

Sub: Proposal for prospecting of 1745.883 ha of forest land of Kente Extention Coal Block in favour of Rajyasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited for exploration of coal reserves by undertaking 153 boreholes of 4” Dia in Suguja District in the State of Chhattisgarh-reg.

1. The State Government of Chhattisgarh vide their letter No. F-5-44/2017/10-2 dated 07.07.2017 submitted the above mentioned proposal seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.
2. The facts related to the proposal as contained in the State Government's letter dated 07.07.2017 are given below in the form of fact sheet:

FACT SHEET

1.	Name of the Proposal	Proposal for prospecting of 1745.883 ha of forest land of Kente Extention Coal Block in favour of Rajyasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited for exploration of coal reserves by undertaking 153 boreholes of 4” Dia in Suguja District in the State of Chhattisgarh
2.	Location (i) State (ii) District	Chhattisgarh Surguja
3.	Particulars of Forests: (i) Name of Forest Division and Forest area involved. (ii) Legal status/Sy.No.	Surguja Forest Division, Ambikapur 1745.883 ha Protected Forest Land
4.	Vulnerability to erosion	Prospecting operation will have no effect on topography and erosion. Proposed area is having rich biodiversity and Virgin Forest.
5.	(i) Vegetation (ii) Density (iii) No. of trees enumerated/to be actually felled	Forest type – 3B/C2 Southern Moist Mixed Deciduous & 3C/C2e (ii) Moist Peninsular Low Level Sal Forest 0.5 to 0.6 NA
6.	Whether area is significant from wildlife point of view	Details of wildlife present in and around the forest land proposed to be utilized for prospecting:- Bear, Fox, Jackal, Snakes, Birds, etc and sometimes movement of wild elephant is seen.
7.	Whether forms part of National park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve, Elephant Corridor, etc. (if so, details of the area and comments of the Chief Wildlife Warden	No
8.	Whether any RET species of flora and fauna are found in the area. If so details thereof	No

9.	Approximate distance of the proposed site for diversion from boundary of forest.	Proposed prospecting area within the forest land
10.	Whether any protected archaeological/ heritage site/defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the area.	No
11.	Whether any work of in violation of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 has been carried out (Yes/No). If yes details of the same including period of work done, action taken on erring officials. Whether work in violation is still in progress.	No
12.	Whether the requirement of forest land as proposed by the user agency in col. 2 of Part-I is unavoidable and barest minimum for the project, if no recommended area item-wise with details of alternatives examined.	Kente Extension coal block has been allotted by Ministry of coal, New Delhi vide letter no. 13016/26/2004 dated 31.03.2015 to M/s RRVUNL for captive use in their thermal power plants located at Rajasthan. The coal block area is therefore site-specific
13.	Whether clearance under the Environment (protection) Act, 1986 is required?	NA
14.	Compensatory Afforestation	
	(i) Details of non-forest area/degraded forest area identified for CA, its distance from adjoining forest, number of patches, size of each patches.	No compensatory afforestation is required for the purpose of forest land to be used for exploratory drilling as per provisions of guidelines of MoEF&CC, Government of India vide F. No. 11-96/2009-FC dt. 4.7.2014.
	(ii) Map showing non-forest/degraded forest area identified for CA and adjoining forest boundaries.	NA
	(iii) Detailed CA scheme including species to be planted, implementing agency, time schedule, cost structure, etc.	NA
	(iv) Total financial outlay for CA	NA
	(v) Certificate from the competent authority regarding suitability of the area identified for CA and from management point of view.	NA
15.	Catchment Area Treatment	NA

16.	Rehabilitation of Oustees a) No of families involved b) Category of families c) Details of rehabilitation plan	NA NA NA
17.	Employment likely to be generated a) Whether the project is likely to generate employment b) Permanent/ Regular Employment (Number of person) c) Temporary Employment (Number of person-days)	NA
18.	Compliance of Scheduled Tribe and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006	NA
19.	Site Inspection Report by DFO	Pg-27-28/c
20.	Cost Benefit Ratio	NA
21.	Total Cost of the Project	Rs 350 (Rupees in lakhs)
22.	Recommendation i. DFO ii. CCF iii. PCCF/Nodal Officer iv State Government	Recommended (Pg-26/c) with the condition that prospecting work shall be done by drilling machine manually transported to specified point of boreholes due to sufficient regeneration in forest area. Recommended (Pg-29/c) Recommended (Pg-30/c) Recommended (Pg-31/c) subject to specific condition – “The prospecting work in the area proposed to be undertaken will be conducted by drilling boreholes by dismantlable drilling machines. The drilling machines will be dismantled and the parts/components will be manually shifted one by one at the proposed drilling points and re-assembled for conducting the drilling operation. No roads would be allowed inside forest area for transportation of these drilling machines”

3. Ministry vide its letter dated 27.07.2017 requested to Regional Office, Nagpur of this Ministry to carry out site inspection of the proposal area.
4. Regional Office, Nagpur vide their letter no. FC-Misc-158/RON/2017-NGP/2301 dated 23.08.2017 has informed that examination of the proposal of the prospecting for coal mining in the Regional office revealed that actual area proposed for temporary change in land use is 6.12125 ha comprised of 6.12 ha drilling of 153 bore holes (0.04 ha.per bore hole) and 0.00125 ha for sumps. No forest land has been proposed to be used for construction of road paths, etc. Total area proposed for temporary change in land use is less than 100 ha. In this connection, it is to inform that as per the provision of the guidelines dated 04.07.2014, wherein inter-alia it is stated that site inspection by the Regional Office concerned of this Ministry will be insisted only if the actual area of forest land

proposed to be utilized for construction of new road/paths and for drilling of bore holes/sample collection pits etc. is more than 100 ha.

In view of the above facts related to the proposal and also the provision of the guidelines issued by the MoEF&CC, site inspection of the area proposed for prospecting was not undertaken by the Regional Office, Nagpur.

5. It is also imperative to mention that the instant proposal is adjacent to area diverted for 1898.328 ha in two phases of forest land for Parsa East and Kete Basan captive coal block open cast mining project in favour of M/s Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited in South Surguja Forest Division in Surguja District of Chhattisgarh. vide this Ministry's letter no. F. No. 8-31/2010 dated 15.03.2012. Recently, the State Government of Chhattisgarh vide their letter no. F 5-4/2010/10-2 dated 03.05.2017 submitted a proposal for change of land use of 29.09 ha forest land out of already diverted forest land of 762.00 ha out of approved 1898.328 in favour of Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited, in Villages Parsa and Kete, Telsil Udaipur, District Surguja, Chhattisgarh. The said proposal was placed before Forest Advisory committee (FAC) in meeting held on 20.07.2017 and the FAC recommended that:
 - i. Before taking any decision on the issue, State Government may be requested to submit details of MOU signed between RRVUNL and Adani group and clarify whether forest land diversion permission given to RRVUNL under Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 has been transferred to Adani group without concurrence of MoEF&CC in violation of FC guidelines 2.8.
 - ii. State government shall submit complete compliance status of conditions imposed in stage II approval which was granted vide letter no. F. No. 8-31/2010 dated 15.03.2012 in favour of RRVUNL.
 - iii. Since the present proposal has been forwarded without detail of exploring alternative sites in non-forest areas. State government shall explore alternative so that the project can be installed over non-forest land.
 - iv. The FAC decided to defer the proposal till the above stated information are received from the State Government and placed before the FAC.
6. It is also mentioned that the Civil Appeal No. 4395 of 2014 in the matter of Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Nigam Ltd. Vs. Sudiep Shrivastava is also pending at present before Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

In view of above, the above facts may be placed before FAC in its meeting scheduled to be held on 30th August, 2017 for examination and appropriate recommendation please.
