

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi – 1100 03
Dated: April, 2023

To,

The Principal Secretary,
Government of West Bengal,
Kolkata-700 098

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

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the above subject proposal and to convey that the instant proposal has been considered by Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 24.03.2023. The minutes of the meeting are available on PARIVESH portal at www.parivesh.nic.in.

2. The AC, after detailed deliberation with Nodal officer (FCA), Govt. of West Bengal, Regional Officer, IRO, Kolkata and Chief Managing Director, WB Mineral Development & Trading Corporation and after going through the facts of the proposal, deferred the proposal with the following observations:

- i. The 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. The State Govt. has mentioned that as per Rule 22E (3) (i) of the Mineral Concession (Amendment) Rules, 2020, this change in land type within lease area comes under 'minor changes' in the approved mining plan and does not require fresh approval of the mining plan. The Rule 22E (3)(i) however refers to the "change in land type within the leased area" as a minor change, whereas in the instant case the area has been reduced from 370 ha to 356.575 ha. Moreover 65.09 ha additional area has been taken outside the block. The purpose/component wise breakup of the required area has to be in conformity with the mining plan. The same needs to be examined by the State Government. The State Govt. shall ensure to submit the mining plan as required under extant guidelines.
- ii. A copy of approved Wild Conservation Plan shall be submitted.
- iii. The State Govt. shall explore the possibility to exclude the area

proposed for dumping on forestland and explore alternatives on adjoining non-forest land. The KML file of the area proposed for dumping shall also be submitted.

- iv. Since the composition of the Advisory Committee has now been changed and the sub-committee as constituted earlier could not visit the area, therefore, a committee consisting of Advisory Committee member Shri Manoj Pant and representatives of Ministry/IRO shall visit the area and submit report.

3. In view of above, Government of West Bengal is requested to provide their response on the points as indicated at para 2 [(i) to (iii)] above for further consideration of the proposal in the Ministry.

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-

(Suneet Bhardwaj)

Assistant Inspector General of Forests (FC)

Copy to:

1. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Government of West Bengal, Kolkata.
2. The Nodal Officer (FCA), O/o the PCCF, Government of West Bengal, Kolkata.
3. Dy. Director General (Central), Regional Office, Kolkata.
4. User agency.
5. Monitoring Cell of FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi.