

F. No. 8-61/2016-FC

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan
Aliganj, Jor Bagh Road
New Delhi- 110003
Dated:21-08-2025

To

The Joint Secretary
Ministry of Mines,
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
Email: vivek.bajpai@gov.in

Subject: Proposal for prior approval under section 2 (1) (iii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for 145.231 ha (originally proposed 153.09 ha) forest land for Iron Ore mining at village Surjagad Wooria Hill Bhamragad, Tahsil Etapali, Dist. Gadchiroli in Maharashtra State in favour of M/s Gopani Iron & Power (India) Pvt. Ltd - regarding.

Madam/Sir,

In reference to this Ministry's letter dated 30.04.2025, the Ministry of Mines vide letter dated 09.07.2025 (**copy enclosed**) had informed that the Letter of Intent issued by the State Government on 04.09.2006 has become infructuous and void.

2. Now, the Ministry of Mines vide letter dated 01.08.2025(**copy enclosed**) in the instant matter has informed that the Letter of intent(Lol) issued by State Govt. on 04.09.2006 is valid without referring or superceding the letter dated 09.07.2025.

In view of the above, the Ministry of Mines is requested to clarify the factual position and verify the authenticity of the letter dated 01.08.2025.

Yours faithfully,

Digitally signed by
SUNEET BHARDWAJ
Date: 21-08-2025
17:35:17

Sd/-
(Suneet Bhardwaj)
Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:-

1. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF, Department of Forest, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur.
2. DDGF (Central), MoEF&CC's Regional Office at Nagpur.
3. APCCF-cum-Nodal Officer, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur.
4. User Agency.
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi for uploading.

No. 16/60/2025-Mines VI
Government of India
Ministry of Mines

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
Dated the 9th July, 2025

Office Memorandum

Subject: Proposal for prior approval under Section 2 (1) (iii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for 153.09 ha forest land for Iron Ore mining at village Surjagad Wooria Hill Bhamragad, Tahsil Etapali, Dist. Gadchiroli in Maharashtra State in favour of M/s Gopani Iron & Power (India) Pvt. Ltd.

The undersigned is directed to refer to letter dated 30.04.2025 (copy enclosed) received from Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on the subject mentioned above wherein the comments of Ministry of Mines have been sought in the matter keeping in view the Section 10A(2)(c) and other provisions of MMDR Act.

2 . The matter has been examined in the Ministry and it is observed that in the instant case the Letter of Intent for grant of mining lease for mineral iron ore was issued by the State Government in favor of M/s Gopani Iron & Power (India) Pvt. Ltd. on 04.09.2006. Therefore, the instant case falls within the ambit of Section 10A(2)(c) of the MMDR Act.

3 . As per the provisions of Section 10A(2)(c) of the MMDR Act and Rule 8(4) of the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydro Carbons Energy Minerals) Concession Rules, 2016, the mining lease in the instant case was required to be executed and registered within a period of two years from the date of commencement of the MMDR Amendment Act, 2015 i.e. on or before 11.01.2017. However, the mining lease in the instant case has not been executed.

4. In view of above, the Letter of Intent issued by the State Government on 04.09.2006 has become infructuous and void.

5. This issues with the approval of the competent authority.

Encl.: As stated above

Digitally signed by
VINOD KUMAR
Date: 09-07-2025
20:23:51
(Vinod Kumar)

Under Secretary Government of India
Tel. No.: 011-23383946
Email: vinod.kr71@nic.in

To

The Secretary,
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh,
New Delhi - 110003.

Copy to:

1. The Director General of Forest & Special Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh, New Delhi.
2. The Addl. Chief Secretary, Industries Department, Government of Maharashtra, Mantralaya, Mumbai.
3. The Controller General, Indian Bureau of Mines, Indira Bhawan, Civil Lines, Nagpur.

No. 16/60/2025-Mines VI
Government of India
Ministry of Mines

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
Dated the 1st Aug, 2025

Office Memorandum

Subject: Proposal for prior approval under Section 2 (1) (ii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for 153.09 ha forest land for Iron Ore mining at village Surjagad Wooria Hill Bhamragad, Tahsil Etapali, Dist. Gadchiroli in Maharashtra State in favour of M/s Gopani Iron & Power (India) Pvt. Ltd.

The undersigned is directed to refer to letter dated 30.04.2025 (copy enclosed) received from Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on the subject mentioned above wherein the comments of Ministry of Mines have been sought in the matter keeping in view the Section 10A(2)(c) and other provisions of MMDR Act.

2. The matter has been examined in the Ministry and it is observed that in the instant case the Letter of Intent for grant of mining lease for mineral iron ore was issued by the State Government in favor of M/s Gopani Iron & Power (India) Pvt. Ltd. on 04.09.2006. Therefore, the instant case falls within the ambit of Section 10A(2)(c) of the MMDR Act.

3. As per the provisions of Section 10A(2)(c) of the MMDR Act and Rule 8(4) of the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydro Carbons Energy Minerals) Concession Rules 2016, mining lease in the instant case was required to be executed and registered within a period of two years from the date of commencement of the MMDR Amendment Act, 2015 i.e. on or before 11.01.2017. However, the mining lease in the instant case has not been executed.

4. In this instant case Govt. of Maharashtra have already issued letter for validation of LOI on 19/12/2023 in which they have clearly stated that "LOI is still valid" as per the direction of Hon'ble High court Mumbai bench nagpur dt. 06/01/2017 & 12/09/2017.

5. In view of above, the Letter of Intent issued by the State Government on 04.09.2006 is valid.

6. This issues with the approval of the competent authority.

Encl.: As stated above

Digitally signed by
VINOD KUMAR

Date: 01-08-2025

14:32:50
(Vinod Kumar)

Under Secretary Government of India
Tel. No.: 011-23383946
Email: vinod.kr71@nic.in

To
The Secretary,
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh,
New Delhi – 110003.

no enclosure found with this letter.

JSA (CR) 14/8/2025