

To

**The Divisional Forest Officer
Keonjhar Wildlife Division
Anandapur**

Sub: Diversion of balance forest land of 746.3325ha including 11.8305ha for safety zone(excluding 95.60ha pre-1980 broken up forest land already diverted and 4.467ha of forest land being proposed for diversion in separate proposal for mining infrastructure of Daitary ML) within total forest land of 846.3995 ha located within approved mining Lease area of 1018.3085ha for Iron ore mining in Daitary Mining lease in cuttack Forest Division of Jajpur District and Keonjhar(WL) Division of Keonjhar District, Odisha of OMC Ltd.- Submission of final study report regarding.

Ref: (i) Letter No.8-28/2015 FC dt.10.05.2023 of MoEF & CC, Govt. of India (FC Division).
(ii) Letter No. 3548/3F (Mining) dt. 24.08. 2023 by DFO, Keonjhar Wildlife Division, Anandapur.

Sir,

The MoEF & CC, Govt. of India vide letter under reference (i) has sought clarification on the time period during which the Jhum/shifting cultivation has taken place over an area of 28.67 ha of revenue forest land within Daitari ML area of 1018.3085 ha of OMC Ltd located in Keonjhar and Jajpur district of Odisha. DFO, Keonjhar Wildlife Division, Anandapur while referring the above letter has sought clarification on the following vide letter under reference (ii):

- Under which circumstances the Jhum/shifting cultivation has taken place within the lease area?
- The time period during which the same has happened?
- To intimate the steps taken by OMC.
- To intimate the present status of Jhum/shifting cultivation.

In compliance to the above observations it is submitted that the land parcel is very close to Talapada village and the tribal people depend their livelihood by cultivation. Although, OMC provided employment to the villagers, as a traditional habit of the villagers, the vegetation has been partly removed with an intermittent time period.

In order to ascertain the time period during which the Jhum/shifting cultivation has occurred, OMC requested ORSAC to provide satellite imagery at five yearly intervals for the year from 1970 to 1985. Since the images were not available with ORSAC, they requested NRSC Data Centre, Hyderabad to provide the required images for the aforementioned period. The images, as per the advice by NRSC were downloaded from the web server but of very poor quality. The available images for different period have been superimposed with the kml file of 28.67 ha and following are the observations:

Sl. No.	Images downloaded for the Year	Analysis of imagery data
1	1973	Partly cleaned area for Jhum/shifting cultivation is observed.
2	1975	Cleaned area for Jhum/shifting cultivation is observed.
3	1976	Cleaned area for Jhum/shifting cultivation is observed.
4	1980	Partly cleaned area for Jhum/shifting cultivation is observed.
5	1986	Re-growth of vegetation is observed

6	1988	Re-growth of vegetation is observed
7	1989	Partly cleaned area for Jhum/shifting cultivation is observed.
8	1990	Partly cleaned area for Jhum/shifting cultivation is observed.
9	1991	Cleaned area for Jhum/shifting cultivation is observed.

The copies of the images are given at **Annexure-I** for reference. Although, the original images are very poor in resolution but it gives a fair idea about the period i.e. 1975, 1976 and 1991 during which Jhum/shifting cultivation has taken place. Re-growth of vegetation during non-cultivation period i.e. 1986 & 1988 has been observed.

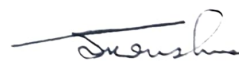
As an alternate approach, the statement of respected persons (Age Group of 50 to 80) of Talapada village was recorded in presence of Sarpanch, Bareiguda Gram Panchayat and Forester, Brahmanipal on dt 18.08.2023 to ascertain the period during which Jhum/shifting cultivation has taken place. The reasons of doing such activities by the Juang community were attributed to traditional cultivation to feed their family members. It is revealed from the statement that the time period of above activity has taken place within 1975 to 1978. The copy of the statement in Odia and its translation in English with photographs of the gathering on dt 18.08.2023 is enclosed as **Annexure-II** for kind reference.

The CSR Team of OMC is spreading awareness on disadvantages of podu cultivation to the villagers in common gathering. The security personnel of OMC patrol the area regularly to prevent tree felling. OMC has adopted Talapada village and provided all facilities which resulted complete stoppage of podu cultivation in the region. OMC supports the villagers and people around by distributing saplings free of cost to generate green cover. Besides, natural regeneration is coming up in the area by preventing forest fire. The plantation programme initiated by the DFO, Keonjhar Wildlife Division, Anandapur adds to the green cover to compensate the loss.

The mapping of present day topography does not show any podu cultivation in the region and natural growth has come up in many parts of earlier degraded land.

Therefore, it is requested to kindly recommend the above clarification for necessary further action by MoEF & CC for grant of stage-I forest clearance pertaining to Daitari Iron Ore Mines of OMC Ltd.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr Suman Krishna Sit)
General Manager (Geology)
Authorized signatory

Encls. as above