

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan
Aliganj, Jor Bagh Road
New Delhi- 110003
Dated:11-08-2025

To
The Principal Secretary (Forests)
Government of Maharashtra
Mumbai.

Subject: Proposal for prior approval under section 2 (1) (iii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for 145.231 ha (originally proposed 153.09 ha) forest land for Iron Ore mining at village Surjagad Wooria Hill Bhamragad, Tahsil Etapali, Dist. Gadchiroli in Maharashtra State in favour of M/s Gopani Iron & Power (India) Pvt. Ltd- regarding.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Govt. of Maharashtra vide letter No. FLD 36A16/C.R.402/F-10 dated 15.12.2016 and further clarification/details provided vide letter dated 24.03.2017, 26.09.2024 and 14.05.2025 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 30.07.2025. The detailed minutes of the said meeting is placed on the website of this Ministry: www.parivesh.nic.in. After examination of the proposal the Committee deferred the proposal for want of the following information:

- i. The comments/opinion received from the Ministry of Mines regarding the validity of the Letter of Intent (LoI) shall be forwarded to the State Government. The State Government shall submit the proposal only after a valid LoI is issued in favour of the User Agency

3. In view of above, the copy of the OM No. 6/60/2025-Mines VI dated 09.07.2025 received from the Ministry of Mines is enclosed and State is requested to take necessary action in the matter as per the decision of the Advisory Committee.

Yours faithfully,

Encl: As above.

Digitally signed by
Suneet Bhardwaj
Date: 13-08-2025
17:54:40

Sd/-
(Suneet Bhardwaj)
Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:-

1. PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forest, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur.
2. DDGF (Central), MoEF&CC's Regional Office, at Nagpur.
3. APCCF-cum-Nodal Officer, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur.
4. User Agency.

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

No. 16/60/2025-Mines VI
Government of India
Ministry of Mines

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
Dated the 9th July, 2025

Office Memorandum

Subject: Proposal for prior approval under Section 2 (1) (iii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for 153.09 ha forest land for Iron Ore mining at village Surjagad Wooria Hill Bhamragad, Tahsil Etapali, Dist. Gadchiroli in Maharashtra State in favour of M/s Gopani Iron & Power (India) Pvt. Ltd.

The undersigned is directed to refer to letter dated 30.04.2025 (copy enclosed) received from Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on the subject mentioned above wherein the comments of Ministry of Mines have been sought in the matter keeping in view the Section 10A(2)(c) and other provisions of MMDR Act.

2 . The matter has been examined in the Ministry and it is observed that in the instant case the Letter of Intent for grant of mining lease for mineral iron ore was issued by the State Government in favor of M/s Gopani Iron & Power (India) Pvt. Ltd. on 04.09.2006. Therefore, the instant case falls within the ambit of Section 10A(2)(c) of the MMDR Act.

3 . As per the provisions of Section 10A(2)(c) of the MMDR Act and Rule 8(4) of the Minerals (Other than Atomic and Hydro Carbons Energy Minerals) Concession Rules, 2016, the mining lease in the instant case was required to be executed and registered within a period of two years from the date of commencement of the MMDR Amendment Act, 2015 i.e. on or before 11.01.2017. However, the mining lease in the instant case has not been executed.

4. In view of above, the Letter of Intent issued by the State Government on 04.09.2006 has become infructuous and void.

5. This issues with the approval of the competent authority.

Encl.: As stated above

Digitally signed by
VINOD KUMAR
Date: 09-07-2025
20:23:51
(Vinod Kumar)

Under Secretary Government of India
Tel. No.: 011-23383946
Email: vinod.kr71@nic.in

To

The Secretary,
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh,
New Delhi - 110003.

Copy to:

1. The Director General of Forest & Special Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh, New Delhi.
2. The Addl. Chief Secretary, Industries Department, Government of Maharashtra, Mantralaya, Mumbai.
3. The Controller General, Indian Bureau of Mines, Indira Bhawan, Civil Lines, Nagpur.