

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Aliganj, Jor Bag Road,
New Delhi - 110003.

Dated: 26-07-2024

To

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

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2(ii) of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 in favour of M/s Kashvi Power & Steel Pvt. Ltd. for non-forestry use of 60.508 ha of forest land including 2.331 ha of safety zone in Dholta Pahar Iron Ore Block for iron ore mining in Bonai Forest Division under Sundargarh District, Odisha (Online No. FP/OR/MIN/150522/2021) - reg.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the State Government of Odisha's letter No. FE-DIV-FLD-0030-2023-6820/FE&CC dated 09.04.2024 requesting for re-consider the above subject proposal under Section 2 (i) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and to say that the said proposal was placed before the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 04.07.2024. The detailed minutes of the AC meeting held on 04.07.2024 may be accessed on the website of this Ministry: www.parivesh.nic.in. The Advisory Committee has considered the facts submitted by the State Government for re-consideration of the proposal and decided to *defer* the proposal for seeking following information from the State Government and as well as Regional Office Bhubaneswar:

- i. The State Government shall submit a valid and cogent reasons that why a comprehensive proposal including all ancillaries activities have not been submitted in accordance with the decision of the Advisory committee meeting held on 20.10.2023.
- ii. The State Government shall provide the comments on the issues raised by the Regional Office is their SIR regarding:
 - a. Studies need to be conducted on the impact of mining in Sarkunda RF on loss of habitat of wildlife including mesopredator and small mammals, movement and dispersal of elephant.
 - b. Studies on impact of mining on the hydrological regime of Sarkunda RF as well as the watershed of the proposed mining lease area within 10 km zone of influence need to be undertaken.
 - c. Studies on the eco-cultural linkages of the local communities with the Sarkunda Sal forest needs to be studied to find the organic link between the forest and the people of the region, which is already heavily, mined district and this forest chunk of 1901.108 ha appears to be a contiguous patch of forest in the mining dominated landscape.
 - d. The RO in his SIR has also reported that agriculture patches area also seen in one corner of the plot. Here regeneration of Sal is quite good

and needs adequate protection, watch and ward and fencing. Hence, instead of 1600 plants/ha over 52 ha and 1000/ha over 5 ha, a maximum of 400 plants (Sal and associates need to be planted in the CA site). The balance proposed sapling can be taken up in additional CA land. The proposal for CA needs to be revised accordingly.

- iii. CA has been proposed on 58.757 ha non-forest Got. land (excluding 2.331 ha earmarked for Safety zone) however, equivalent NFL to the extent of the area is being proposed for diversion i.e.60.508 ha is required as per the latest guidelines issued by the Ministry in this regard.
- iv. The Regional office shall examine the facts submitted by the State Government for re-consideration of the proposal and submit comments along-with specific recommendations.
- v. DDGF, Regional Office, Bhubaneswar shall make a presentation on actual status of land and the studies recommended by him in the area, with special reference to the whole mining landscape of the district.

In view of the above, the State Government is requested to provide information, as indicated in point no. (i) to (iii) above, for further consideration of the proposal in the Ministry.

Yours faithfully,

(Suneet Bhardwaj)

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 **with a request to furnish detailed report as indicated in point no. (iv) to (v) above, as per recommendation of Advisory Committee.**
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.