

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Aliganj, Jor Bag Road,
New Delhi - 110003.

Dated:12-02-2026

To

The Addl. Chief Secretary (Forests),

Government of Odisha,
Bhubaneswar.

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 Bhusan Power & Steel Limited for non-forestry use of 112.621 ha of Forest land (including 1.808 ha earmarked for Safety Zone) in village Baldihi under Koira Tahasil and Koira Range of Bonai Forest Division of Sundargarh District within the block area of 139.223 ha in respect of Netrabandha Pahar Iron Ore Block in Odisha State- regarding.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Government of Odisha's letter No. FE-DIV-FLD-0088-2022-19934/FE&CC dated 09.11.2022 on the above subject seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. After careful examination of the proposal by the Advisory Committee, constituted under Section-3 of the said Adhiniyam, the 'in-principle' approval to the proposal under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 was granted vide this Ministry's letter of even number dated 21.12.2023 subject to fulfillment of certain conditions prescribed therein. The State Government has furnished compliance report in respect of the conditions stipulated in the 'in-principle' approval and requested the Central Government to grant final approval.

2. In this connection, I am directed to say that on the basis of the compliance report furnished by the State Government vide letter no. 19377/9F (MG) – 27/2022 dated 17.09.2025 and letter no. 272/9F (MG) – 27/2022 dated 05.01.2026, 'final' approval of Central Government under Section 2 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 is hereby granted for non-forestry use of 112.621 ha

of Forest land (including 1.808 ha earmarked for Safety Zone) in village Baldihi under Koira Tahasil and Koira Range of Bonai Forest Division of Sundargarh District within the block area of 139.223 ha in respect of Netrabandha Pahar Iron Ore Block in Odisha State subject to fulfillment of the following conditions:

1. Legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged;
2. The State Government shall ensure that compensatory afforestation over the non-forest land 113.544 ha which has been notified as "Jaidega Protected Forest" and "Jhurmur protected Forest" vide Notification No 12237/FE&CC dated 29.05.25 and 12223/FE&CC dated 29.05.25 respectively and 2.731 ha of NFL notified as "Dharopani Protected Forest" vide Notification No 12230/FE&CC dated 29.05.25 shall be raised and the work of the afforestation shall start within two years from the date of issue of diversion order of the forest land;
3. The State Government shall ensure that the compensatory afforestation shall be raised as per the approved plan, and the work of the afforestation shall start within two years from the date of issue of diversion order of the forest land;
4. The State Government shall ensure the afforestation on degraded forest land over an area of 3.00 ha measuring one and a half times the area under safety zone as per the approved scheme;
4. The State Government shall ensure that the User agency either himself or through the State Forest Department shall undertake gap planting and soil and 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;
5. The 25% of the CA cost additionally shall be spent towards soil and moisture conservation activities in the proposed CA area as per site requirement;
6. The user agency shall pay the additional amount of NPV, if so determined, as per the final decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India;
7. *State Government shall ensure that the transportation of ore will be as per the recommendation in the report submitted by CSIR-NEERI;*
8. *The State Government shall ensure the implementation of approved holistic transportation plan. Transportation of ore should be as far as possible through common conveyor belt, slurry pipeline, railways, etc. Transportation of ore through road should be minimized in a time bound manner;*
9. *The State Government shall ensure that the user agency would follow the recommendation if any, made by the oversight committee constituted under the Chairmanship of the DDGF (Central) RO Bhubaneswar for 10 years who*

will monitor and review the compliance of the conditions stipulated in the approval and submit report to the Ministry annually;

10. *The provisions of the approved Integrated Regional Wildlife Management Plan shall be implemented by the State Forest Department from the cost realized from the user agency on pro rata basis;*
11. *The State Government shall ensure the implementation of approved Bio-diversity Conservation Plan for entire landscape;*
12. *The State Government shall ensure the implementation of Soil and moisture conservation measures shall be undertaken in and around 10 KM radius of the mining lease areas;*
13. *The State Government shall ensure that the conditions stipulated in EC should be strictly implemented and monitored;*
14. Compensatory levies, if any, realized in future under the extant project, shall be transferred/ deposited, through e-payment module on PARIVESH portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>), into the account of CAMPA of the State concerned, managed by the National Authority (CAMPA);
15. 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:
 - i. Mitigation measures to minimize soil erosion and choking of stream, shall be implemented within a period of two years with effect from the date of issue of order of diversion of forest land, 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.
16. 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.
17. No damage shall be caused to the top-soil and the user agency will follow the top soil management plan;
18. The User Agency shall regularly undertake desilting of village tanks and other water bodies, located within five km from the mine lease boundary, as per plan submitted along with the compliance of 'in-principle' approval, so as to mitigate the impact of project on such tanks/water bodies;
19. The State Government shall ensure that the trees should be felled in phased manner as per the requirement in the approved Mining Plan with prior permission of concerned DFO;
20. The User Agency shall undertake that afforestation of the non-mineralized virgin forest land within the mining area shall be taken up at project cost;
21. The cost of felling of trees shall be deposited by the User Agency with the State Forest Department;
19. 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;
20. The provisions of the approved Site-Specific Wildlife Management Plan shall be implemented by the State Forest Department from the cost realized from the user agency on pro rata basis;
21. The User Agency shall ensure that the bird nests artificially made out of the Eco-friendly materials shall be used in the area, including forest area, human settlement, adjoining to forest area being diverted in the project as per the plan approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden;
22. The User Agency shall undertake that the project authority needs to take up

- works for construction and cleaning of garland drains, stabilizing retaining walls, proper terracing of OB dumps and checking gully formation resulting in soil erosion;
23. The User Agency shall undertake that plants which are having lowest translocation factor can be preferred under afforestation on the OB dumps and fruit trees to be avoided in planting during biological stabilization of OB dumps;
 24. The User Agency shall undertake that prevention of fall of wild animals into mining pit by fencing the open pit area;
 25. The User Agency shall undertake that the angle of repose in OB dumps to be maintained to ensure stability and safety;
 26. The User Agency shall undertake that vetiver grass can be planted at the lower reaches of the dump to bind the soil and prevent soil erosion giving better stability to the dump;
 27. 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;
 28. 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;
 29. 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;
 30. The User Agency shall obtain the Environment Clearance as per the provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, if required;
 31. 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;

32. 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;
35. The layout plan of the 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 except the change in land use allowed on the forest land vide Ministry's guideline dated 26.12.2024;
36. 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;
37. No damage to the flora and fauna of the adjoining area shall be caused;
38. Any other condition that the concerned Regional Office of this Ministry may stipulate with the approval of competent authority in the interest of conservation, protection and development of forests & wildlife;
39. 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;
40. Violation of any of these conditions will amount to violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and action would be taken as prescribed in para 1.16 of Chapter 1 of the Consolidated Guidelines and Clarifications on Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 as issued by this Ministry's letter dated 29.12.2023;
41. 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;
42. The State Government and user agency shall ensure compliance to all conditions stipulated in the 'in-principle' approval letter dated 21.12.2023 for which undertakings have been obtained from the user agency; and
43. As per Sub-rule 7 of Rule 11 of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 the State Govt. after receiving the 'Final' approval of the Central Government under sub-section (1) of section 2 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and after fulfilment and compliance of the provisions of all other Acts and rules made thereunder, as applicable including ensuring settlement of rights under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (2 of 2007), shall issue order for diversion of the forest land.

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-

(Raja Ram Singh)

Deputy Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:

1. The PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forest, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar.
2. The DDGF (Central), Regional Office of MoEF&CC at Bhubaneswar.
3. The Nodal Officer (FCA), Department of Forest, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar.
4. User Agency.
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi for uploading on PARIVESH portal.