

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

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**Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,**  
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj,  
New Delhi – 110003  
**Dated: As per E-sign**

To,

**The Principal Secretary (Forests),**  
Government of Maharashtra,  
Mumbai.

**Subject: Diversion of 0.20 ha Zudpi Jungle forest land under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for opencast mining for Bhatadi Expansion Mine Project by M/s Western Coalfield Limited, District Chandrapur in the State of Maharashtra (Online proposal No FP/MH/MIN/17443/2016) - regarding.**

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Government of Maharashtra's letter No. FLD-3620/C.R.40/F-10 dated 02.02.2024 (received from the Regional Office, Nagpur in the Ministry through e-file on 09.07.2024) forwarding a fresh proposal on the above subject seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. After examining the proposal, the following shortcomings have been observed:

- i. As per DSS analysis, the Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve is located at a distance of 2.12 KM from the proposed forest land for diversion. Therefore, comments of the CWLW along with status of proposal for SBWL/ NBWL clearance needs submission.
- ii. As per the DSS analysis, total area of the mining lease is found 834.846 ha instead of 838.14 ha as per the Part-I PARIVESH. Therefore, correct KML file of the Mining lease shall be submitted/uploaded.
- iii. The DSS analysis revealed that apart from 0.20 ha Zudpi Jungle land, 4.86 ha protected forest land is also located within the Mining lease. Therefore, The State Govt. shall submit its comments along with a copy of approval regarding 4.86 ha protected forest land if obtained under the Van Adhiniyam, 1980 needs submission.
- iv. The satellite imagery shows that a Irai river at a distance of 201 meter from the proposed forest land for diversion. The State Govt. shall offer their comments and the mitigation measures required to protect the river from the adverse effect of mining shall be submitted.
- v. The Satellite imagery shows that a Temple i.e. Hanuman Mandir is located a distance of 7.40 meter south of the proposed forest land for diversion. This needs clarification.
- vi. The proposal is for open cast mining and DFO in its site inspection report has

mentioned that no. tree felling is involved. The State Govt. shall submit its comments.

- vii. A Land use Map indicating the different components of the projects shall be submitted conspicuously depicting the various projects components vis-à-vis including the components proposed to be undertaken on the Non-forest land.
- viii. Details of mineral evacuation plan and involvement of forest land, if any, shall be intimated.
- ix. The State Govt. shall submit the status of Mine lease validity along with the relevant details.
- x. The Mining plan with Progressive Mine closure plan has been approved by the Board of Directors, WCL vide its letter No. WCL/BD/SECTT/BM-273/2016/688 date 13.02.2016 and the same has not been found uploaded on PARIVESH. The same needs submission.
- xi. It has been reported in online Part-I that the present proposal involves rehabilitation of Oustees. The State Govt. shall clarify that the forest land will not be utilized for rehabilitation of project families/ persons.
- xii. The State Govt. reported that the Bhatadi mine is an ongoing project of M/s WCL whereas that Chapter 7, Para 7.3 of the Consolidated handbook of guidelines under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules 2023 issued by the Ministry on dated 29.12.2023 says that The Supreme Court of India in its order of 6th July 2011 issued guidelines so as to not create fait accompli situation in the matter of diversion of forest land under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980. Therefore, in the case of new mining leases/projects having forest land in part or in full, approval under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 for diversion of entire forest land located within the mining lease/project is to be obtained before execution/renewal of mining lease/project. Therefore, reason behind not obtaining the forest land diversion approval before invoking the mining in the lease area needs clarification.

Accordingly, it is requested to furnish the above mentioned information to this Ministry for further consideration of the proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Signed by

Suneet Bhardwaj

Date: 14-08-2024 15:31:47

Sd/-

(Suneet Bhardwaj)

**Assistant Inspector General of Forests**

**Copy to:**

1. The PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forest, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur;
2. The Dy. DGF (Central), Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Nagpur;
3. The Nodal Officer, Department of Forest, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur;
4. User Agency;
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi for uploading on

PARIVESH portal.