



भारत सरकार

Government of India

पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय

Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change

एकीकृत क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, गुवाहाटी/Integrated Regional office, Guwahati
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No. 3-AS C 023/2017-SHI / 79-81

15th February, 2021

सेवा मे,

अतिरिक्त प्रमुख सचिव/ Addl. Chief Secretary,
असम सरकार/Govt of Assam,
पर्यावरण और वन विभाग/Environment and Forests Department,
दिसपुर/Dispur, गुवाहाटी/Guwahati-781006.

Sub:- Proposal for diversion of 208.807 ha of forest land for construction of 400 KV D/C (Quad) from Jigmelling to Alipurduar Transmission Line by Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd.

Sir,

This has got reference to the State Govt of Assam letter No. FRS.59/2017/187 dated 12.05.2017 and No. FRS.59/2017/Pt/291 dated 22.01.2021, on the subject mentioned above, seeking prior approval of the Central Government in accordance with Section 2 of the Forest(Conservation)Act, 1980. After careful consideration of the proposal, In Principle Approval (IPA) was granted vide Regional Office, Shillong, letter even number dated 18.10.2018 subject to fulfillment of certain conditions.

In this connection and on the basis of the compliance report furnished by the State Government's letter No. FRS.59/2017/Pt/291 dated 22.01.2021 and submission of compensatory levies by e-challen and online payment by user agency under CAMPA, Final Approval of the Central Govt is hereby granted under Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 208.807 ha of forest land for construction of 400 KV D/C (Quad) from Jigmelling to Alipurduar Transmission Line by Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The legal status of the forest land shall remain unchanged.
- 2) Forest land will be handed over only after required non-forest land for the project is handed over by the user agency.
- 3) The compensatory afforestation shall be taken up by the Forest Department over double the degraded forest land of 419.5 ha in Kokrajhar district { i.e. 141 ha in Chirang RF, Haltugaon Division, 278.5 ha (i.e. 71ha in Phulkumari RF , 45 ha in Bhelakura RF , 154 ha in Mahamaya RF and 8.5ha in Guma RF) in Parbatjhor Division} at the cost of the

user agency as per the scheme furnished by the State Govt. As far as possible, a mixture of local indigenous species shall be planted and monoculture of any species may be avoided.

- 4) The suggestive measures for the portion of the proposed area and two patches of compensatory afforestation area falling under elephant grid shall be adopted as per the Ministry's letter F.No. 7-25/2012-FC dated 19.11.2014 as recommended by the Chief Wildlife Warden, Govt of Assam.
- 5) The complete compliance of the Forest Right Act, 2006 shall be ensured by way of prescribed certificate from the concerned District Collector.
- 6) The user agency at its cost shall provide bird reflectors which are to be fixed on upper conductor of transmission line at suitable intervals to avoid bird hits.
- 7) **The User Agency shall comply with the guidelines for laying transmission lines through forest areas issued by Ministry vide letter no. 7-25/2012-FC dated 05/05/2014 & 19/11/2014.**
- 8) The User Agency shall obtain Environmental Clearance as per the provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, if applicable.
- 9) The layout plan of the proposal shall not be changed without prior approval of Central Government.
- 10) No labour camp shall be established on the forest land.
- 11) Sufficient firewood, preferably the alternate fuel, shall be provided by the User Agency to the labourer after purchasing the same from the State Forest Department or the Forest Development Corporation or any other legal source of alternate fuel.
- 12) The boundary of the diverted forest land shall be suitably demarcated on ground at the project cost, as per the directions of the concerned Divisional Forest Officer.
- 13) No additional or new path will be constructed inside the forest area for transportation of construction materials for execution of the project work.
- 14) The period of diversion under this approval shall be co-terminus with the period of lease to be granted in favour of the user agency or the project life, whichever is less.
- 15) The forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the project proposal.
- 16) The User Agency and the State Government shall ensure compliance of all the Court orders, provisions, rules, regulations and guidelines for the time being in force as applicable to the project.
- 17) The forest land proposed to be diverted shall under no circumstances be transferred to any other agencies, department or person without prior approval of Govt. of India.
- 18) State Govt shall adhere to the conditions stipulated by the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife in its 50th meeting held on 07.09.2018 in addition to the condition stipulated by CWLW and NTCA as communicated by GoI's letter No. F.N. 6-111/2018WL dated 27.09.2018 which are reproduce as follows:-
 - (i) Tower shall be fenced with elephant proof fence maintained properly.
 - (ii) The conductors shall be sufficiently high to avoid chances of any accident due to sagging of conductors and such guidelines in this regard.

- (iii) The user agency shall maintain and monitor the line passing through the tiger reserve area regularly jointly with the Forest Department and incur such expenditures as and when required.
- (iv) Necessary retrofitting measures as and when required in the interest of wild animal movement and protection shall be done by the user agency in future.
- (v) The user agency shall provide sufficient funds to the Wildlife Department as per the guidelines from NBWL.
- (vi) Since the proposed line is a high Voltage Transmission line, it is recommended that the stretch from Tower No. 4 to 6 having dense forest should be fenced around to prevent wild elephants from coming in contact with Towers. In the above stretch, the conductors should be erected at sufficient height to avoid chances of any accident due to sagging. The Power Grid Corporation shall maintain the line after commissioning to avoid any accident to specially the wild elephants moving through the areas.
- (vii) Insulated cables should be used in the stretch of proposed transmission line passing through the forest and important wildlife areas across its length. All power lines within 5 km of forest and scrub patches and important wildlife area across its entire length will be marked with bird diverters (with solar powered night flashers) spaced at 10 m interval.
- (viii) In area without the insulated cables, Power Grid shall maintain > 1.5 m spacing (larger than wrist-to-wrist or head-to-foot distance of a bird) between energized components grounded hardware. In compliance with MoEFCC's guidelines no clearance of vegetation shall be allowed for open area with sparse vegetation (such as scrublands, grasslands, wetlands, etc), A 5.8 m vertical clearance areas of the transmission and 1.2 m horizontal clearance from the vegetation could be permitted in other areas of the transmission line. These dimensions are based on clearance requirements for power lines under Rules 77, 79 and 80 read with Rules 82 A(3) in the Indian electricity Rules 1956 (as amended up to 20 November 2000) and local forest officials should monitor strict implementation of this on ground.
- (ix) The width of the right of way for transmission line on forest land should not be over 35 m. The alignment of the Power Line shall be made such that minimum numbers of trees are felled. Any felling/pollarding/pruning of trees for allowing electricity clearance/maintenance will be done with the permission of the local DFO. Only those trees that are of sufficient height to compromise the requirements of minimal vertical and horizontal clearance from the conductor wires at maximum sag point should be lopped.
- (x) The user agency should adhere to the guidelines issued by Hon'ble National Green tribunal in its judgements in Janajagarthi Samiti verses Union of India and Others (Appeal No.10 of 2012) related to transmission line passing through the forest in Western Ghats. Forest Clearance Division, MoEF&CC in consultation with Central Electricity Authority had also issued guidelines pertaining to transmission lines passing through the forests. The user agency should follow these guidelines while construction of the power line.
- (xi) Periodic clearing of vegetation along the power line may bring up invasive species. The plantation of native, palatable species should be actively promoted by the user agency in collaboration with the Forest Department below the Power line. This will not only prevent growth of invasive unpalatable species like but also will provide excellent forage for wild ungulates in from of its

leaves and fruits. No construction/maintenance work shall be permitted between 6 pm to 7 am. Labour camps should be at least 1 km away from the boundaries of forest land along the entire of the proposed transmission line. In compliance with MoEFCC's guidelines, construction of new approach/access route will require prior approval under Forest Conservation Act, 1980.

- (xii) The user agency shall deposit 5 % of the total project cost to the Manas Tiger Reserve Management which should utilize this money for eco-restoration, prey augmentation, reducing public dependence on forests and promoting traditional local livelihoods in the landscape. The Chief Wildlife Warden, Assam should constitute a monitoring committee comprising of members from local forest officials, MoEF&CC and NTCA, Regional Office and user agency to oversee the implementation of the project in adherence to the mitigation measures suggested herein and /or by the State Forest Department.
- (xiii) The project proponent shall finalize the mitigation measures in consultation with state Chief Wildlife Warden on the basis of WII guideline named "Eco-friendly Measures to Mitigate Impact on Linear Infrastructure on Wildlife" prior to start of the work of the project and the mitigation measures so finalized shall be implemented at the project cost.
- (xiv) The annual compliance report on the stipulated conditions of the NBWL shall be submitted by the user agency to the State Chief Wildlife Warden and an annual compliance certificate shall be submitted by the State CWCL to Integrated Regional Office, Guwahati.
- 19) Violation of any of these conditions will amount to violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and action would be taken as per the MoEF&CC Guideline F. No. 11-42/2017-FC dt 29/01/2018.
- 20) 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.

भवदीय,

(W. Longvah)
वन महानिरीक्षक (केंद्रीय)
Inspector General of Forests(C)

Copy to:

✓ The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF, Govt of Assam, Environment and Forest Department, Aranya Bhawan, Rop Konwar Jyoti Prasad, Agarwal Path, Near Srimanta Sankardev Kalakhetra, Panjabari, Guwahati-781037 for kind information and necessary action.


वन महानिरीक्षक (केंद्रीय)
Inspector General of Forests(C)