

F.No.8-02/2024-FC
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(Forest Conservation Division)

Indira ParyavaranBhawan,
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi - 110003
Dated: 20-11-2025

To,

The Principal Secretary (Forests),
Government of Chhattisgarh,
Raipur.

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for non-forestry use of 682.2722 ha (570.100 ha inside lease and 112.1722 ha outside lease) forest land for Bailadila Iron Ore Deposit-4 Mine in favour of M/s NMDC-CMDC Limited in Dantewada Forest Division, South Bastar, Dantewada District in the State of Chhattisgarh (Online No.FP/CG/MIN/146694/2021) - regarding.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Government of Chhattisgarh letter no. 5-39/2023/10-2 dated 02.02.2024 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, 'in-principle' approval to the proposal under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 was granted vide this Ministry's letter of even number dated 23.06.2025 subject to fulfillment of certain conditions prescribed therein. The State Government has furnished compliance report in respect of the conditions stipulated in the Stage-I approval and has 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. 5-39/2023/10-2 dated 16.10.2025, 'final' approval of Central Government under Section 2 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 is hereby granted for non-forestry use of 682.2722 ha (570.100 ha inside lease and 112.1722 ha outside lease) forest land for Bailadila Iron Ore Deposit-4 Mine in favour of M/s NMDC-CMDC Limited in Dantewada Forest Division, South Bastar, Dantewada District in the State of Chhattisgarh subject to the following conditions:

- i. Legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged;

- ii. The State Government shall ensure strict adherence to the implementation of mitigation/protection measures given in the ICFRE Report;
- iii. The State Government shall ensure that the minimum safe distance of 150 meters and 191 meters respectively towards the west and east of Galli Nalla bank shall be maintained;
- iv. The State Government shall ensure that the initial mining operations shall be restricted to at least 5m above the Galli Nalla bed across the strike of the deposit in the North Block. On reaching the Bench levels in the North Pit to the corresponding levels of the Galli Nalla, the impact of mining operations on Galli Nalla shall be monitored through a reputed institution like ICFRE to determine whether further mining operations can be allowed or not in reference to impact on Tree fern survival;
- v. The State Government shall ensure that no float ore mining shall be undertaken on the eastern slope of the western ridge of Deposit-4 / western slope of Galli Nalla;
- vi. The State Government shall ensure that no mine waste dumping should be done on the eastern slope of the western ridge (Deposit-4) as wash offs from dumps will add to siltation in Galli Nalla that will adversely affect Tree Fern habitat;
- vii. The State Government shall ensure that no loose stacking of minerals be made on the eastern slope of the western ridge of Deposit-4 / western slope of Galli Nalla;
- viii. The State Government shall ensure that the User agency shall undertake detailed "Impact Assessment Study of Mine Progression on Galli Nalla Ecosystem" by a reputed third-party organization during the plan period, from the start of operations;
- ix. The State Government shall ensure that the Biodiversity Conservation plan and the Wildlife Management Plan shall be implemented at the cost of the user agency;
- x. For the purpose of Pump-House and Water Pipe line over an area of 4.68 Ha, approval dated-14.03.2002 had been obtained by the NMDC Ltd. An area of 2.452 Ha out of this approved area of NMDC Ltd. is overlapping with the present Forest Diversion proposal of the Bailadila Iron Ore Deposit-4 of the NMDC-CMDC Ltd. Since the 2.452 ha area is also a part of the instant proposal, therefore the State Govt. shall ensure that the User agency/NMDC shall submit a proposal for the modification/reduction in area approved vide letter dated-14.03.2002 accordingly;
- xi. 235 ha forest land proposed for Compensatory Afforestation consists of MDF. The State Govt. shall ensure Compensatory Afforestation plantation on Degraded Forest land as per CA scheme provided in compliance to the condition of Stage-1 approval;
- xii. The State Govt. shall ensure that compensatory Afforestation on the double degraded forest land shall be raised at the project cost under the supervision of the State Forest Department and afforestation works shall start within two years from the date of

final approval and maintained thereafter in accordance with the approved CA scheme in consultation with the State Forest Department;

- xiii. The State Govt. shall ensure that the CA shall 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;
- xiv. 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;
- xv. The State Government ensure to upload the KML files of the area under diversion and area earmarked for CA in the e-Green watch portal of FSI, before handing over forest land to the user agency;
- xvi. The User Agency shall obtain the Environment Clearance as per the provision of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, if required;
- xvii. The State Govt. shall ensure that the User Agency shall undertake mining in a phased manner after taking due care for reclamation of the mined out area. The User Agency shall prepare a detailed plan for life of project as per mining plan, clearly linking the progress of mining and felling of the trees. Felling of trees shall be done, when it is absolutely necessary in phase-wise manner in the areas which become due for mining as per mining plan. 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, Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 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 Chief Conservator of Forests (Central) may direct that the mining activities shall remain suspended till such time, such reclamation activities are satisfactorily executed;
- xviii. The State Govt. shall ensure that the user agency shall implement the schedule for surrender of the mined out and reclaimed forest land submitted in compliance to the condition of Stage-1 approval;
- xix. The State Govt. shall ensure that the rehabilitated forest area after closure of mining operations shall be handed over to the State Forest Department for sustainable forest management in the future;
- xx. **Safety Zone Management:** The State Govt. shall ensure that 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:
 - a. 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;
- b. Boundary of the safety zone of the mining lease, adjacent to habitation/roads, should be properly fenced by the user agency;
 - c. 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; and
 - d. The State Government and the user agency shall ensure that safety zone is maintained as per the prescribed norms.
- xxi. The State Govt. shall ensure that the 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:
- a. Mitigative measures to minimize soil erosion and choking of stream shall be implemented within a period of three years with effect from the issue of final approval in accordance with the approved Plan in consultation with the State Forest Department;
 - b. 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;
 - c. Construction of check dams, retention /toe walls to arrest sliding down of the excavated material along the contour in accordance with the approved scheme;
 - d. 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°;
 - e. No damage shall be caused to the top-soil and the user agency will follow the top soil management plan.
- xxii. The validity of approval granted under the Adhiniyam shall be for a period co-terminous with the validity of the mining lease proposed to be granted under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, as amended from time to time or Rules framed there under, or for such periods may be specified by the Central Government;
- xxiii. The State Govt. 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 within the periphery of 100 m from outer perimeter of the mining lease as per approved plan for plantation and SMC activities submitted along with compliance of 'in-principle' approval;
- xxiv. The State Govt. shall ensure that the User Agency shall regularly

undertake de-silting of village tanks and other water bodies, located within five km from the mine lease boundary, as per approved plan, to mitigate the impact of project on such tanks/water bodies;

- xxv. The State Govt. shall ensure that 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;
- xxvi. The State Govt. shall ensure that adequate care shall be taken to check any rolling of overburden/dumps beyond the designated area and to check soil erosion caused due to mining activities;
- xxvii. The State Govt. shall ensure that the User agency will undertake comprehensive soil conservation measures at the project cost in consultation with the State Forest Department as per the scheme submitted to the Ministry in compliance of condition of 'in-principle' approval;
- xxviii. 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;
- xxix. The cost of felling of trees shall be deposited by the User Agency with the State Forest Department;
- xxx. The State Govt. shall ensure that 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;
- xxxi. The State Govt. shall ensure that 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;
- xxxii. 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 inland use allowed on the forest land vide Ministry's guideline dated 26.12.2024;
- xxxiii. 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;
- xxxiv. The State Govt. shall ensure that no damage to the flora and fauna of the adjoining area shall be caused;
- xxxv. The State/user agency shall comply the provisions of 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;

- xxxvi. 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;
- xxxvii. 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;
- xxxviii. 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 consolidated guidelines and clarifications issued under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 as issued by this Ministry on dated 29.12.2023;
- xxxix. The State Government and user agency shall ensure compliance to all conditions stipulated in the 'in-principle' approval letter dated 23.06.2025 for which undertakings have been obtained from the user agency; and
- xl. 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/-
(**Suneet Bhardwaj**)
Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:

1. The PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forest, Government of Chhattisgarh, Raipur;
2. Sub-Office, MoEF&CC, Raipur;
3. The Nodal Officer, Department of Forest, Government of Chhattisgarh, Raipur;
4. User Agency;
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi for uploading on PARIVESH portal