

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
JorBagh Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi: 110003,

Dated: 8th April, 2022

Office Memorandum

Subject: Diversion of 109.459 ha of forest land for Open Cast Mining Project at Gourangdih ABC coal mine in favour of WB Mineral Development and Trading Corporation under Durgapur Forest Division, West Bengal.

I am directed to refer to the above subject proposal and to inform that the instant proposal has been considered by FAC in its meeting held on 31.03.2022 and the minutes of the meeting may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The FAC *inter-alia* recommended that:

- i. Schedule-I species like Porcupine, Rock Python, Spectacled Cobra, etc. have been reported in the area. Comments of the Chief Wildlife Warden of the State on the likely impact of the project on wildlife and mitigating measures, if any, required to be taken for the conservation and development of the wildlife be obtained and intimated to the Ministry.
- ii. Detailed purpose wise breakup of the forest land as well as non-forest land in commensuration with the land use proposed in the approved mining plan needs to be informed by the State.
- iii. Adequacy of existing road infrastructure to accommodate the increased transportation of coal from the proposed mine and existing mines may be informed by the State supported with scientific and factual inputs.
- iv. Railway siding is reported to be located at distance of 20 km from the proposed mine, which is reported to be used by other mines also, therefore, possibility of evacuation of coal using common closed/piped conveyor corridor should also be explored to reduce pollution loads on the existing road infrastructure.
- v. As per detailed provided online, total area involved in the project is 356.575 ha, comprising of 247.116 ha of non-forest land and 109.459 ha of forest land. Corresponding detail of area mentioned in the approved Mining Plan are different wherein total area has been mentioned as 370 ha comprising of 92.53 ha of forest land and 277.47 ha of non-forest land. Discrepancy in the area needs to be rectified by the State and exact detail may be provided to the Ministry.
- vi. Areas of Mining Plan and Mining lease are not same. Ministry's guidelines stipulated that area of safety zone should be inside the mining lease while the same has been kept out side the lease area in the extant case. Similarly, area of external dumps and infrastructure have also been kept outside the lease. Rationale for not including 143.305 ha of area outside the lease containing vital project components like safety zone, external dumps, infrastructure, etc. may be intimated by the State.
- vii. A Sub-Committee of the FAC will visit the area to look into the above observations of the FAC and a report on the same will be submitted for further consideration of the Committee. Regional Officer, Kolkata will also be part of the Sub-Committee.

2. In view of above, the following sub committee of the FAC is constituted. The committee will visit the area to look into the above observations of the FAC and analyze the proposals submitted by the User Agency.

- i. Dr Soma Das, Regional Officer, IRO,Kolkata
- ii. Ms. Kana Talukdar, Nodal Officer (FCA), WBFD, Kolkata
- iii. Dr.Sanjay Deshmukh, FAC Member

3. The FAC sub-committee is requested to visit the site and submit the report with their observations and recommendations at the earliest.


(Sandeep Sharma)

Assistant Inspector General of Forests

To:

1. Dr.Sanjay Deshmukh, FAC Member
2. Dr Soma Ghosh, Regional Officer, Integrated Regional Office, Kolkata.
3. Ms Kana Talukdar, Nodal Officer (FCA), WBFD, Kolkata

Copy for information to:

1. The Principal Secretary (Forests), Government of West Bengal Kolkata.
2. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests(HoFF), Government of West Bengal, Kolkata.
3. The Nodal Officer (FCA), O/o the PCCF(HoFF), Government of West Bengal, Kolkata.
4. User agency.
5. Monitoring Cell of FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi.
6. PPS to DGF&SS/PPS to ADGF (FC)/PPS to IGF (FC).