

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

ಪ್ರಧಾನ ಮುಖ್ಯ, ಅರಣ್ಯ, ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ
(ಅರಣ್ಯ ಪಡೆ ಮುಖ್ಯಸ್ಥರು) ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ

Office of the
Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Head of Forest Force)



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Old File No. A5(1).MNG.CR-6/2017-18

E-office File No. KFD/HOFF/A5-1(MNG)/7/2019-FC

Encl: 3 sets of Proposals

E-72107

Date 15-04-2021

05-05-

To,

The Additional Chief Secretary to Government
Department of Forest, Ecology and Environment
M. S. Building, Bengaluru

Sir,

Sub: Diversion of 39.90 hectare (39.70 ha for Mining Lease and 0.20 ha for Approach Road) of forest land in Sy No. 45, 49 & 50 of Jalligeri village, Kasaba Hobli, Shirahatti Taluk, Gadag District for establishing Sangli Gold Mine in favour of M/s Ramgad Minerals & Mining Limited, Hosapete, Ballari District

Proposal No. FP/KA/MIN/42366/2019 [FORM-A]

- Ref:**
1. Online proposal [FORM-A PART-I] dated 27-06-2020 (re-submitted) of M/s Ramgad Minerals & Mining Limited, Hosapete r/w uploading of Acknowledgement on 08-09-2020 for having delivered the hard copies of proposal to jurisdictional Deputy Conservator of Forests and Deputy Commissioner
 2. This office online communication dated 14-09-2020 to Deputy Conservator of Forests, Gadag Division for further processing of proposal
 3. Online submission of PART-II on 04-12-2020 by Deputy Conservator of Forests, Gadag Division [Letter No. A4/GFL/FC/RMML/Minning/39.899Ha/CR-09/2020-21/1834 dated 04-12-2020]
 4. Online submission of PART-III on 12-01-2021 by Chief Conservator of Forests, Dharwad Circle [Letter No. A1/GFL /B/S.G.M/Jalligeri/CR-1/2020-21/1820 dated 13-01-2021]

1. M/s Ramgad Minerals & Mining Limited, Hosapete [USER AGENCY] vide Ref (1) has (re)submitted an online proposal [FORM-A (PART-I)] seeking approval under Section 2(ii) of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 39.90 hectare (39.70 ha for Mining Lease and 0.20 ha for Approach Road) of forest land

in Sy No. 45, 49 & 50 of Jalligeri village, Kasaba Hobli, Shirahatti Taluk, Gadag District for establishing Sangli Gold Mine in favour of M/s Ramgad Minerals & Mining Limited, Hosapete, Ballari District. The same was accepted by Nodal Officer (FCA) on 14-07-2020 for further processing. After receiving the Acknowledgement online on 08-09-2020 from the User Agency for having delivered the hard copies to the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Gadag Division & Deputy Commissioner, Gadag District, the Web portal link was forwarded to the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Gadag Division on 14-09-2020 for field verification and processing under Section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

2. **Location and component-wise details of the project:** The location-wise details of the forest land requirement for the project are given below.

District, Taluk, Hobli	Village	Sy No.	Project Component	Forest extent proposed for diversion (ha)	Legal status of forest land
Gadag District, Shirahatti Taluk, Kasaba Hobli	Jalligeri	45	Mining Lease	38.77	Reserved Forest
		50		0.93	
		50	Approach Road	0.06	
		49		0.14	
Total (ha)				39.9	

The component-wise requirement of the forest land for the project is given below.

Project component		Forest extent proposed for diversion (ha)
1	Mining	39.70
2	Approach Road	0.20
Total		39.90

3. **DCF, Gadag Division Report:** The Deputy Conservator of Forests, Gadag Division has inspected the site on 02-12-2020 and vide Ref (3) has submitted the Site Inspection Report along with other details in PART-II of the proposal to the Chief Conservator of Forests, Dharwad Circle. Main features of the proposal as reported by the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Gadag Division r/w the report of Chief Conservator of Forests, Dharwad Circle and also that of the ICT Centre of Forest Department are as follows.

- The forest land proposed for diversion is prone to soil erosion.
- The forest land proposed for diversion is in general landscape of Eco-class III (Tropical Dry Deciduous Forests) and other Eco-class IV Tropical Thorn Forest and Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest with a Canopy Density up to 0.1 (Open forest).
- The number of trees to be felled are 2021 numbers in various girth.

- d. Major wild animals found in the area are Stripped hyena, Wolf, Indian porcupine, Jackal, Jungle Cat, Mongoose, Langur, Hare, Wild Pig, Four-horned, Pangolin, Monitor lizard, Indian cobra, Indian rock python, Black buck etc.
- e. There are rare/endangered/unique species of flora and fauna reported in the area like *Dolichandrone crispae*, *Petrocarpus marsupium*, *Dalbega latifolia*, Sandal, *Aegle marmelos*, *Gardenia gummifera*, *Abrus precatorius*, *Butea superba*, *Lettsomia elliptica*, *Mimosa pudica*, *Hemideguas indicus*, *Moullava spicata* and etc.
- f. The forest land proposed for diversion falls in Kappatagudda Wildlife Sanctuary.
- g. There are no protected archaeological/ heritage site/defence establishment or any other important monument located in the area.
- h. The requirement of forest land as proposed by the User Agency is unavoidable and bare minimum for the project.
- i. There is no violation reported under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

The Deputy Conservator of Forest, Gadag Division has expressed negative impact of this project on flora, fauna, ground water, watershed landscape, native medicinal plant species, etc. and considering all the above elements in order to conserve the natural resources and maintain ecological balance, he has recommended the proposal for rejection.

- 4. **CCF Dharwad Circle Report:** The Chief Conservator of Forests, Dharwad Circle has inspected the site on 22-12-2020 and has agreed with the opinion of Deputy Conservator of Forests, Gadag Division. The Chief Conservator of Forests, Dharwad Circle vide Ref (4) has submitted his report in PART-III and has **agreed with the recommendations of the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Gadag Division for rejection of the proposal for diversion of the land with the following observations.**

- i. The whole area is a valuable bio-diversity repository crucial for conservation of wildlife peculiar to the Decan plateau dry scrub forest with very good potential. It is also an important watershed for the surrounding agricultural tracts which area dependent on rain water runoff for their basic needs. It is to be noted that more than the removal of ore in the actual area applied for, the accompanying disturbances due to road construction, movement of vehicles, noise and dust pollution and disruption of drainage due to blasting etc., will be greater peril to the eco-system.

- ii. The existence of flora-fauna and avian species as listed in the report submitted by Deputy Conservator of Forests, Gadag are dependent on micro climate provided by Kappatagudda. These species of the area suggest that this area is ecologically 'rich', 'valuable', 'unique', and 'irreplaceable'. This proposed project may negatively affect the catchment and watershed of the landscape. Further, by virtue of their biological richness, they are potentially of high value of Human societies, help in maintaining the ecological richness, they are potentially of high value of Human societies, help in maintaining the ecological stability of the area and are significant in conserving biological diversity. The uniqueness of the services they offer to human societies are precious.
- iii. Images from various sources like camera traps and individual observations of field staff during patrolling reveal the active presence of good number of wild fauna both herbivorous and carnivorous including species mentioned in schedule-I of Wild Life Protection Act 1972 like Blackbuck, Indian Wolf, Leopard, Four horned Antelope. etc., species mentioned in schedule-II like Rhesus macaque, Chameleon etc., and species mentioned in schedule-III like Spotted deer and Hyena. Other than these species there are good number of Amphibians and Reptiles as well as good number of birds including schedule-I like Peafowl, Hornbills found in these areas. This fragile Eco-system is also home to a variety of Butterflies, Moths, Beetles and other beneficial insects which bestow their contribution to the survival of the mankind in form of pollination and maintaining the balance of the Eco-System.
- iv. Field inspections reveal that there is a stratified distribution of animals across the slopes of the Kappathgudda, which is readily observed here. On top of the hillocks four horned antelopes are found. On middle slopes Chinkaras can be seen and on foot of the hillock, Black bucks are seen often. This fact supports the stability of the ecosystem and the food web present in pristine Kappathgudda.
- v. The valley which the proposed area drains has been given due importance by declaring it a Medicinal Plant Development Area (MPDA) before being declared as Kappathgudda Wildlife Sanctuary. A preliminary survey has revealed the existence of endangered flora like *Dolichandrone crispae*, a medicinal plant, *Pterocarpus marsupium*, small pocket of *Dalbergia latifolia*, profused natural regeneration of Sandal, *Aegle marmelos*, *Gardenia gummifera*, *Abrus precatorius*, *Butea Superba*,

Lettsomia elliptica, Moullava spicata, Hemideguas indicus and Mimosa pudica.

- vi. Various non-forestry activities in the area may lead to fragmentation of habitat which is dangerous to the food web and ecosystem stability of the Kappathgudda. Because of this fragmentation much more cases of man-animal conflict may arise and it may lead to straying of wild life like leopards, wolves & hyenas into surrounding human habitat.
- vii. The whole landscape is catchment area for Gadag and its surrounding villages and a source of water for the local populace. Moisture conservation activities taken up in the area under various scheme are not only beneficial for the rise in the groundwater level and water retention capacity of the area. The green cover suppresses soil erosion which is likely to happen if the area is denuded. The area forms the ridge line of Kappathgudda hills which has been the catchment for the drainage of Shirahatti and Mundaragi Taluks of the Gadag District. Dambal and Hirewaddatti minor irrigation tanks which are the lifelines of this locality entirely depend on Kappathgudda Wildlife Sanctuary for their water source which is likely to deplete if soil binding vegetation will be removed from the surrounding area.
- viii. The part of proposed mining project lying in the Kappathgudda Wildlife Sanctuary as notified in FEE 57 FWL 2019 dated 16-05-2019 may alter / destroy or disturb present ecological setup both in physical and biological levels which may not be possible to restore later at any cost. The other parts of the project also lie in the ESZ.
- ix. This proposed project No.FP/KA/MIN/42366/2019 earlier submitted as FP/KA/MIN/26675/2017 was recommended for **rejection** by Deputy Conservator of Forests, Territorial Division, Gadag.
- x. The Deputy Conservator of Forests, Territorial Division, Gadag expressed negative impact of this project on flora-fauna, groundwater, watershed-landscape, native medicinal plant species, etc., Considering all the above elements in order to conserve the natural resources and maintain ecological balance, this proposed project is recommended for **REJECTION.**
- xi. The proposed site is ecologically **highly vulnerable** for commercial activities and once again it is reiterated that such activities / projects should be barred/rejected in the future.

5. **Net Present Value (NPV):** The User Agency is required to pay the Net Present Value (NPV) of forest land proposed for diversion as per Para 3.1 to 3.4 of the FC Guidelines communicated by Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, New Delhi vide F. No. 5-2/2017-FC dated 28-03-2019. The User Agency has submitted an Undertaking dated 20-12-2019 to pay the charges towards Net Present Value (NPV) of the forest land proposed for diversion.

6. **Compensatory Afforestation (CA):** As the instant proposal is a fresh proposal under FC Act, the User Agency is required to provide an equivalent extent of suitable non-forest land in accordance with FC guidelines. Further, as per Government of Karnataka Order No. FEE 88 FLL 2016 dated 31-08-2016 pertaining to FC proposals of private User Agencies, such CA land needs to be a private land either as forest enclosure or adjoining an existing forest area in man-animal conflict zone. In addition, the User Agency is also required to pay the CA charges as per prevailing rates. The User Agency has identified an extent of 40.04 ha of non-forest (Revenue) land in following Village and Survey numbers for CA purpose.

District	Taluk	Hobli	Village	Sy No.	Extent	
					(acre)	(ha)
Ballari	Harapanahalli	Telagi	Arasanalu	262/A	99.00	40.04
Total					99.0	40.04

The CA land information in the form of Topo Map, Geo-referenced Map, KML file and GPS readings of all corners have already been uploaded / submitted by the User Agency in PART-I of the proposal. The Deputy Conservator of Forests, Davanagere Division has submitted the CA Land Suitability Certificate and CA scheme. The same are enclosed herewith. In addition, the User Agency has also given an Undertaking dated 20-12-2019 to pay the CA charges.

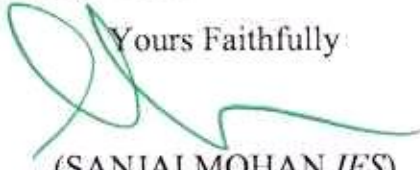
7. **Status of Mining Lease:** The User Agency has uploaded a copy of Letter of Intent (LoI) for grant of mining lease dated 31-07-2006 issued by the Secretary to Government (Commerce & Industries Department) addressed to the Director, Department of Mines and Geology. However, the status of mining lease as per the MMDR (Amendment) Act, 2015 has not been submitted by the User Agency.

In light of the facts stated above and agreeing with the recommendation of the field officers, the proposal for diversion of forest land inside Kappathgudda Wildlife Sanctuary is recommended for rejection. Hence, the Government of Karnataka is requested not to consider the proposal for seeking in-principle (Stage-I approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 39.90 hectare (39.70 ha for Mining Lease and 0.20 ha for Approach Road) of forest land in Sy No. 45, 49 & 50 of Jalligeri village, Kasaba Hobli,

Shirahatti Taluk, Gadag District for establishing Sangli Gold Mine in favour of Ramgad Minerals & Mining Limited, Hosapete, Ballari District subject to the conditions specified in Annexure 'A'.

The hard copy of the proposal along with the relevant documents in 3 sets is submitted herewith for further needful. The present status of the proposal obtained from the web-portal is also appended for necessary action.

Yours Faithfully

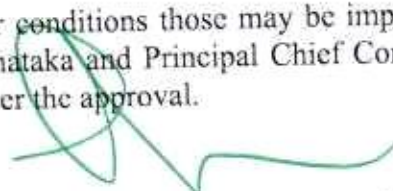

(SANJAI MOHAN IFS)
Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Head of Forest Force)

Copy to the:

1. Chief Conservator of Forests, Dharwad Circle, Dharwad for information.
2. Deputy Conservator of Forests, Gadag Division, Gadag for information.
3. M/s Ramgad Minerals & Mining Limited (RMML) Corporate Office, Baldata Enclave, Aberaj Baldota Road Hosapete, Ballari District – 583 203 for information.

ANNEXURE - 'A'

1. The legal status of forest land shall remain unchanged and it shall continue to be forest land.
2. The User Agency shall pay the applicable Net Present Value (NPV), Compensatory, Plantation cost of extraction of trees, Land lease rent and any other levies as per the conditions of approval.
3. The User Agency shall demarcate the lease area in the manner specified at the time of approval at its own cost.
4. The road shall be used for transportation of ore between sunrise and sunset only.
5. The lessee shall not sub-lease, mortgage & hypothecate the forest area.
6. The leased out area should be used for the purpose for which it is granted. In case the land is not used for the stipulated purpose within two years or when it is no longer needed for the stipulated purpose, the area would stand resumed to the Forest Department.
7. No change in Land Use Plan on forest land shall be done except with prior approval of Government of India under FC Act 1980.
8. The application for renewal of the lease in the prescribed form and manner shall be submitted at least six months prior to the expiry of forest lease. In case no renewal is sought, the Lessee shall hand over the lease.
9. No residential or commercial buildings shall be permitted in the forest area proposed for diversion.
10. No crushing / breaking of stones or labour camp shall be allowed on forest land and all waste / debris generated shall be scientifically disposed of outside the forest area.
11. Any damage to forest area because of implementation of the proposal shall be compensated by the Lessee. The extent of damage shall be assessed by the jurisdictional Deputy Conservator of Forests/ Conservator of Forests/ Chief Conservator of Forests.
12. The Lessee shall ensure that no avoidable harm is caused to the fauna and flora in and around the proposed area.
13. In case, any violation of the provisions of the Karnataka Forest Act, 1963 & Rules, 1969 or other relevant Acts/Rules is reported during the lease period, the lease will be liable for forfeiture under Section 82 of Karnataka Forest Act, 1963. The Chief Conservator of Forests / Deputy Conservator of Forests concerned are authorized to take necessary action in this regard.
14. The approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is subject to any other clearances necessary under the prevailing statutes.
15. The User Agency shall also abide by other conditions those may be imposed by the Government of India, Government of Karnataka and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Forest Force) before or after the approval.


Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Head of Forest Force)

PART - IV

(To be filled in by the Nodal Officer or Principal Chief Conservator of Forests or Head of Forest Department)

<p>Detailed opinion & specific recommendation of the State Forest Department for acceptance or otherwise of the proposal with remarks</p> <p>(While giving opinion, the adverse comments made by concerned Conservator of Forests or Deputy Conservator of Forests should be categorically reviewed and critically commented upon).</p>	<p>Agreeing with the recommendation of the field officers, the proposal for diversion of forest land inside Kappathgudda Wildlife Sanctuary is recommended for rejection. Hence, the Government of Karnataka is requested not to consider the proposal for seeking in-principle (Stage-I approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 39.90 hectare (39.70 ha for Mining Lease and 0.20 ha for Approach Road) of forest land in Sy No. 45, 49 & 50 of Jalligeri village, Kasaba Hobli, Shirahatti Taluk, Gadag District for establishing Sangli Gold Mine in favour of Ramgad Minerals & Mining Limited, Hosapete, Ballari District subject to the conditions specified in Annexure 'A'.</p> <p>Proposal No. FP/KA/MIN/42366/2019 [FORM-A]</p>
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Signature:


RAJIV RANJAN IFS

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Forest Conservation) AND
Nodal Officer (FCA)

Name:
Designation:

Countersigned by :


SANJAI MOHAN IFS

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Head of Forest Force)

Name:
Designation:

N.D.O. No: 05/2020-22

(Official Seal)

Date: 05-05-2021