



सं.5-ORA559/2023-BHU

दिनांक 03.08.2023

सेवा में,

अपर वन महानिदेशक (एफ.सी.),
पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय,
इंदिरा पर्यावरण भवन,
जोरबाग रोड, अली गंज,
नई दिल्ली - 110 003

बिषय : Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Govt. under Section 2 (ii) of the FC Act, 1980 in favour of M/s Rungta Mines Ltd. for non-forestry use of 156.978 ha of forest land (147.803 ha in Bonai Forest Division & 9.175 ha in Keonjhar Forest Division) for Iron Ore Mining and ancillary activities within Jumka Pathiriposhi Pahar Iron Ore Block of Bonai Forest Division & Keonjhar Forest Division under Sundagarh & Keonjhar District- reg.

संदर्भ: मंत्रालय पत्र सं. 8-08/2023-FC दिनांक 10.07.2023.

महोदय,

उपर्युक्त विषयक प्रसंगाधीन पत्र के आलोक में संबंधित प्रस्ताव का स्थल निरीक्षण अधोहस्ताक्षरी के द्वारा दिनांक **25.07.2023** को किया गया | स्थल निरीक्षण उपरांत स्थल निरीक्षण प्रतिवेदन इस पत्र के साथ संलग्न भेजा जा रहा है |

अनु : यथोक्त |

भवदीय,

(ए. टी. मिश्रा)
उप वन महानिदेशक (के)

SITE INSPECTION REPORT IN RESPECT OF DIVERSION 156.978 HA OF FOREST LNAD (147.803 HA IN BONAI FOREST DIVISION & 9.175 HA IN KEONJHAR FOREST DIVISION) IN RESPECT OF JUMKA PATHIRIPOSHI PAHAR IRON ORE BLOCK OF M/S RUNGTA MINES LTD. OF BONAI FOREST DIVISION AND KEONJHAR FOREST DIVISION UNDER SUNDGARH AND KEONJHAR DISTRICT.

The site inspection of the above project was carried out by the undersigned on 25.07.2023 along with DFO, Keonjhar & DFO, Bonai Division and representatives from the user agency.

1. Legal status of the forest land proposed for diversion:

As reported by State Govt., legal status of the forest land is as below:

Sl. No.	Name Forest Division	Name of Village	Forest area (in Ha)		
			PRF	Revenue Forest	Total
1.	Bonai	Batagaon	80.143	0	80.143
2.		Kensara	67.660	0	67.660
3.	Keonjhar	Kadakala	0	9.175	9.175
Total			147.803	9.175	156.978

2. Item-wise break-up details of the forest land proposed for diversion.

The item wise break up of forest and non-forest land as proposed by the State Govt. for this project is as below:

Sl. No.	Purpose of Utilization	Total Forest land (in Ha)	Non-forest land (in Ha)	Grand Total (in Ha)
1.	Mining including Mobile Crushing and Screening Unit, Temporary Stack Yard	121.340	0	121.340
2.	Dumping of Overburden	7.301	0	7.301
3.	Mine Road	7.936	0.076	8.012
4.	Infrastructure (Temporary Office, Rest Shelter, Workshop, Weigh Bridge etc.)	1.813	1.187	3.000
5.	Ore Processing Site	3.820	0	3.820
6.	Mineral Stack Yard	9.290	0	9.290
Sub-Total		151.500	1.263	152.763
7.	Safety Zone	5.478	0.268	5.746
Grand Total		156.978	1.531	158.509

The user agency has a approved Mining Plan over an area of 158.509 Ha approved by Indian Bureau of Mines, Bhubaneswar vide letter No.MP/A/18-ORI/BHU/2021-22 dated 24.11.2021. As per Mining Plan, mined out area in the lease at conceptual stage is 144.918 ha. State Govt. has proposed 7.301 ha for Dumping of Overburden and 5.746 ha have been earmarked for safety zone will be remained without any change in land use till end of the mining. During field visit, the user agency informed that most of the area proposed for infrastructure (temporary office, rest shelter, workshop, weigh bridge etc.) will be subsequently mined out during the period of mining.

3. Whether proposal involves any construction of buildings (including residential) or not. If yes, details thereof:

As reported by the State Govt. 1.813 of forest land has been proposed for Infrastructure (Temporary Office, Rest Shelter, Workshop, Weigh Bridge etc.)

4. Total cost of the project at present rates:

As reported by the State Govt., the estimated cost of the project is reported to be Rs.38,000.00 Lakhs.

5. Wildlife:

The proposed forest land of 156.978 ha comprises of 147.803 ha of forest land in Bonai Forest Division and 9.175 ha of forest land in Keonjhar Forest Division.

The DFO, Bonai has reported that fauna such as Elephant, Wild boar, Hanuman langur, Indian hare, Indian Palm squirrel, Jungle Cat, Rat and different types of snakes and birds got recorded from the applied area.

The DFO, Keonjhar reported that applied forest land in village Jumka Pathiriposhi Pahar under Banspal Tahasil of BJP Range of Keonjhar Division is dwelling habitat for Bear, Barking deer, Hyena, Porcupine etc. Wild elephants, often visit various forest blocks of the instant diversion project.

Whether forest area proposed for diversion is important from wildlife point of view or not:

The DFOs of Keonjhar and Bonai Forest Division have reported that the applied area does not form a part of any National Park/ Wildlife Sanctuary/ Biosphere Reserve/ Tiger Reserve/ Elephant Corridor. There is no rare/ endangered/ unique species of flora and fauna in the forest area proposed for diversion. It was also reported that the proposed site for the project does not come under eco-sensitive zone of any protected area.

As elephant movement often noticed this area, Wildlife Conservation Plan with special emphasis to mitigate the adverse impact on elephant movement as well as conservation and protection of other wildlife found in and around the proposed area is required.

6. Vegetation:

The DFO, Keonjhar, DFO, Bonai and RCCF, Rourkela have reported that density of vegetation as 0.6 with Eco Value Class-I. However, as per the Decision Support System it says that the area is inviolate. During field inspection very dense forests as well as degraded blanks were found. Some of the photographs taken during inspection are as below:





Photographs of proposed site for diversion.

Within the proposed area there is road entering inside the lease area. There are also other narrow earthen roads within the proposed area. During inspection, it is noticed that some patches of proposed forest land is under Podu cultivation and some patches are degraded grass land.

(a) Total number of trees to be felled.

The DFO, Bonai has reported that enumeration has been conducted in 30 nos. of sample plots of 1 ha each within 147.803 ha of forest land (including 4.224 ha of Safety zone). By extrapolation, total nos. of trees (above 30 cm girth) over forest land proposed to be diverted (147.803 ha x 220.63 nos.) has been calculated to 32,610 nos. (including 932 nos. within safety zone area). 4,651 nos. of poles under 30 cm girth has been enumerated over the area. Thus, in Bonai Division 32,610 nos. of trees above 30 cm girth and 4,651 nos. of trees/poles below 30 cm girth have been enumerated.

The DFO, Keonjhar has reported that there are 3,732 nos. of trees (3,632 nos. sound & 80 nos. unsound trees) above 30 cm girth and 1,717 nos. of poles under 30 cm girth standing over 9.175 ha of forest land proposed in Keonjhar Division. Further, 367 nos. trees (360 nos. sound & 7 nos. unsound) above 30 cm girth and 92 nos. of poles under 30 cm girth standing over 1.531 ha of non-forest land involved in the project. In Keonjhar Division total 3,732 nos. of trees are above 30 cm girth and 1,717 trees/poles below 30 cm girth have been enumerated over the applied area.

Effect of removal of trees on the general ecosystem in the area:

As there are large numbers of trees to be felled, it will affect the general ecosystem of the area. Trees should be felled in a phased manner when absolutely essential to remove to minimize the adverse impact on the eco-system.

(b) Important species:

As reported by the State Govt., the tree species available in the applied area is Sal (*Shorea robusta*), Piasal (*Pterocarpus marsupium*), Gambhari (*Gmelina arborea*), Kasi (*Bridelia retusa*), Kusum (*Schleichera oleosa*), Asana (*Terminalia tomentosa*), Jamu (*Syzigium cumini*), Kendu (*Diasporus melanoxylon*), Amba (*Mangifera indica*), Sunari (*Cassia*

fistula), Sidha (*Lagerstroemia parviflora*), Bara (*Ficus bengalensis*), Char (*Buchanania lanjan*), Bahada (*Terminalia belerica*), Harida (*Terminalia Chebula*), Kumbhi (*Careya arborea*) etc.

7. **Background note on the proposal:**

State Govt. of Odisha, pursuant to the MMDR Act, 1957 and the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015 as amended from time to time, issued notice inviting tender dated 07.07.202 to commence the auction process for grant of mining lease for Jumka Pathiriposhi Pahar Iron Ore Block over 158.509 Ha for Iron Ore located in Sundargarh and Keonjhar District. The e-auction process was conducted in accordance with the tender document for the said mineral block on 24.09.2021 and Rungta Mines Ltd. was declared 'Preferred Bidder' under Rule 9(9)(iii) or Rule 10 (1A) of Auction Rules, having quoted highest Final Price Offer vide letter No.MXIII(b)46/2021/7738/DM dated 05.10.2021 issued by Director of Mines, Govt. of Odisha. Accordingly, pursuant to Rule 10 (2) of the Auction Rules and the terms of the Tender Document, the Govt. of Odisha issued Letter of Intent (LoI) bearing No.IV(b)SM-49/2021/8716/SM dated 28.10.2021 for grant of Mining Lease for Jumka Pathiriposhi Pahar Iron Ore Block in Sundargarh District over 158.509 Ha area to Rungta Mines Ltd. for a period of 50 years (fifty) years. The validity of LoI is for a period of 3 (three) years from the date of its issuance on 28.10.2021, within which all the conditions stipulated therein need to be fulfilled and the Mining Lease deed has to be executed between Rungta Mines Ltd. and the Govt. of Odisha.

8. **Compensatory afforestation:**

(a) **Whether land for compensatory afforestation is suitable from plantation and management point of view or not:**

The DFO, Keonjhar Forest Division has reported that CA area has been identified over 156.978 ha of non-forest Govt. land in village Deri under Banspal Tahasil, BJP Range of Keonjhar Forest Division. The Collector, Keonjhar vide letter No.273 dated 11.02.2022 and No.1872 dated 26.05.2022 has allotted above non-forest Govt. land for raising C.A.

The C.A. site was inspected along with DFO, Keonjhar. The C.A. site is non-forest land with moderately dense forest and open forest. The identified C.A. land is in one patch. Some of the photographs of CA site are as below:





Photographs of proposed CA Site

During inspection the DFO, Keonjhar said that out of 156.978 ha of non-forest land, ANR plantation over 50.00 Ha @ 500 seedlings/ha and over 5.00 ha @ 1600 seedlings/ha have been proposed. Thus total 33,000 seedlings will be planted over 156.978 ha of non-forest land. In order accommodate balance 1,23,978 seedlings (1,56,978 – 33,000) , the DFO, Keonjhar has identified 189.722 Ha of degraded forest land in Jadipada RF under Keonjhar Forest Division. The DFO, Keonjhar has proposed AR Plantation @ 1000 seedlings/ha over 92.946 Ha, ANR plantation @ 500 seedlings/ha over 74.237 ha and ANR Plantation @ 200 seedlings/ha over 8.00 ha of degraded forest land.

The DFO, Keonjhar Division said that as the identified non-forest CA area is large in size i.e. 156.978 Ha one compact block, so there will be no problem from management point of view.

(b) Whether land for compensatory afforestation is free from encroachment/other encumbrances:

The Tahasildar, Banspal has certified that non-forest C.A. land is free from encroachment and encumbrances and not covered under DLC report.

(c) Whether land for compensatory afforestation is important from Religious/Archaeological point of view:

It has been reported that the land for CA is not important from Religious/Archaeological point of view.

(d) Land identified for raising compensatory afforestation is in how many patches, whether patches are compact or not:

The non-forest land identified in Deri village under Banspal Tahasil of Keonjhar under Keonjhar Forest Division for raising compensatory afforestation is comprising 156.978 Ha over 21 plots in one compact block.

(e) Map with details:

The DGPS maps and SoI Toposheets (F45N2) (F45N9) indicating location of identified non-forest land and degraded forest land for C.A. and additional C.A. have been submitted by the State Govt.

(f) Total financial outlay:

The C.A. Scheme over 156.978 of non-forest land has been technically approved by PCCF (Nodal), Odisha with a financial outlay of Rs.3,16,01,200/-. Similarly, the Addl. C.A. Scheme over 189.722 Ha of degraded forest land has been technically approved by PCCF (Nodal), Odisha for a financial outlay of Rs.5,57,79,500/-

9. Whether proposal involves violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 or not. If yes, a detailed report on violation including action taken against the concerned officials:

The DFOs of Keonjhar & Bonai have reported that no violation under FC Act, 1980 has been committed by the user agency. During inspection, no violation has been noticed on the field.

10. Whether proposal involves rehabilitation of displaced persons. If yes, whether rehabilitation plan has been prepared by the State Government or not:

The State Govt. has reported that there is no displacement of people due to this project. Hence, rehabilitation and resettlement plan is not required.

11. Reclamation plan:

The State Govt. has reported that the Phased Reclamation Plan has been submitted. The reclamation and rehabilitation will be carried out as per the approved progressive mine closure/final mine closure plan approved by the Indian Bureau of Mines.

12. Details on catchment and command area under the project:

Not reported.

13. Cost benefit ratio:

As reported, the total benefit of due to the proposed project comes to Rs.459445.601 Lakhs. The total loss due to proposed forest diversion has been calculated to be Rs.5158.79248 Lakhs. Hence, the Cost-Benefit Ratio is reported to be 1 : 89.06.

14. Recommendations of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests/State Government:

The forest area proposed for diversion has been duly recommended by PCCF.

15. Utility of the project:

As reported by State Govt., the project will generate employment for 50 persons directly which shall mostly be tribes. It will also create indirect employment for about 195 persons. This will lead to peripheral development of surrounding villages on account of their socio-economic condition of the locals/tribals.

Numbers of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes to be benefited by the project:

Not reported.

16. (a) Whether land being diverted has any socio-cultural/ religious value:

Not reported.

(b) Whether any sacred grove or very old growth trees/forests exist in the areas proposed for diversion:

Not reported.

(c) Whether the land under diversion forms part of any unique eco-system:

No such report available.

17. Situation with respect to any Protected Area:

The DFO, Bonai and DFO, Keonjhar have reported that the distance of project site from the nearest PA Similipal Tiger Reserve is 89.03 Km and Karo-Karampada Elephant Corridor is situated at a distance of 20.95 Km from the project site.

18. Any other information relating to the project:

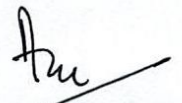
There is a earthen road which passes through the proposed area. The road is being used by the local villagers.

19. Recommendations of Dy. Director General of Forests (Central) along with detailed reasons:

1. The Govt. of Odisha issued Letter of Intent (LoI) bearing No.IV(b)SM-49/2021/8716/SM dated 28.10.2021 for grant of Mining Lease for Jumka Pathiriposhi Pahar Iron Ore Block in Sundargarh District over 158.509 Ha area to Rungta Mines Ltd. for a period of 50 years (fifty) years. The validity of LoI is for a period of 3 (three) years from the date of its issuance on 28.10.2021, within which all the conditions stipulated therein need to be fulfilled and the Mining Lease deed has to be executed between Rungta Mines Ltd. and the Govt. of Odisha.
2. The Mining Plan has been approved by the Indian Bureau of Mines vide their letter No.MP/A/18-ORI/BHU/2021-22 dated 24.11.2021. The proposed diversion is as per the approved Mining Plan.
3. As reported by the State Govt. there is no displacement of people due to this project. Hence, rehabilitation and resettlement plan is not required.
4. Total land involved in this project is 158.509 Ha comprising of 156.978 Ha of forest land and 1.531 Ha of non-forest land. The proposed 156.978 Ha of forest land comprises of 147.803 Ha of PRF land and 9.175 Ha of Revenue Forest land.
5. In lieu of 156.978 Ha of forest land proposed for diversion, State Govt. has identified equivalent non-forest land over 156.978 ha in village Deri under Banspal Tahasil of Keonjhar Forest Division for raising C.A.
6. As elephant movement often noticed in this area, Wildlife Conservation Plan with special emphasis to mitigate the adverse impact on elephant movement as well as conservation and protection of other wildlife found in and around the proposed area is required. To address the issue of wildlife conservation, the State Govt. has recommended for Site Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan duly approved by CWLW, Odisha. Besides, State Govt. has also recommended that the user agency shall pay towards cost of Regional Wildlife Management Plan for the entire ML area.

7. The number of trees to be felled is large. To minimize the adverse ecological impact, trees should be felled in a phased manner and when become absolutely necessary. The user agency shall explore the possibility of successful transplantation of maximum number of trees identified to be felled under strict supervision of the State Forest Department.
8. The mining is a site specific project. As per Decision Support System analysis the proposed area shows as inviolate with 101.00 Ha under VDF, 38.00 Ha under MDF, 7 Ha under Open Forest and 13 Ha non-forest land. However, the DFO, Keonjhar and DFO, Bonai have reported that vegetation density is 0.6 with Eco Value Class-I. During inspection very dense forests as well as degraded blanks were found in the proposed area.

With above facts and observation made during field inspection, the site inspection report is being submitted for further necessary action.



(A.T. MISHRA)

DY. DIRECTOR GENERAL OF FORESTS (C)