

File No. 8-07/2024-FC
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(Forest Conservation Division)

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj
New Delhi - 110003.
Dated:06-01-2025

To

The Addl. Chief Secretary (Forests),
Government of Odisha,
Bhubaneswar

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for non-forestry use of 134.69 ha of forest land for expansion of Kulda Open Cast Coal Mining Project of Basundhara Area of Mahanandi Coalfields Limited in Sundargarh District under Sundargarh Forest Division (Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/50293/2020)

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Govt. of Odisha letter No. FE-DIV-FLD-0033-2024-7679/FE&CC dated 25.04.2024 and additional information submitted by the PCCF (Forest Diversion and Nodal Officer, FC Act). vide letter No. dated 20827/9F (MG)-49/2023 dated 18.10.2024 and vide letter No. 20827/9F (MG)-49/2023 dated 11.12.2024 on the proposal mentioned in above subject seeking prior approval of the Central Government in accordance with Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and to say that the proposal was considered in the Advisory Committee meeting held on 26.12.2024. After examination of the proposal the Committee deferred the proposal for want of the following information:

- i. The area proposed for CA on DFL is having MDF over 116 ha as per DSS analysis. Further, as informed by the state the area involves road, cultivated land and claims under FRA, 2006, which indicate that the area proposed for CA is neither completely suitable for plantation, nor it is free from encumbrances. The State Govt. shall therefore exclude the area which is not suitable for CA and provide alternate DFL twice in extent to the area proposed for diversion which is suitable for raising plantation and is free from all encumbrances. All requisite details with respect to the revised CA area shall be provided.
- ii. The State shall provide the status of the compliance of the conditions stipulated in the approval dated 11.03.2019 (for 29.41 ha) for Basundhara washery. The status of violations (if any) in the said project shall also be submitted.
- iii. The Regional Office shall provide the detailed site inspection report of the CA area with clear recommendations. The Regional office shall also give its comments on the status of the compliance of the conditions stipulated in the

approval dated 11.03.2019 (for 29.41 ha) for Basundhra washery and violations (if any) in the said project.

- iv. The State has informed that the DFO, Sundargarh Division vide his Memo No. 6722 Dtd 30.11.2024 has stated that as per DSS analysis, an area of 10 Ha of water bodies was not included earlier and it is clarified that an area of 929.825 ha is comprised of 4 Ha as MDF, 678 Ha as Non-Forest, 132 Ha as open forest, 105 Ha as scrub and 10 Ha Water Bodies. The possible impact of mining over 10 ha water bodies needs to be examined and state shall provide the justification along with proposed mitigation measures if any for the inclusion of 10 ha water bodies in the project.

In view of above, the State Government is requested to furnish information, as indicated above for further consideration of the proposal in the Ministry.

Yours faithfully,

(Dr. Dheeraj Mittal)

Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:

1. PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forests, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar.
2. Dy. DGF (Central), Regional Office of the MoEF&CC at Bhubaneswar-
action taken with respect to the point (iii).
3. Nodal Officer (FCA), Department of Forests, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar.
4. User Agency.
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi for uploading on PARIVESH portal.