

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj
New Delhi - 110003
Dated:21-10-2024

To

The Additional Chief Secretary (Forests)

Government of West Bengal,
Department of Forests,
Aranya Bhavan (1st Floor),
Block-LA-10A, Sector-III, Salt Lake City,
Kolkata - 700098

Sub: 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 338.74 ha of forest land for Coal Mining in Barjora (North) Coal Mine Block in favour of West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited (WBPDC), Bankura District, West Bengal (Online Proposal No. FP/WB/MIN/43000/2019)-reg.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the above-mentioned subject proposal as uploaded on PARIVESH portal vide proposal No. FP/WB/MIN/43000/2019 on 17.10.2023 and submitting additional information through online on 26.06.2024 for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. Further, it is to inform that the proposal was examined by the Advisory Committee in its meeting held on 14.10.2024. The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DIGF (Central), Regional Office, Bhubaneswar and Nodal Officer, Government of West Bengal decided to defer the proposal for want of the following information:

- i. The CWLW while recommending the proposal has mentioned that the impact of the proposed project could be kept at manageable level using extraction technology that does not require blasting. In this regard, the state shall intimate whether the mining is proposed to be done with the extraction technology without blasting or otherwise.
- ii. A brief profile of the company/UA should be submitted giving details of their existing mining leases for coal in the State with their capacity of production, the present level of average annual production, location of these pits and the status of reclamation of forest land where mining is completed. Along with this, the State Government should also submit the details of all other coal-mining leases with their capacity and average annual production and projected future requirements. They should fully justify the necessity of

opening the proposed mining lease on forest land by giving details like total number of mines with mining lease, area, mineable, reserve life of mine, maximum production achieved in particular year against permission granted for production per year".

- iii. The "Tartora Nala" flows from west to east of the proposed mine boundary and needs to be diverted as per the approved Mining Plan. A justification for the diversion of the Nala needs to be submitted. The state shall examine the matter and give a reasoned justification as to why the diversion of nala is essential and why it is not possible to retain the nala within the mining lease with a safety zone along the nala. The State Govt. shall submit no objection certificate from irrigation/water resource department with regard to the proposed diversion of the said nala.
- iv. The PCCF(HoFF) has recommended the proposal, however, keeping in view the fact that the area proposed is in high conservation zone and part of a landscape which is an elephant habitat, an in depth analysis of the issue is needed, especially in view of the concerns raised by the Nodal Officer. The PCCF(HOFF) shall therefore submit his clear recommendations duly addressing the specific concerns raised by the Nodal Officer.
- v. The compensatory afforestation has been proposed over non-forest land. The regional Office in the SIR has reported that about 169.41 ha area in Jalpaiguri district is in the riverine area of Teesta river. The suitability of the same has to be ensured. Further, it has been informed that during site inspection, only some of the areas proposed for CA in Bankura District were physically inspected. The Regional Office needs to inspect the remaining areas proposed for CA and ensure their suitability. A detailed report in this regard is required from the Regional Office.
- vi. The State Government shall submit the information on the above-mentioned points to the Ministry along with a copy to the Regional Office. The Regional Office shall examine the same and keeping in view the recommendations of the Nodal Officer, West Bengal and the Regional Office shall submit its recommendations on the proposal to the Ministry.

In view of the above, the Govt. of West Bengal is requested to provide the above mentioned information for further action in the matter.

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-

(Suneet Bhardwaj)

Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:-

1. PCCF (HoFF), West Bengal Department of Forests, Aranya Bhavan, Block-LA, 10-A, Sector-III, Salt Lake City, Kolkata-700098.
2. DDGF (Central), Sub-Office Kolkata under the jurisdiction of RO Bhubaneswar.
3. Nodal Officer (FCA), Department of Forest and Environment, Government of

West Bengal, Kolkata.

4. User Agency.

5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF & CC, New Delhi.