

Sub: Proposal for according permission for use of 0.64 ha of forest land within total forest land of 249 ha located inside Rabipur Reserved Forest land in Talcher Forest Range of Angul Forest Division for undertaking exploratory drilling of 16 no. of boreholes @ 0.04 ha each by M/s National Thermal Power Corporation Ltd. for prospecting of coal in forest areas of Chandrabila Coal Block of Angul district in Odisha.

1. The Government of Odisha vide their letter no. 10F(cons) -255/2014-550/F&D dated 8th January 2015 submitted the above subject proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government, in terms of the Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The said proposal was placed before the **Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) in its meeting held on 28th January, 2015.**
2. Details indicated in the proposal submitted by the Government of Odisha are as below:-

FACT SHEET

1.	Location of the project or scheme	Proposal for drilling of 16 holes in 249 ha forest land in Chandrabila, Talcher coal filed.
2.	Location:	
	State/ Union territory	Odisha.
	District	Angul.
	Forest Division	Angul Forest Division.
	Area of forest land proposed to be utilized for prospecting	249 ha forest land
3.	Legal status of Forest land identified for prospecting	16 holes in 249 ha forest land in Rabipur RF of Chandrabila, coal block in Talcher Forest Range
4.	Details of vegetation available in the forest land proposed for diversion	
	i Forest type	North Indian Moist Deciduous Forest
	ii Average crown density of vegetation	0.41
	iii Species wise local or scientific names and girth wise enumeration of trees required to be felled	In separate sheet (sheet has not been found to be available in the proposal)
iv Working plan prescription for the forest land proposed to be utilized for prospecting	Comes under Rehabilitation Working Circle of the Working Plan in force at present	
5.	Brief note on topography and vulnerability of the forest land proposed to be utilized for prospecting to erosion.	The area is vulnerable to erosion. The area comes under Rabipur RF (Chandrabila Coal Block)
6.	Approximate distance of the forest land proposed to be utilized for prospecting from boundary of forest land	The proposed site is within Rabipur RF
7.	Significance of the forest land proposed to be utilized for prospecting from wildlife point of view	
	i Details of wildlife present in and around the forest land proposed to be utilized for prospecting	Sloth bear, Wild boar, Barking deer, Hares, Cuckoos', Myna, Kajalpati, Occasionally visited by wild Elephants during harvesting season.
	ii Whether forms part of National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Bio-sphere reserve, Tiger Reserve, Elephant corridor, corridor wildlife migration corridor, etc (if so, the details of the area and	The proposed site is not a part of National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, biosphere reserve, tiger reserve, elephant corridor, etc. But it is visited by wild elephant every year during harvesting season of paddy crop.

		comments of the Chief Wildlife Warden to be annexed).	
	iii	Whether any National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary Bio-sphere reserve Tiger Reserve, Elephant corridor, wildlife migration corridor, etc is located within 10 KMs from boundary of the forest land proposed to be utilized for prospecting (if so, the details of the area and comments of the Chief Wildlife Warden to be annexed).	The proposed site is situated within 10 Kms from the boundary of Kanhei Jena-Anantapur corridor which is approximately 4 kms away
	iv	Whether any National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Bio-sphere reserve, Tiger Reserve, Elephant corridor wildlife migration corridor etc is located within 1 Kms from boundary of the forest land proposed to be utilized for prospecting (if so, the details of the area and comments of the Chief Wildlife Warden to be annexed)	Rabipur RF itself is a migration corridor for wild elephants and other available wild life.
	v	Whether any rare or endangered or unique species of flora and fauna found in the area, if so details thereof:	No
8.		Whether any protected archaeological/ heritage site/ defence establishment or any other important monument is located in the area. If so, the details thereof with NOC from competent authority, if required.	No found
9.		Comment as to the reasonability of the extent of the forest land proposed to be utilized for prospecting.	The land under question is a RF and is habitat of may wild animals and birds. Due to fragmentation they will suffer a lot. However drilling holes only may not have any adverse effect in wildlife
	i	Whether the requirement of forest land as proposed by the user agency in para-6 & Para-7 of the Part-I is un-avoidable and bare minimum for the project	Sites for bore hole have been demarcated in permanent gaps devoid of vegetation which may be bare minimum for drilling operation
	ii	If so recommended area of forest land which may be used for prospecting	16 holes over an area of 0.04 having 6" dia each distributed over 249 ha of Rabipur RF
10.		Details of violation committed	No
	i	Whether any work in violation of the Act or Guidelines issued under the Act has been carried out (Yes/No)	No
	ii	If yes details of the violation including period of work done area of forest land involved in violation, name, address & designation of the person (s) responsible for violation and action taken against the person (s) responsible for violation	No
	iii	Whether work in violation is still in progress (Yes/No)	No
11.		Details of Compensatory Afforestation scheme	Not applicable
	(i)	Legal status of the land identified to raise Compensatory Afforestation	Not applicable

	(ii)	Details such locations, survey or Compartment or Khasra number, area and distance from adjoining forest of each plot of non-forest area or degraded forest land identified for Compensatory Afforestation	Not applicable
	(iii)	Survey of India TOPP Sheet (s) in original in 1:50, 000 Scale showing non-forest or degraded forest land identified for Compensatory Afforestation and adjoining forest boundary enclosed (Yes/No)	Not applicable
	(iv)	Detailed Compensatory Afforestation scheme including species to be planted, implementing agency, time schedule, cost structure etc. enclosed (Yes/No)	Not applicable
	(v)	Total financial out lay for Compensatory Afforestation scheme	Not applicable
	(vi)	Certificates from the concerned Deputy Conservator of Forests regarding suitability of area identified for Compensatory Afforestation and from management point of view enclosed (Yes/No)	Not applicable
12.		Site inspection report of the Deputy Conservator of Forests highlighting important facts pertaining to the import of proposed activities on flora and fauna enclosed (Yes/No)	Attached with proposal
13.		Specific recommendation of the Deputy Conservator of Forests for acceptance or otherwise of the proposal with reasons.	The proposal for drilling operation may be accepted, but if the question of forest diversion comes, the same may not be accepted for RF and considering its importance from wildlife point of view.
14		Recommendation of the Chief Conservator of Forests	Recommended for acceptance of the proposal.
15		Recommendation of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests	Recommended for according permission
16		Recommendation of the State Government	Recommended for according permission

3. FAC in its meeting after examination of proposal and interaction with representatives of user agency observed as below:

- (i) Ministry of Coal, Government of India vide letter dated 1st July 2013 allocated four coal blocks in Odisha and Chhattisgarh in favour of M/s NTPC Ltd, to meet requirement of coal for its Power Projects;
- (ii) Among the four blocks, Chandrabila and Kudanall-Luburi coal blocks with 550MT and 396MT reserves respectively are located in Odisha;
- (iii) The Chandrabila coal block is spread over 934 hectares in Kaniha tehsil of Angul district of Odisha comprising of 685 hectares of non-forest land and 249 hectares of forest land;
- (iv) Prospecting has already been undertaken in the non-forest land of the block by the user agency in Phase- I with findings of proved category of coal reserve there. As such exploration/prospecting activities of coal is proposed to be undertaken in Phase-II over the 249 hectares of forest land falling in Rabipur Reserved Forest;
- (v) In the instant proposal, the user agency has proposed to drill 16 boreholes of 6" diameter within 249 hectares

of forest land located inside Rabipur Reserved Forest, It has been reported by the State Government that the proposed drilling site is located in middle portion of the coal block and has not been explored earlier;

- (vi) Drilling of 16 boreholes will result in temporary change in land use is 0.64 hectares of forest land;
 - (vii) Legal status of forest land proposed to be utilised for prospecting is Reserved Forest;
 - (viii) Forest land proposed to be utilised for prospecting contains North Indian Moist Deciduous Forest having crown density 0.41;
 - (ix) Forest land proposed to be utilised for prospecting falls in Rehabilitation Working Circle of the Working Plan in force at present;
 - (x) Forest land proposed to be utilised for prospecting is vulnerable to erosion;
 - (xi) Forest land proposed to be utilised for prospecting is not a part of National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, biosphere reserve, tiger reserve, elephant corridor, etc. Sloth bear, Wild boar, Barking deer, Hares, Cuckoos', Myna, Kajalpati are reported to be present in and around the forest land proposed to be utilised for prospecting. During the harvesting season, the forest land proposed to be utilised for prospecting is occasionally visited by the wild elephants;
 - (xii) Forest land proposed to be utilised for prospecting is located at *approx.* 4 kilometer distance from the Kanhei Jena-Anantapur corridor;
 - (xiii) As the proposal does not involve any permanent change in lands use in the forest land proposed to be utilised for prospecting, compensatory afforestation is not required to be undertaken;
 - (xiv) The proposal being for prospecting, is exempted from the requirement of providing documentary evidence in support of the settlement of rights in accordance with the provisions of the Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006;
 - (xv) The proposed prospecting activity does not involve felling of any tree as the DFO in Part II of the proposal has reported that that the sites for boreholes have been demarcated in permanent gaps devoid of vegetation;
 - (xvi) This exploration project does not involve displacement of any human habitation;
 - (xvii) The concerned Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) recommended that proposal for drilling operation may be accepted, but if the question of forest diversion comes, the same may not be accepted considering the importance from wildlife point of view of the forest land proposed to be utilised for prospecting; and
 - (xviii) The Chief Conservator of Forests, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and the State Government have recommended the proposal without making any comments on recommendation of the DFO that if the question of forest diversion comes, the same may not be accepted considering the importance from wildlife point of view of the forest land proposed to be utilised for prospecting.
4. FAC after detailed deliberations recommended that before taking decision on the proposal, the Forest Survey of India, Dehradun may be requested to assess the coal block based on the draft parameters formulated by a Committee reconstituted under Chairmanship of the Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to identify inviolate forest areas for mining.
 5. FAC also recommended that meanwhile the State Government may be requested to furnish their specific comments on recommendation of the concerned Divisional Forest Officer that proposal for drilling operation may be accepted, but if the question of forest diversion comes, the same may not be accepted considering the importance from wildlife point of view of the forest land proposed to be utilised for prospecting.
 6. Accordingly, the Ministry vide its letter dated 19.03.2015 (**pg. 57-60/c**) forwarded the recommendation of FAC to the Forest Survey of India and the Government of Odisha for compliance.
 7. The State Govt. vide their letter no. 10F(cons) – 43 /2018/ 11279/F&E dated 16.05.2018 (**Pg 61/c**) informed that the matter was refer to PCCF (WL) & CWLW, Odisha for his considered views and on the basis of his comments, the

state Govt. recommends to allow prospecting exercise in this case as the same will have no significant disturbance to wildlife habitat in the area.

8. In response to ministry's letter dated 28.01.2015, the Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun vide their letter dated 20/04/2015 (**Pg.65/c**) informed that this proposal cannot be analyzed through DSS as no shape file or coordinates have been provided for the analysis.
9. Now, the User agency has provided the KML file of the forest area proposed for prospecting along with Mining lease boundary and the said proposal has been analyzed through DSS. The detailed report of DSS may kindly be seen at **F/X**. Major observation are as follows :
 - i. Proposed area for diversion of forest land falls on Dhenkanal district of Odisha State.
 - ii. Calculated area of Coal block Mining lease area is found 966.43 ha and the area of the Forest land applied for diversion is found 292.11 Ha. whereas as per instant proposal 249 ha area of forest land is sought by the user agency. Thus, there is discrepancy of 43.11 Ha. area is observed in the forest land proposed for prospecting work.
 - iii. Simplipal-Satkosia Tiger Corridor is located at a distance of 7.29 Km from the proposed Coal block boundary.
 - iv. Legal status of the proposed land cannot ascertained through DSS due to the unavailability of RFA boundary of Odisha State.
 - v. Proposed area of Chandrabila coal block is classified as Inviolate based on Decision Rule No. 1 as it falls on 'Sighada Jhor' river & within its 250 meter buffer. Total 8 Grids of size 1X1 Km is falling on proposed coal block, out of which none of the Grid is having its score above 70. Thus, the coal block is Not-inviolate as per Decision rule-2.
 - vi. Out of total coal block lease area , 48 ha. of land having the canopy density of Moderately dense forest, 197 ha. of land as open forest, 2 ha. of land as Water and 719 ha. of land as Non Forest in terms of forest classes (as per the ISFR 2015) based on the interpretation of satellite data period 2013-2014.
 - vii. Forest Types details: 5B/C2 Northern Dry Mixed Deciduous Forest: 96 Ha, 5B/C1 c Dry Peninsular Sal Forest: 94 Ha and Non-Forest:776 ha.
10. It is also imperative to mention that Principle Secretary/ Chairman & Managing Director, TANGEDCO & TNEB Ltd. vide his letter no. Lr. No. CE/M/Mines/EE/A1/F, Chandrabila CB/D.163/2018 dated 19.07.2018 (**pg. 69-70/c**) addressed to Secretary (EF &CC) informed that the Ministry of Coal has allotted Chandrabila Coal Block in the State of Odisha to TANGEDCO. Out of total area of 9.321 sq.km in Chandrabila coal block, CMPDI has completed the detailed exploration in the non-forest area of 5.68 sq. Km. Forest area of 3.64 sq. Km has yet to be explored for want of forest clearance, whereas the instant proposal has earlier been submitted by NTPC. However, no detail for allotment of coal block is given.
11. The user agency has been change from NTPC to TANGEDCO.

The above facts may be placed before FAC scheduled to be held on 30.08.2018 for their examination and appropriate recommendation.
