

सं.5-ORA566/2023-BHU

दिनांक 05.07.2023

सेवा में,

अपर वन महानिदेशक (एँफ़.सी.),
पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय,
इंदिरा पर्यावरण भवन,
जोरबाग रोड, अली गंज,
नई दिल्ली - 110 003

बिषय : Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Govt. under Section 2 (iii) of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 in favour of M/s Raga Tradecon Pvt. Ltd. for grant of mining lease over 66.242 ha of forest within Netrabandha Pahar (West) Iron Ore Block in village Baldihi and Sanua under Bonai Forest Division of Sundargarh District of Odisha State.

संदर्भ: मंत्रालय पत्र सं. 8-12/2023-FC दिनांक 28.04.2023.

महोदय,

उपर्युक्त विषयक प्रसंगाधीन पत्र के आलोक में संबंधित प्रस्ताव का स्थल निरीक्षण दिनांक **01.06.2023** को किया गया | स्थल निरीक्षण उपरांत स्थल निरीक्षण प्रतिवेदन इस पत्र के साथ संलग्न भेजा जा रहा है |

अनु : यथोक्त।

भवदीय,
ए. टी. मिश्रा.

(ए. टी. मिश्रा)

उप वन महानिदेशक (के)

SITE INSPECTION REPORT OF PROPOSAL SEEKING APPROVAL UNDER SECTION-2 (iii) OF FOREST CONSERVATION ACT, 1980 IN FAVOUR OF M/S RAGA TRDECON PVT. LTD. FOR GRANT OF LEASE OVER 66.242 HA OF FOREST LAND WITHIN NETRABANDHA PAHAR (WEST) IRON ORE BLOCK IN VILLAGE BALDIHI AND SANUA UNDER BONAI FOREST DIVISION OF SUNDARGARH DISTRICT OF ODISHA STATE.

The site inspection of the above project was carried out by the undersigned on 01.06.2023 along with DFO, Bonai other officials from Forest Department and representative of the user agency.

1. Legal status of the forest land proposed for diversion:

The legal status of forest land is as follows:

PRF	49.411 ha
Revenue Forest	8.032 ha
DLC	8.799 ha
Total	66.242 ha

2. Item-wise break-up details of the forest land proposed for diversion.

Sl. No.	Name of the Forest Division	Name of the Village/ Tahasil	Forest land (in ha)				Non-forest land (in ha)		Total non-forest (in ha)	Grand Total (in ha)
			PRF	Rev. Forest	DLC Forest	Total Forest	Govt. land	Pvt. Land		
1.	Bonai	Baldihi/ Koira	49.411	8.032	8.799	66.242	6.537	1.591	8.128	74.370

3. Whether proposal involves any construction of buildings (including residential) or not. If yes, details thereof:

Not applicable at present.

4. Total cost of the project at present rates:

The total cost of the project is reported to be Rs.100 Crores.

5. Wildlife:

As reported by the DFO, Bonai Forest Division, fauna such as Elephant (*Elephas maximus*), Sloth Bear (*Melursus ursinus*), Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*), Barking Deer (*Muntiacus muntjak*), Mongoose (*Herpestes edwardsi*), Porcupine (*Hystrix indica*), Jackal (*Canis aureus*), Hanuman Langur (*Presbytes entellus*), Hyaena (*Hyaena hyaena*), etc. and different types of snakes and birds are noticed in the area. The distance of project site from the nearest Protected Area (Similipal Wildlife Sanctuary) is 81.65 Km. The project is 13.93 Kms away from the nearest Elephant Corridor (Karo-Karampada).

Whether forest area proposed for diversion is important from wildlife point of view or not:

The DFO, Bonai Forest Division has reported that the applied area is not involved with any eco-sensitive zone/ National Park/Sanctuary.

6. Vegetation:

The density of vegetation is reported to be 0.5 (Eco Value Class-I).

(a) Total number of trees to be felled.

Not applicable at this stage.

Effect of removal of trees on the general ecosystem in the area:

Not applicable at this stage.

(b) Important species:

Sal (*Shorea robusta*), Sidha (*Lagerstroemia parviflora*), Sagan (*Tectona grandis*), Shisu (*Dalbergia latifolia*), Amla (*Emblica officinalis*) Kusum (*Schleichera oleosa*), Bara (*Ficus bengalensis*), Harida (*Terminalia chebula*), Bahada (*Terminalia belerica*), Char (*Buchanania lanian*), Jamu (*Syzygium cuminii*), Asan (*Terminalia tomentosa*), Kendu (*Diospyros melanoxylon*), Mahul (*Madhuca indica*), Kumbhi (*Careya arborea*), Mango (*Mangifera indica*) etc. are major species among flora observed during site inspection.

Number of trees of girth below 60 cm.

Not applicable at this stage.

Number of trees of girth above 60 cm

Not applicable at this stage.

7. Background note on the proposal:

As reported, M/s Raga Tradecon Private Limited has been incorporated under company Act 1956 vide certificate of Incorporation No.21-73114 on 24.07.1995 with corporate identity number of the company U51420MH 1995PTC62317. The registered office is situated at state of Maharashtra (Mumbai), House No-503, 5th floor, Greenland Appts, BLDG No.3, JB Nagar, Andheri East, Mumbai-400059, Maharashtra to carry on all or any of the business as manufacturers, buyers, sellers, suppliers, traders, exporters, minerals, metals etc. The company does not have any other mines in the State of Odisha or any other part of India.

The Govt. of Odisha., Steel & Mines Department pursuant to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015 as amended from time to time (the Auction Rule) issued the notice inviting tender dated 07.07.2021 for commencement of the auction process for grant the mining Lease for Netrabandha Pahar (West) Iron Ore Block located in Koira Tahasil of Sundargarh District of Odisha. The e-auction process was conducted in accordance with the tender document and the mineral auction Rules, 2015 for the said Mineral Block and M/s Raga Tradecon Pvt. Ltd. was declared as the preferred Bidder under Rule 9(9) (iii) or Rule 10 (A) of Auction Rules having quoted a final price offer of 139.50%. The Director of Mines, Steel & Mines Department, Govt. of Odisha declared M/s Raga Tradecon Pvt. Ltd. as preferred bidders for grant of mining lease of Netrabandha Pahar (West) Iron ore block.

Further, M/s Raga Tradecon Pvt. Ltd has made payment of Rs.5,84,05,424/- (Rupees Five Crore Eighty-four Lakhs Five Thousand Four Hundred Twenty-four) only on dated 22.10.2021 towards the first installment being twenty percent of the upfront money. Accordingly, the Government of Odisha, Steel & Mines Department has issued Letter of Intent (LoI) vide letter No. 8722IIV(II)SM-5 3/202 I/SM, Bhubaneswar, dated 28.10.2021 in favour of M/s Raga Tradecon Pvt. Ltd. for grant of Mining Lease for Netrabandha Pahar (West) Iron Ore Block over an area of 74.370 ha in south of Baldihi village, Koira Tahasil of Sundargarh district of Odisha for a period of 50 years.

As per the LoI condition, the letter of intent is valid subject to the compliance of provision of the Act and the Rules made there under as amended from time to time and MIs Raga Tradecon Pvt. Ltd shall be designated as the **Successful Bidder** and subsequently will be granted the mining lease only upon satisfactory completion of all the requirements under the Act and Rules made there under. This Letter of Intent is valid for a period of 3 (Three) years from the date of its issuance, within which time all the above condition must be fulfilled and the mining lease deed must be executed. The valid period shall be extended for maximum period of 2 years and the total period for which the Letter of Intent would remained valid upto 5 (Five) years from the date of issuance.

Accordingly, M/s Raga Tradecon Pvt. Ltd. has submitted the application for seeking permission under Section-2 (iii) of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for grant of forest land on lease over 66.242 ha within Netrabandha Pahar (West) Iron Ore Block of total 74.370 ha located in village Baldihi & Sanua in Koira Tahasil under Bonai Forest Division of Sundargarh District, Odisha.

8. Compensatory afforestation:

As reported, the Compensatory Afforestation is not required for this proposal at this Stage.

(a) Whether land for compensatory afforestation is suitable from plantation and management point of view or not:

Not applicable.

(b) Whether land for compensatory afforestation is free from encroachment/other encumbrances:

Not applicable.

(c) Whether land for compensatory afforestation is important from Religious/Archaeological point of view:

Not applicable.

(d) Land identified for raising compensatory afforestation is in how many patches, whether patches are compact or not:

Not applicable.

(e) Map with details:

Not applicable.

(f) Total financial outlay:

Not applicable at this stage.

9. **Whether proposal involves violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 or not. If yes, a detailed report on violation including action taken against the concerned officials:**

As reported by the DFO, Bonai Forest Division, no violation has been reported under FC, Act 1980. During site inspection also, no violation was observed.

10. **Whether proposal involves rehabilitation of displaced persons. If yes, whether rehabilitation plan has been prepared by the State Government or not :**

As per report of the DFO, Bonai Forest Division, the project does not involve displacement of any human habitation. Hence, resettlement and rehabilitation plan is not required.

11. **Reclamation plan:**

The Mining Plan of Netrabandha Pahar (West) Iron Ore Block along with Progressive Mine Closure Plan over an area of 74.370 ha has been approved by the Indian Bureau of Mines vide their Letter No. MPIA/24-ORI/BHU/2021-22 dated 07.02.2022 and has been submitted.

Details of financial allocation:

Not applicable at this stage.

12. **Details on catchment and command area under the project:**

Not applicable.

Catchment area treatment plan to prevent siltation of reservoir:

Not applicable.

13. **Cost benefit ratio:**

As reported, the Cost-Benefit analysis is not required for this proposal at this stage.

14. **Recommendations of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests/State Government:**

Recommended by PCCF, Odisha/State Government.

15. **Conservator of Forests (Central) shall give detailed comments on whether there are any alternative routes/alignment for locating the project on the non-forest land:**

N.A.

16. **Utility of the project:**

The project will reportedly generate employment for about 188 nos. of persons with different skills out of which 70 persons direct/ regular and 118 persons indirect.

Numbers of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes to be benefited by the project:

Not reported.

17.

(a) **Whether land being diverted has any socio-cultural/ religious value:**

As reported, there is no Archeological/Heritage/Defence establishment or any other monuments located in the area.

(b) **Whether any sacred grove or very old growth trees/forests exist in the areas proposed for diversion:**

Not reported.

(c) **Whether the land under diversion forms part of any unique eco-system:**

The DFO, Bonai Forest Division has reported that there is no Archeological/Heritage/Defence establishment or any other important monuments located in the area.

18. **Situation with respect to any Protected Area:**

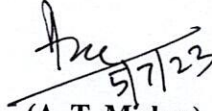
The nearest Elephant Corridor is Karo-Karampada, which is at a distance of 13.93 Kms and the nearest PA, Similipal Wildlife sanctuary is at a distance of 81.65 Kms approximately.

19. **Any other information relating to the project:**

- 1) No violation of FC Act, 1980 has been reported by the DFO, Bonai. During site inspection no violation was observed.
- 2) The applied area is outside the Eco-sensitive Zone/National Park/Wildlife Sanctuary.
- 3) The distance of project site from the nearest Protected Area (Similipal Wildlife Sanctuary) is 81.65 Km. The project is 13.93 Kms away from the nearest Elephant Corridor (Karo-Karampada).
- 4) The density of vegetation is reported to be 0.5 (Eco Value Class-I).
- 5) No tree felling is required in the instant proposal as it is the case of approval under Section 2 (iii) of FC Act, 1980.

Since, mining of iron ore is a site specific activity, so the proposal may be considered under Section 2 (iii) of FC Act, 1980.

However, it is also to mention that by taking approval under Section 2 (iii), the project proponent cannot do any non-forestry activity except signing of the mining lease. The Letter of Intent has been issued on 28.10.2021. The Letter of Intent is valid upto 3 years and can be extended to 2 more years. The project proponent may be advised to submit the detail proposal under Section 2 (ii) of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.


(A. T. Mishra)

Dy. Director General of Forests (Central)