

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi – 110003

Dated: 21st December, 2023

To

The Principal Secretary (Forests),
Government of Jharkhand,
Ranchi.

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of M/s Central Coalfield Limited for non-forestry use of 431.59 ha of forest land for Amrapali Open Cast Coal mining project in Chatra South Forest Division in Chatra District of Jharkhand State– regarding.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Government of Jharkhand's letter No. Van Bhumi-4/2022-1689/V.P. dated 16.06.2022 on the above subject seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and to say that the proposal has been examined by the Advisory Committee constituted by the Central Government under Section-3 of the aforesaid Act.

After careful examination of the proposal of the State Government & on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and with due approval of the competent authority, the Central Government hereby accords "*In-principle/Stage-I*" approval under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of M/s Central Coalfield Limited in Chatra for non-forestry use of 431.59 ha of forest land for Amrapali Open Cast Coal mining project South Forest Division in Chatra District of Jharkhand State subject to fulfilment of the following conditions:

1. Legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged;
2. **Compensatory Afforestation:**
 - i. The compensatory afforestation over suitable **non-forest land**, equal in extent to the forest land being diverted i.e. 431.59 ha, shall be raised by the State Forest Department at the cost of the user agency and the work of compensatory afforestation shall start within two years of issue of order of diversion of forest land;
 - ii. The non-forest land identified for raising Compensatory Afforestation shall be demarcated by concrete pillars of suitable size and handed over, free from all encumbrances to the State Forest Department and the same will be notified

as protected forest under section 29 of Indian Forest Act,1927(16 of 1927) or under any other law for the time being in force before the Final/Stage-II approval;

- iii. The User Agency shall transfer the cost of raising and maintaining the compensatory afforestation as per the approved CA Scheme at the current wage rate in consultation with State Forest Department in the account of CAMPA of the concerned State through online portal;
- iv. The cost of compensatory afforestation at the prevailing wage rates as per compensatory afforestation scheme and the cost of survey, demarcation and erection of permanent pillars, if required on the CA land, shall be deposited in advance with the Forest Department by the user agency. The CA will be maintained for 10 years. The scheme may include afforestation of indigenous species with appropriate provision for anticipated cost increase for works scheduled for subsequent years;

3. Net Present Value:

- i. The User Agency shall transfer the funds towards the cost of Net Present Value (NPV) of the forest land being diverted under this proposal in accordance with the MoEF&CC's guidelines dated 6.01.2022 read with guidelines dated 19.01.2022;
 - ii. At the time of payment of the Net Present Value (NPV) at the present rate, the user agency shall furnish an undertaking to pay the additional amount of NPV, if so determined, as per the final decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India;
4. *Keeping in view the encroachments over the areas earlier proposed for CA, the State Govt. shall provide areas free from all encumbrances for the purpose of raising compensatory afforestation along with relevant documents, certificates and kml files and uploaded the same on the PARIVESH portal;*
 5. *The road has been constructed/widened/blacktopped within the area of coal block and involves violation of the provisions of FCA,1980. The State shall conduct a detailed enquiry and initiate action as per section 3A/3B;*
 6. *The violation for the construction of road has taken place within the area of the coal block, therefore the user agency shall deposit penal NPV at the rate of Five times of the Normal NPV for forest area broken up without prior approval of the central government;*
 7. *Keeping in view the likely impact of the project on the movement of wildlife in general and elephant in particular, the user agency shall prepare on a landscape level in 10 km circumference of the Project proposal area and the 531.64 ha already diverted area, an 'Integrated Site Specific Wildlife Conservation Management and Impact Mitigation Plan';*
 8. The State Government shall upload the KML files of the area under diversion and the accepted area for raising compensatory afforestation in the E-green watch portal of FSI, before handing over forest land to the user agency;

9. All the funds received from the user agency under the project shall be transferred/deposited in CAMPA account only through e-portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>). Amount deposited through other mode will not be accepted as compliance of the Stage-I clearance;
10. The compliance report shall be uploaded on **e-portal** (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>);
11. Following activities, as per approved plan / schemes, shall be undertaken in the lease area by the User Agency under the supervision of the State Forest Department. Approved scheme/plan shall be submitted to the Ministry along with compliance of Stage-I approval:
 - i. Mitigative measures to minimize soil erosion and choking of stream shall be implemented within a period of three year with effect from the issue of Stage-II clearance in accordance with the approved Plan in consultation with the State Forest Department;
 - ii. Planting of adequate drought hardy plant species and sowing of seeds, in the appropriate area within the mining lease to arrest soil erosion in accordance with the approved scheme;
 - iii. Construction of check dams, retention /toe walls to arrest sliding down of the excavated material along the contour in accordance with the approved scheme;
 - iv. Stabilize the overburden dumps by appropriate grading/benching, in accordance with the approved scheme, so as to ensure that angles of repose at any given place is less than 28°; and
 - v. No damage shall be caused to the top-soil and the user agency will follow the top soil management plan.
12. User agency either himself or through the State Forest Department shall undertake gap planting and soil & moisture conservation activities to restock and rejuvenate the degraded open forests (having crown density less than 0.40), if any, located in the area within 100 meter from outer perimeter of the mining lease. The plan for plantation and SMC activities will be prepared and submitted to MoEF&CC before Stage-II Clearance;
13. **Safety Zone Management:** Following activities, at project cost, shall be undertaken by the user agency for the management of safety zone as per relevant guidelines issued by the Ministry's guidelines:
 - i. User agency shall ensure demarcation of safety zone (7.5 meter strip all along the inner boundary of the mining lease area), and its fencing, protection and regeneration by erecting adequate number of 6 feet high RCC boundary pillars inscribed with DGPS coordinates with barbed wire fencing and deploying adequate number of watchers under the supervision of the State Forest Department;
 - ii. Boundary of the safety zone of the mining lease, adjacent to habitation/roads, should be properly fenced by the user agency;

- iii. Safety zone shall be maintained as green belt around mining lease and to ensure dense canopy in the area, regeneration shall be taken up in this area by the user agency at project cost under the supervision of the State Forest Department;
- iv. The State Government and the user agency shall ensure that safety zone is maintained as per the prescribed norms;
14. The R&R Plan shall be implemented as per the R&R Policy of State Government in consonance with National R&R Policy, Government of India before the commencement of the project work and implementation. The said R&R Plan will be monitored by the State Government/Regional Office of MoEF&CC along with indicators for monitoring and expected observable milestones;
15. The User Agency shall prepare a list of existing village tanks and other water bodies with GPS co-ordinates located within five km from the mine lease boundary. This list is to be duly verified by the concerned Divisional Forest Officer. The User Agency shall regularly undertake desilting of these village tanks and other water bodies so as to mitigate the impact of siltation of such tanks/water bodies. A detailed approved plan for de-silting of identified ponds and water bodies to be prepared in consultation with forest department and shall be submitted to MoEF& CC before Stage-II approval;
16. The user agency shall explore the possibility of translocation of maximum number of trees identified to be felled and shall ensure that any tree felling shall be done only when it is unavoidable and that too under strict supervision of the State Forest Department. Also the trees should be felled in phased manner as per the requirement in the approved Mining Plan with prior permission of concerned DFO;
17. The cost of felling of trees shall be deposited by the User Agency with the State Forest Department;
18. The User Agency shall undertake mining in a phased manner after taking due care for reclamation of the mined over area. The concurrent reclamation plan as per the approved mining plan shall be executed by the User Agency from the very first year, and an annual report on implementation thereof shall be submitted to the Nodal Officer, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, in the concerned State Government and the concerned Regional Office of the Ministry. If it is found from the annual report that the activities indicated in the concurrent reclamation plan are not being executed by the User Agency, the Nodal Officer or the concern Addl. Principle Chief Conservator of Forests (Central) may direct that the mining activities shall remain suspended till such time, such reclamation activities area satisfactorily executed;
19. The User Agency shall comply with the Hon'ble Supreme Court order on re-grassing, and re-grass the mining area and any other areas which may have been disturbed due to mining to restore them to a condition which is fit for growth of fodder, flora, fauna, etc. in a timely manner;
20. Period of diversion of the said forest land under this approval shall be for a period co-terminus with the period of the mining lease proposed to be granted under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, as amended and the Rules framed there-under;

21. The User Agency shall obtain the Environment Clearance as per the provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, if required;
22. No labour camp shall be established on the forest land and the User Agency shall provide fuels preferably alternate fuels to the labourers and the staff working at the site so as to avoid any damage and pressure on the nearby forest areas;
23. The boundary of the diverted forest land, mining lease and safety zone, as applicable, shall be demarcated on ground at the project cost, by erecting four feet high reinforced cement concrete pillars, each inscribed with its serial number, distance from pillar to pillar and GPS coordinates;
24. The layout plan of the mining plan/ proposal shall not be changed without the prior approval of the Central Government and the forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the proposal;
25. The forest land proposed to be diverted shall under no circumstances be transferred to any other agency, department or person without prior approval of the Central Government;
26. No damage to the flora and fauna of the adjoining area shall be caused;
27. The user agency shall comply all the provisions of the all Acts, Rules, Regulations, Guidelines, Hon'ble Court Order (s) and NGT Order (s) pertaining to this project, if any, for the time being in force, as applicable to the project;
28. The User Agency shall submit the annual self -compliance report in respect of the above stated conditions to the State Government, concerned Regional Office and to this Ministry by the end of March every year regularly;
29. Any other condition that the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change may stipulate from time to time in the interest of conservation, protection and development of forests & wildlife shall be carried with by the State Government and user agency;
30. Violation of any of these conditions will amount to violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and action would be taken as prescribed in para 1.21 of Chapter 1 of the Handbook of comprehensive guidelines of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 as issued by this Ministry's letter No. 5-2/2017-FC dated 28.03.2019.

After receipt of compliance report on fulfillment of the conditions mentioned above, the proposal shall be considered for final approval under Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Transfer of forest land shall not be affected till final approval is granted by the Central Government in this regard.

Yours faithfully

(Dr. Dheeraj Mittal)

Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:

1. The PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forest, Government of Jharkhand, Ranchi.
2. The Dy. DGF (Central), Regional Office, Ranchi.

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3. The Nodal Officer (FCA), Department of Forest, Government of Jharkhand, Ranchi.
4. User Agency.
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi for uploading on PARIVESH portal.