

NH/HOP/SHEP/Env/2025/Camp-Jammu/ 54

Date: 14.05.2025

The Chief Conservator of Forests,  
& Nodal Officer (FCA),  
FRMC, Narwal Jammu.

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (i) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) Ltd. for non-forestry use of 847.17 ha. of Reserved Forest and Jungle-jhari land for construction of Sawalkot HEP (1856 MW) within the jurisdiction of Udhampur, Mahore, Batote and Ramban Forest Divisions, Districts- Udhampur, Reasi and Ramban in the State of Jammu & Kashmir (Online proposal No. FP/JK/HYD/150591/2021) - reg.

Ref: MoEF&CC New Delhi communication No. 01-01-2025 and No. 14-02-2025

Sir,


On the subject matter cited above, the point wise reply to the observations raised by the MoEF&CC in EDS dated 01-01-2025 and 14-02-2025 pertains to user agency is given as under:-

S. No.	EDS	Reply
1	List of existing HEPs on Chenab River Basin along with details viz. name of tributary on which the said HEPs have been built, power generation capacity and their KML files may be submitted.	In reply to point No. 1, it is submitted that there are three number of HEPs on River Chenab namely (i) 390 MW Dulhasti HE Power Station at Kishtwar (ii) 890 MW Baghliar HEP at Ramban and (iii) 690 MW Salal Hydro Electric Project at Reasi. KML files are annexure-I.
2	Carrying Capacity Studies and Cumulative Impact Studies in the instant proposal which is on Chenab River Basin has not been submitted along with the proposal. Status of the river basin study along with the copy of the report if done may be provided.	In reply to point No. 2, it is submitted that Since the River Chenab and River Jhelum are falling in Indus Water Treaty; the data of the studies cannot be published due to Security reasons. Hence, the Cumulative Impact Studies in the instant proposal and river basin study shall not be possible due to the said reason.  Further, the MoEF&CC has taken up the matter with Government of J&K, in this regard the Government of J&K has made a communication with Minister Environment and Climate Change requesting for exemption from carrying out the CIA/CCS Studies.
3	State Government is requested to intimate the status of approval of State Dam Safety Authority (SDSA) and National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) for the Sawalkot HEP. Other approvals received pertaining to Dam safety may kindly be intimated.	In reply to point No. 3, it is submitted that <b>there is no statutory requirement for clearance from the NDSA or SDSA for the under-construction projects as per the provisions of the Dam Safety Act, 2021.</b> As intimated by the Regional Director, (North) NDSA Chandigarh (Copy of the email enclosed Annexure-II).

*C. S. Singh*

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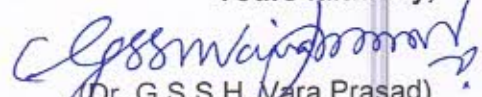
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13	As per DSS report, calculated area of shape file/ KML file of Forest land proposed for diversion is 838.473 ha. whereas area proposed for diversion is 847.17 ha. There is a discrepancy of 8.697 ha. Revised KML file for exact area needs to be submitted.	In reply to point No. 13, it is submitted that the KML for 847.17 ha the area proposed for diversion is re-verified and no discrepancy has been found.  Further, the mismatched in the area is due to non inclusion of Dumping Site, after inclusion of the Dumping Site, the total area remains the same and diversion of 847.17 ha may be allowed. Hence, the revised KML is submitted. (Annexure-V(Forest) & VI(Non-Forest))
15	As per DSS, observation based on high resolution Google Earth (GE) images: road and solid structure such as building, pillars for flyover, etc. is visible. Comments from State Government in this regard needs to be submitted. Further, approvals obtained, if any, in the past may also be submitted along with compliance report.	In reply to point No. 15, it is submitted that the, River Chenab is passing through the Ramban Town/ Villages. The submergence area starts from Dam located at Tanger Village of Ramban District ends at CRP Camp, zero point located at Chandrakote village of Ramban District, which is around 40 Km's. As per DSS, observation based on high resolution Google Earth (GE) images: all the roads and solid structures such as building, pillars for flyover, etc. which are visible, are coming (Fully/ Partially) under submergence area of the project <b>on non-forest land</b> .
16	As per DSS, component wise KML file is not available for the extant proposal. The same needs to be submitted.	In reply to point No. 16, it is submitted that the component wise KML file is submitted to the extent of proposal consolidate.  All the components are falling in and around the Dam area of Panchari range of Udhampur, Mahore and Gool range of Ramban. Further component wise KML file are submitted. (Annexure-VII)

It is requested to kindly grant in-principle approval for this project, which is of national importance at the earliest please.

Yours faithfully,


  
(Dr. G.S.S.H. Vara Prasad)  
Senior Manager (Environment)

Copy to:

1. Executive Director, Regional Office, Jammu for kind information.
2. General Manager (HoP), Sawalkote HE Project for kind information.

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4	In component-wise break-up, an area of 2.4 ha has been proposed for Explosive Magazine. State Government may inform whether the area sought for the same is barest minimum. Further, State Government may also explore the possibility of shifting the same to non-forest land and revised area, if any, may be intimated to the Ministry.	In reply to point No. 4, it is submitted that the area of 2.4 ha has been proposed for Explosive Magazine at Gandhri Forest Range, which is barest minimum and very essential. Further, it is submitted that, while selecting the site Explosive Magazine the project always selects the site, which are near to the work place and located in the forest area and safe from all angles. Keeping in view of the reasons explained above, the above, the shifting of Explosive Magazine on to non-forest land and revised area, if any, may not be possible.
5	In component-wise break-up, an area of 9.0 ha has been proposed for Muck Disposal Area MDS-1 and MDS-2 above FRL. State Government may inform whether the area sought for the same is barest minimum. Further, State Government may also explore the possibility of shifting the same to non-forest land and revised area, if any, may be intimated to the Ministry.	In reply to point No. 5, it is submitted that the area of 9.00 ha in Gandhri Range, has been proposed for dumping site, which is barest minimum and very essential. Further, it is submitted that due to non availability of Non Forest lands in nearby areas, shifting of the same on to non-forest land un avoidable and hence, the revised area, which is not possible due to hilly terrain.
6	In component-wise break-up, an area of 12.001 ha has been proposed for Quarry Sites above FRL. A copy of approval obtained from mining department along with supporting document like approved mining plan may be provided.	In reply to point No. 6, it is submitted that the area of 12.001 ha in Panchari Forest Range has been proposed for Quarry sites area above FRL. Further, it is submitted that, Land diverted for Quarry sites are located in near Dam area and are temporary in nature, the details of quarry site plan as proposed in DPR were submitted to Directorate of Geology and Mining Government of J&K by JKPDC. Further, the Directorate of Geology and Mining Government of J&K has issued NOC in favour of JKPDC (copy enclosed as Annexure-III and IV.
7	In component-wise break-up, an area of 1 ha has been proposed for Roads within Project are above FRL. State Government may inform whether the area sought for the same is barest minimum. Possibility of reducing the area to the barest minimum may be explored by the State Government and revised area, if any, may be intimated to the Ministry.	In reply to point No. 7, it is submitted that the area of 1.0 ha has been proposed for Roads within Project above, FRL in Panchari Range, which is barest minimum and very essential.

*[Signature]*

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