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F. No. 11-9/98-FC
Government of India
Ministry of Environment and Forests
(FC Division)

Paryavaran Bhawan,
CGO Complex, Lodhi Road,
New Delhi - 110 510.
Dated: 03rd November, 2010

To
The Principal Secretary (Forests),
(All States / UTs).

Sub: General Approval under section-2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 to LWE affected districts for diversion of forest land for certain activities to be carried out by the Government Department involving not more than 2.00 ha of forest land—reg.

Sir,

The Ministry of Environment and Forests organized a National Conference on Forestry Administration in Left Wing Extremism affected Areas on 07.08.2010 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, which was attended by the Divisional Forest Officers of 35 worst LWE affected districts of 9 States with their respective Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Additional Chief Secretary & Principal Secretary (Forests). Representatives from various organizations and individuals with experiences of working in these areas were also invited to participate in this conference. The Union Minister for Home, the Minister for Tribal Affairs and the Dy. Chairman, Planning Commission were invited to interact with the field level forest officers of these districts to discuss their experiences and difficulties in forestry administration. One of the important and actionable points that emerged from the discussions held during the National Conference is given below:

"It was decided that the Forest department would be more pro-active in dealing with cases where critical public infrastructure works are being taken up by the local administration in these districts and if required a special mechanism can be worked out within the ambit of the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 to expedite such clearances."

Accordingly, under the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, the existing general approval for certain activities to be carried out by the Government Departments involving not more than 1.00 ha of forest land has been further relaxed to diversion of not more than 2.00 ha of forest land by the Central Government. These activities included the following:

1. Schools,
2. Dispensaries/Hospitals,
3. Electrical and Telecommunication Lines,
4. Drinking Water,
5. Water/Rain Water Harvesting Structures,
6. Minor Irrigation Canal,
7. Non Conventional Sources of Energy,
8. Skill up Gradation/Vocational Training Center,
9. Power Sub-stations,
10. Rural roads
11. Communication Posts; and
12. Police establishments like Police Stations / Outposts / Border Outposts / Watch Towers in sensitive area (identified by Ministry of Home Affairs); and
13. Underground laying of optical fibre cables, telephone lines & drinking water supply lines.

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The General Approval shall be subject to fulfillment of the following conditions:

- i. The relaxation in 'General Approvals' for public infrastructure works covering above listed activities in 35 worst LWE affected districts shall not be more than 2.00 ha of forest land.
- ii. The extension of such relaxation shall also be applicable to all other LWE districts as and when identified by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- iii. All other terms and conditions as contained in this Ministry's letter of even number dated 03.01.2005 and 11.09.2009, by which general approval involving not more than 1.00 ha of forest land under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 was granted, will also be applicable in this case.
- iv. All other terms and conditions as contained in this Ministry's letter of even number dated 16.10.2000 and 08.04.2009, by which general approval for underground laying of optical fibre cables, telephone lines and drinking water supply lines involving not more than 1.00 ha of forest land under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 was granted, will also be applicable in this case.

It may also be noted that this General Approval under Section-2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is further relaxation in 'General Approvals' for public infrastructure works covering above listed activities in LWE affected districts up to 2.00 ha of forest land for a period of five year i.e. up to 31.12.2015 on the terms and conditions given above.

Yours faithfully,


(C.D. Singh)

Sr. Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:-

1. The Director, PMO, New Delhi for kind information.
2. The Secretary (Coordination), Cabinet Secretariat New Delhi.
3. The Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi.
4. The Member Secretary, Planning Commission, New Delhi.
5. The Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, New Delhi.
6. The Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, New Delhi.
7. All PCCFs / Nodal Officers (All States/UTs).
8. All Regional Offices, Ministry of Environment & Forests.
9. Director General of Police (All States/UTs).
10. Dy. Secretary (FC) / AIGs (FC).
11. File No. 2-1/2003-FC
12. Guard File.


(C.D. Singh)

Sr. Assistant Inspector General of Forests

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Issued
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