

**Government of India**  
**Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**  
**(Forest Conservation Division)**

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**Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,**  
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj,  
New Delhi – 110003  
**Dated: As per E-sign**

To,

**The Principal Secretary (Forests),**  
Government of Maharashtra,  
Mumbai.

**Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 9.4715 ha (Revised from 6.4325 ha) forest land for laying underground Natural Gas Pipeline of Nagpur to Jharsuguda alongwith Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) Stretch of Nagpur to Jharasguda Pipeline passing through district Nagpur, Bhandara and Gondiya in the State of Maharashtra in favour of GAIL India Limited (Online No. FP/MH/Pipeline/153017/2022) - regarding.**

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer the Government of Maharashtra's letter No. FLD-2023/CR-109/F-10 dated 19.04.2023 on the above subject seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. After careful examination and recommendation of the proposal by the Advisory Committee, constituted under Section-3 of the aforesaid act and with due approval of the competent authority "*in-principle*" approval for the above mentioned proposal was granted vide this Ministry's letter of even no. dated 03.10.2024 subject to fulfilment of certain conditions.

In this connection, I am directed to say that on the basis of the compliance report furnished by the Government of Maharashtra vide letter No. FLD-2023/C.R.109/F-10 dated 09.01.2025, **Final approval** of the Central Government is hereby granted under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 9.4715 ha (Revised from 6.4325 ha) forest land for laying underground Natural Gas Pipeline of Nagpur to Jharsuguda alongwith Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) Stretch of Nagpur to Jharasguda Pipeline passing through district Nagpur, Bhandara and Gondiya in the State of Maharashtra in favour of GAIL India Limited subject to fulfilment of the following conditions:

- i. Legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged;
- ii. The Compensatory Afforestation shall be carried out on non-forest land of village Jalalhaba, Gat No. 59 over an area of 10.00 ha by the State Forest Department at the project cost and the work of compensatory afforestation

shall start within three years from the date of grant of Final approval;

- iii. The compensatory afforestation scheme, as approved, shall be implemented by the State Forest Department. The CA will be maintained for 10 years and the CA scheme may include afforestation of indigenous species with appropriate provision for anticipated cost increase for works scheduled for subsequent years;
- iv. The non-forest land identified for raising compensatory afforestation which has been transferred and mutated in favour of the State Forest Department shall be notified as **RF/PF under IFA, 1927 or any state /local act before handing over of forest land to the User Agency by the State Government;**
- v. The user agency shall pay the additional amount of NPV, if so determined, as per the final decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India;
- vi. The User Agency, if required, shall obtain the environment clearance under the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 issued under the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986;
- vii. The State Government shall ensure that no labour camp shall be established on the forest land and the User Agency shall provide firewood preferably alternate fuels to the labourers and the staff working at the site so as to avoid any damage and pressure on the nearby forest areas;
- viii. The State Government shall ensure that the boundary of the diverted forest land shall be demarcated on ground at the project cost, by erecting four feet high reinforced cement concrete pillars, each inscribed with its serial number, forward and back bearing and distance from pillar to pillar;
- ix. The State Government shall ensure that the forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the proposal;
- x. The State Government and user agency shall ensure that because of this project, no damage is caused to the wildlife available in the area;
- xi. The user agency shall explore the possibility of translocation of maximum number of trees identified to be felled and shall ensure that any tree felling shall be done only when it is unavoidable and that too under strict supervision of the State Forest Department;
- xii. The State Government and user agency shall ensure that layout plan of the proposal shall not be changed without the prior approval of the Central Government;
- xiii. The State Government and user agency shall ensure that the forest land proposed to be diverted shall under no circumstances be transferred to any other agency, department or person without prior approval of the Central Government;
- xiv. The user agency in consultation with the State Government shall create and maintain alternate habitat/home for the avifauna, whose nesting trees are to

be cleared in this project. Bird's nests artificially made out of eco-friendly material shall be used in the area, including forest area and human settlements, adjoining the forest area being diverted for the project;

- xv. The User Agency shall implement the R & R Plan, if applicable, as per the R&R Policy of State Government in consonance with National R&R Policy, Government of India before the commencement of the project work and implementation. The said R&R Plan will be monitored by the State Government/Regional Office of MoEF&CC;
- xvi. The User Agency shall submit the annual self-compliance report in respect of the above stated conditions to the State Government, concerned Regional Office and to this Ministry by the end of March every year regularly;
- xvii. Any other condition that the concerned Regional Office of this Ministry may stipulate with the approval of competent authority in the interest of conservation, protection and development of forests & wildlife;
- xviii. The State Government, before issuing the final diversion order, shall ensure that the user agency has complied with all the provisions of the all Acts, Rules, Regulations, Guidelines, Hon'ble Court Order (s) and NGT Order (s), including compliance of Forest Rights Act, 2006, pertaining to this project, for the time being in force, as applicable to the project;
- xix. Violation of any of these conditions will amount to violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and action would be taken as prescribed in para 1.16 of Chapter 1 of the Consolidated Guidelines and Clarifications on Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 as issued by this Ministry's letter dated 29.12.2023;
- xx. The State Government and user agency shall ensure compliance to all conditions stipulated in the '*in-principle*' approval letter of even no. dated 03.10.2024 for which undertakings have been obtained from the user agency and also the provisions of the all Acts, Rules, Regulations and Guidelines, relevant Hon'ble Court Order (S) and NGT Order (S), if any, for the time being in force ; and
- xxi. As per Sub-rule 7 of Rule 11 of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 the State Govt. after receiving the 'Final' approval of the Central Government under sub-section (1) of section 2 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and after fulfilment and compliance of the provisions of all other Acts and rules made thereunder, as applicable including ensuring settlement of rights under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (2 of 2007), shall issue order for diversion of forest land.

Yours sincerely,

Digitally signed by  
Suneet Bhardwaj  
Date: 11-04-2025  
18:57:42

(Suneet Bhardwaj)  
**Assistant Inspector General of Forests**

**Copy to:**

1. The PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forest, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur;
2. The Dy. DGF (Central), Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Nagpur;
3. The Nodal Officer, Department of Forest, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur;
4. User Agency;
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi for uploading on PARIVESH portal.