Uparjhabi 360.050 ha, Pokhariguda 305.160 ha, Kumjore 224.850 ha and Silet 89.316 ha under Thuamul Rampur Tahasil, Kahalandi (S) Forest Division of Kalahandi District.

(a) **Whether land for compensatory afforestation is suitable from plantation and management point of view or not:**

As per the report of DFO, the land is suitable for compensatory afforestation. As per DSS analysis the land at Silet mostly contain MDF and VDF, in Uparjhabi there are four patches and some patches contain MDF. Therefore, degraded forest land may be required for CA if 1,000 plants cannot be accommodated in the said selected areas for CA. However these areas being non-forest land are acceptable for CA.

- (b) **Whether land for compensatory afforestation is free from encroachment/other encumbrances:**

As per the report of DFO, Kalahandi (S) and Tahasildar, Thuamul-Rampur the land is free from encroachment.

- (c) **Whether land for compensatory afforestation is important from Religious/Archaeological point of view:**

Not reported.

- (d) **Land identified for raising compensatory afforestation is in how many patches, whether patches are compact or not:**

Total 9 patches of land has been identified in 4 villages. The details are given as below:

1. Uparjhabi- 4 No. of patches
2. Pokhariguda- 1 patch
3. Kumjore- 1 patch
4. Silet- 3 No. of patches

All the patches are compact.

- (e) **Map with details:**

Enclosed in the proposal.

- (f) **Total financial outlay:**

Rs. 46,71,44,700/-.

9. **Whether proposal involves violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 or not. If yes, a detailed report on violation including action taken against the concerned officials:**

Violation:

The DFO, Keonjhar Forest Division has reported in the site inspection report that production of Iron Ore from 1994-95 to 2006-07 without approval under FC Act, 1980 as mentioned in the Sl. No. 12 of Annexure-IV A of the 1st report submitted by Hon'ble Saha Commission of enquiry on illegal mining in the State of Odisha.

Action taken:

OR case No.161CH of 2014-15 has been booked for illegal (without FC) production of iron and manganese ore during the period 1994-95 to 2006-07. The PR No.28 of 2014-15 dated 12.02.2015 submitted in the court of JMFC, Barbil is under subjudice.

10. **Whether proposal involves rehabilitation of displaced persons. If yes, whether rehabilitation plan has been prepared by the State Government or not :**

At Sakradih some private land with establishments are existing. However, these lands will not be acquired as stated by representatives of UA. So there is no involvement of resettlement and rehabilitation.

11. **Reclamation plan:**

Mining plan is enclosed in the proposal and is valid from 15.11.2017 to 31.03.2020. No reclamation done for the earlier mining activities. It is to mention here that the mining was manual and mine pits are very shallow and are presently covered with weeds and grasses.

Details and financial allocation:

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12. **Details on catchment and command area under the project:**

Not applicable.

Catchment area treatment plan to prevent siltation of reservoir:

Not applicable.

13. **Cost benefit ratio:**

The cost benefit ratio is 1:17.

14. **Recommendations of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests/State Government:**

Recommended.

15. **Recommendations of Dy. Director General of Forest (Central) along with detailed reasons:**

Enclosed.

16. **Dy. Inspector General of Forests shall give detailed comments on whether there are any alternative routes/alignment for locating the project on the non-forest land:**

This is a mining project and it is site specific.

17. **Utility of the project:**

Numbers of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes to be benefited by the project:

The area is tribal dominated and underdeveloped and will give socio-economic benefits to the people of the area. The project will generate direct employment for 200 persons (the user agency has already placed regular employed executives and non-executives for this project, who are sitting idle due to the non-functioning of the mine and taking about Rs.5.00 crores of salary per month) and indirect employment for 1000 persons.

- 18.

Whether land being diverted has any socio-cultural/ religious value:

- (a)

Not reported.

- (b) **Whether any sacred grove or very old growth trees/forests exist in the areas proposed for diversion:**

Not reported.

- (c) **Whether the land under diversion forms part of any unique ecosystem:**

No, the land under diversion does not form part of any unique ecosystem.

19. **Situation with respect to any Protected Area:**

There is no protected area within 10 km of the proposed site. However, the Karo-Karampada elephant corridor is about 13.59 km from the proposed site.

20. Any other information relating to the project:

The user agency (M/s Odisha Mining Corporation) has 11 iron and manganese leases in Barbil region. They are viz., Banspani, Khandbandh, Tiringpahar, Dubuna-Sakradihi, Unchabali (Mahaparbat), BPJ, Serenda-Bhadrasahi, Dalki, Roida-78, Paralipada, Kaloraida. Out of these 5 are iron ore leases and 5 are iron+manganese leases and 1 i.e. Roida-78 is manganese lease. None of the above mines are working due to lack of various clearances. Khandabandh and Unchabali mines have got Stage-I forest clearance and Tiringpahar mining lease has got Stage-II forest clearance.

The present proposed lease on its eastern side has a very small mine owned one Mr. T. P. Mohanty, otherwise there is no mineral deposits and mainly contain the villages. On the south-east side at a distance of 10 km there exists the Nayagarh RF, adjacent to this RF towards the lease is the Nadijhari DPF and elephants are seen to be residents of Nayagarh and Nadijhari DPF. Towards the south between the lease and other leases on the west there is a forest of width of 1.5 to 2 km up to Andiramara nallah which connects the forest in west to south east. This area has also not been explored and needs to be reserved for movement of elephants to Nayagarh RF from Sundargarh district in the west. Diversion of the above lease will therefore not affect the movement of elephants from Sundargarh district to Nayagarh RF.

There exists a public road from Palashtunga to Bamebari, in between them there is place called Kalimati and the user agency will use about 6 km of road from the mine to catch this existing road at Kalimati or to go to the Nayagarh railway siding and as proposed the user agency will have their own internal road to evacuate the mineral without much disturbance to the village roads and people living nearby.


18.10.2019
(R. K. Samal, IFS)

(i/c) Dy. Director General of Forest (Central)

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE DY. DIRECTOR GENERAL of FOREST
(CENTRAL)**

The mining proposal for diversion of 1243.270 ha of forest land involved in the mining lease area over 1322.019 ha. of Dubna-Sakradihi iron and manganese ore mines of M/s Odisha Mining Corporation Limited in Keonjhar District, Odisha recommended for consideration by the FAC and the Ministry.


18.10.2019

(R. K. Samal, IFS)

(i/c) Dy. Director General of Forest (Central)