

F. No. 8-63/2006-FC
Government of India
Ministry of Environment and Forests
F.C. Division

Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex;
Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110 003.

Dated: 02.05.2008

To

The Principal Secretary (Forests)
Government of Chhattisgarh
Raipur.

Sub:- Diversion of 205.60 ha (201.00 ha for underground mining and 4.60 ha for surface works) of forest land for Haldibari Underground Mining Project of M/s. South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) in district Korea of Chhattisgarh.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to State Government's letter No. F-5-20 / 10-2 / 2005 dated 31.05.2006 on the subject cited above seeking prior approval of the Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. After careful consideration of the proposal by the Forest Advisory Committee constituted under Section-3 of the said Act, in-principle approval for the said Mining Lease was granted vide this Ministry's letter of even number dated 20.10.2006 subject to fulfillment of certain conditions. The State Government has furnished compliance report in respect of the conditions stipulated in the in-principle 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. Bhu - Prabandh / Khanij / 406 dated 23.02.2008, approval of the Central Government is hereby granted under Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 205.60 ha (201.00 ha for underground mining and 4.60 ha for surface works) of forest land for Haldibari Underground Mining Project of M/s. South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) in district Korea of Chhattisgarh subject to fulfillment of the following conditions:

1. Legal status of forest land shall remain unchanged.
2. a Compensatory afforestation shall be raised and maintained by the State Forest Department at the project cost.
b Fencing, protection and regeneration of the safety zone area (100 metres strip all along the outer boundary of the mining lease area as recommended by the State Government) shall be done at the project cost. Besides this, afforestation on degraded forest land, to be selected elsewhere, measuring one and a half times the area under safety zone, shall also be done at the project cost.
c Wherever possible and technically feasible, the User Agency shall undertake afforestation measures in the blanks within the lease area, as well as along the roads outside the lease area diverted under this approval, in consultation with the State Forest Department at the project cost.

3	Following activities shall be undertaken by the User Agency at the project cost:
(i)	Proper mitigative measures to minimize soil erosion and choking of streams shall be prepared and implemented.
(ii)	Planting of adequate drought hardy plant species and sowing of seeds to arrest soil erosion.
(iii)	Construction of check dams, retention / toe walls to arrest sliding down of the excavated material along the contour.
(iv)	The areas shall be reclaimed keeping in view the international practice of stabilizing the dumps by grading / benching so that angles of repose (normally less than 28 at any given place) are maintained.
(v)	The top soil management plan should be strictly adhered to.
4	The forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the proposal.
5	The approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is subject to the clearance under the Environmental Protection Act, 1986.
6	The user agency will make arrangement for free supply of coal to labourers and staff working on the project site so as to avoid any pressure on the adjacent forest areas.
7	The period of permission for lease under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 will be for 20 years subject to possession of valid lease by User Agency under the MMDR Act, 1957.
8	Demarcation of mining lease area will be done on the ground at project cost using four feet high reinforced cement concrete pillars with serial numbers, forward & back bearings and distance from pillar to pillar.
9	Mining / reclamation schedule shall be implemented by the user agency at their cost as per Environmental Management Plan / phased programme.
10	The user agency shall take up afforestation and soil moisture conservations works inside the forest area in 100 m radius from the permitted lease area in consultation with the forest department. Wherever the forest density is less than 0.4, gap plantation should be taken up.
11.	The user agency shall also take up study on soil erosion / soil flow from the over-burden areas with the help of GIS in consultation with the forest department.
12.	The user agency shall take up the de-silting of the village tanks within five km area from the mine lease boundary as a Corporate's social responsibility so as to mitigate the impact of siltation of such tanks if any.

13. In case of underground mining, the user agency shall take up plantation over the surface area wherever the forest density is less than 0.4. Gap planting should be taken up in the areas where density is between 0.4 and 0.7. The user agency will protect the area till the life of the underground mining in consultation with Forest Department.
14. Any other condition that the State Govt. or the Chief Conservator of Forests (Central), Regional Office, Bhopal may impose from time to time in the interest of conservation, protection or development of forests.

Yours faithfully,


(C.D. Singh)

Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:-

1. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Government of Chhattisgarh, Raipur.
2. The Nodal Officer, Office of the PCCF, Government of Chhattisgarh, Raipur.
3. The Chief Conservator of Forests (Central), Bhopal.
4. The User Agency
5. Monitoring cell of the FC section
6. Guard file.


(C.D. Singh)

Assistant Inspector General of Forests

o/c
issued
5/10/8