



सं.5-ORA556/2023-BHU

दिनांक 31.10.2023

सेवा में,

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

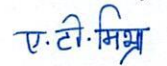
**बिषय :** Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Govt. under Section 2 (ii) of FC Act, 1980 in favour of M/s Odisha Coal & Power Ltd. (OCPL) for non-forestry use of 342.87 Ha of forest land for development of Dip Side Manoharpur Coal Mining Project in Sundargarh District of Sundargarh Forest Division, Odisha.

**संदर्भ:** मंत्रालय पत्र सं. 8-63/2011-FC (Vol-I) दिनांक 18.09.2023.

महोदय,

उपर्युक्त विषयक प्रसंगाधीन पत्र के आलोक में संबंधित प्रस्ताव का स्थल निरीक्षण अधोहस्ताक्षरी के द्वारा दिनांक 27.10.2023 को किया गया | स्थल निरीक्षण उपरांत स्थल निरीक्षण प्रतिवेदन इस पत्र के साथ संलग्न भेजा जा रहा है |

अनु : यथोक्त |

भवदीय,  
  
(ए. टी. मिश्रा)  
उप वन महानिदेशक (के)

**SITE INSPECTION REPORT IN RESPECT OF DIVERSION 342.870 HA OF FOREST LAND FOR NON-FORESTRY PURPOSE TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT OF DIP SIDE MANOHARPUR COAL MINING PROJECT OF M/S ODISHA COAL & POWER LTD. (OCPL) IN SUNDARGARH DISTRICT OF SUNDARGARH FOREST DIVISION.**

The site inspection of the above project was carried out by the undersigned on 27.10.2023 along with DFO, Sundargarh and representatives from M/s Odisha Coal & Power Ltd.

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

As reported by State Govt., legal status of the forest land is as below:

<b>Legal Status</b>		<b>Forest Area (in Ha)</b>
Revenue Forest	:	166.280
Reserved Forest	:	176.590
<b>Total</b>		<b>342.870</b>

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

The item wise break up as proposed for diversion is as below:

Sl. No.	Description	Forest Area (in Ha)			Non-forest Area (in Ha)			Grand Total (in Ha)
		R.F.	Revenue Forest	Total	Govt.	Pvt.	Total	
<b>Inside Dip Side of Manoharpur Coal Block</b>								
1	Quarry Excavation	173.76	92.85	266.61	305.54	95.98	401.52	668.13
2	Nala diversion	0	7.970	7.97	1.95	0.82	2.77	10.74
3	Safety Zone along the ML boundary (7.5 mtr)	2.83	1.32	4.15	0.87	0.73	1.60	5.75
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>176.59</b>	<b>102.14</b>	<b>278.73</b>	<b>308.36</b>	<b>97.53</b>	<b>405.89</b>	<b>684.62</b>
<b>Outside Dip Side of Manoharpur Coal Block</b>								
4	Expit Dump	0	51.64	51.64	4.37	3.32	7.69	59.33
5	ROM Stock Pile	0	0.93	0.93	0	0	0	0.93
6	Railway Siding	0	0.27	0.27	4.84	7.99	12.83	13.10
7	Settling Pond	0	1.43	1.43	0	0	0	1.43
8	Mine Colony	0	1.20	1.20	0	5.74	5.74	6.94
9	Road	0	8.67	8.67	3.37	2.05	5.42	14.09
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>64.14</b>	<b>64.14</b>	<b>12.58</b>	<b>19.10</b>	<b>31.68</b>	<b>95.82</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>176.59</b>	<b>166.28</b>	<b>342.87</b>	<b>320.94</b>	<b>116.63</b>	<b>437.57</b>	<b>780.44</b>

For external OB dump, the user agency has proposed 51.64 ha of forest land. During inspection the representative of OCPL said that out of total overburden of 1747.71 Mcum, 1579.49 Mcum of overburden can be dumped internally and the remaining overburden of 167.92 Mcum, which is 9.6% of the total overburden is required to be dumped externally in the coal mine within mine lease area which also non-coal bearing. There are no other space available for external dumping as both the blocks are surrounded by the other coal blocks in all it's remaining three side. Considering the technical and safety point of view, the forest patches is minimum requirement. Thus, total exclusion of the forest land in OB dump is unavoidable considering the site condition and bare minimum use of forest land has been planned.

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

Yes, Mine colony has been proposed over 6.94 Ha, out of which 1.20 Ha is forest land.

**4. Total cost of the project at present rates:**

As reported by the State Govt., the estimated cost of the project is reported to be Rs.347200 Lakhs.

**5. Wildlife:**

As reported by DFO, Sundargarh wild animal such Wild boar, Barking deer, Jackal, Mangose etc. and different types of birds like Common doves, Mynas, Jungle crow, Indian cuckoo, Parakeets are noticed in the area. Common reptiles and Lizards like Indian cobra, Common krait, Rat snakes etc. are seen in the area. No rare/ endangered/ unique species of flora and fauna found in the area.

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

The DFO, Sundargarh Forest Division has reported that the applied area does not form a part of any National Park/ Wildlife Sanctuary/ Biosphere Reserve/ Tiger Reserve/ Elephant Corridor. It was also reported that the proposed site for the project does not come under eco-sensitive zone of any protected area.

**6. Vegetation:**

As reported by the DFO, Sundargarh the canopy density of vegetation over Reserve Forest (176.59 Ha) is 0.4, in Revenue Forest (166.28 Ha) is 0.3 and Eco-value Class-III.

**(a) Total number of trees to be felled.**

As reported by the DFO, Sundargarh Forest Division that tree enumeration both in forest and non-forest land have been taken up by adopting sampling method. Total 95,660 nos. of trees have been extrapolated based on the sample tree enumeration over forest land involved in the project. Similarly, total 79,200 nos. of trees have been extrapolated based on sample tree enumeration over non-forest land involved in the project. The findings of Sample tree enumeration are tabled as below:

Sl. No.	Type of land	Sample Area covered (in Ha)	Sample Tree enumerated (Nos.)
1	Forest land (28 patches)	45	12562
2	Non-forest land (20 patches @ 2 Ha per patch)	40	7241
Total		85	19803

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

As there are large numbers of trees to be felled, it will affect the general ecosystem of the area. Trees should be felled in a phased manner to minimize the adverse impact on the eco-system.

**(b) Important species:**

As reported by DFO, Sundargarh, the tree species available in the applied area is Sal (*Shorea robusta*), Mahul (*Madhuca indica*), Kendu (*Diospyros melanoxylon*), Char (*Buchanania lanzan*), Asan (*Terminalia tomentosa*), Harida (*Terminalia chebula*) etc.

**7. Background note on the proposal:**

As reported, by the Govt. of Odisha Manoharpur and Dip Side of Manoharpur block are contiguous blocks having common boundary. These two coal blocks were allotted by Govt. of India, Ministry of Coal in favour of OPGC. The Supreme Court of India through its judgement dated 25.08.2014 read with its order dated 24.09.2014 (collectively the "Supreme Court Judgement") had cancelled allotment of 204 coal blocks including the Manoharpur and Dipside Manoharpur coal blocks which were allotted to OPGC. Subsequent to the Supreme Court judgement, the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Ordinance, 2014 and Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Second Ordinance, 2014 (collectively the "Ordinance") were promulgated and the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Rules, 2014 were framed for auction and allotment of all blocks which were subject to cancellation pursuant to the Supreme Court judgement. Further, the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 was enacted which replaced the ordinance.

OCPL applied for allotment of Manoharpur and Dip-Side Manoharpur Coal Blocks through Government dispensation route on 27.02.2015 under the Section 5 (1) of the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 and was declared as a successful allottee on 24.03.2015. Thereafter, OCPL signed Allotment Agreement with the Nominated Authority, Ministry of Coal, Govt. of India on 30.03.2015. Amended Allotment Agreement was executed with Nominated Authority, Ministry of Coal, Govt. of India on 31.08.2015 (103/25/2015/NA) followed by the issuance of the Allotment Order on same date, which is being treated as the zero date of allotment.

It is intimated that Manoharpur Coal block was explored and Dip side of Manoharpur Coal Block is regionally explored at the time of allotment. The exploration of Dip side Manoharpur block has been completed and the Integrated Geological Report (IGR) of Manoharpur & Dip side Manoharpur coal blocks has been prepared by Central Mine Planning & Design Institute (CMPDI). The net geological reserve of Manoharpur Coal Block is 252 Million Tonne (MT) and that of Dip side Manoharpur Coal Block is 726 MT.

Forest Clearance (Stage-I & II) for 276.655 Ha (including 76.19 Ha area which is to be treated as forest as per dictionary meaning) of Manoharpur Coal Block has been obtained from MoEF&CC vide letter No.8-63/2011-FC dated 20.08.2014 by the prior allottee (OPGC). Since, this 76.19 Ha of land is Govt. non-forest land, the same has been acquired through OGLS Act, 1962. However, all the requirement of the FC Act & conditions stipulated in Stage-I & II approval has been complied. The Forest Clearance was transferred to OCPL vide letter No.8-63/2011-FC dated 30.11.2015. Further, 86.527 Ha of land falling outside the coal block, which includes 57.078 Ha of forest land were acquired

by OPGC for pit head infrastructure & coal stockyard etc. under the head MGR. The entire non-forest land was transferred in favour of OCPL by IIDCO, Govt. of Odisha and the entire forest land were transferred in favour of OCPL vide MoEF&CC, Regional Office, Bhubaneswar letter No.5-ORA155/2012-BHU dated 17.10.2017.

State Govt. reported that the total forest land diverted and transferred in favour of OCPL thus comes to 257.543 Ha (200.465 Ha + 57.078 Ha). Further, OCPL has already applied 15.701 Ha of left out forest land for Manoharpur Coal Block, the proposal of which has been forwarded from State Govt. to MoEF&CC and in the meantime it has got Stage-I approval also. Forest land is required for Coal mining, external overburden dumping, construction of evacuation facilities & allied infrastructure. During the preparation of mining plan, it was found that the overall stripping ratio is increasing due to increase in depth in Dip side Manoharpur block and thus increasing the amount of overburden. Requirement of external dump area has been increased due to increase in volume of waste material including overburden. Further, the increase in peak rate capacity (PRC) of the project has necessitated the augmentation of evacuation facilities, thus making a change in surface Layout Plan. An online application for diversion of 342.87 Ha for Dip side Manoharpur Coal Mine Project (Expansion of Manoharpur Coal Mine Project) was filed to MoEF&CC on 14.12.2018. However, after approval of Mining Plan & Mine Closure Plan (Rev-III) ON 26.09.2019, the forest land requirement forecast is 345.356 Ha. Further, as per the DGPS Survey and RoR verification, the extent of forest land is estimated to be 342.870 Ha.

#### **8. Compensatory afforestation:**

In lieu of 342.87 Ha of forest land to be diverted, State Govt. has identified 448.952 Ha (Non-forest Govt. land 245.318 Ha + DLC land 93.691 Ha + DLC land 109.933 Ha) in village Bendrichua, Etma, Laxmanapa, Fateimunda, Kesrijima, Kunjanala of Tahasil Hemgiri, Lephripada, Badagaon and Balisankar and in village Bailma, Karuabahal, Khatrubahal, Tunumura, Kandeimunda, Kutra under Tahasil Kutra and Balisankar under Sundargarh Forest Division.

The DFO, Sundargarh has reported that the effective area suitable for plantation is 76.00 Ha out of identified 245.318 ha and 103 Ha DLC land out of identified 109.933 Ha. Accordingly, the DFO, Sundargarh has prepared CA Scheme over 76.00 Ha of non-forest Govt. land and 103 Ha DLC land with provision for AR plantation @ 1000 seedlings per Ha over 76.00 Ha of non-forest Govt. land and 103 Ha DLC land which accommodate only 1,79,000 seedlings. The balance  $(342.87 \text{ Ha} - 4.15 \text{ Ha} = 338.69 \times 1000 \text{ seedlings/Ha} = 3,38,690 \text{ nos.} - 1,79,000 \text{ nos.} = 1,59,690 \text{ or say } 1,60,000)$  1,60,000 seedlings will be accommodated in 160 ha degraded forest land identified for Addl. C.A. in Kondakamberu URL of Malkangiri Forest Division with a provision for AR plantation @ 1000 seedlings per Ha.

The identified CA land is in 20 patches. The proposed C.A. land at Bendrichua village was visited on 27.10.2022 along with DFO, Sundargarh and representative of OCPL. The patch is dense forest. The DFO present during inspection said that plantation will be done in degraded forest land.

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

The site suitability certificate for raising CA over non-forest Govt. land & DLC land and Addl. CA land have been furnished by DFO, Sundargarh and DFO, Malkangiri

The compensatory afforestation site is found to be suitable for plantation.

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

The Tahsildars of Hemgiri, Lephripada, Badagaon, Balinsankar and Kutra have certified that non-forest Govt. land and DLC land are free from encroachment and encumbrances.

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

It has been reported that the land for CA is not important from Religious/Archaeological point of view.

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

The identified 448.952 Ha (Non-forest Govt. land 245.318 Ha + DLC land 93.691 Ha + DLC land 109.933 Ha) in village Bendrichua, Etma, Laxmanapa, Fateimunda, Kesrijima, Kunjanala of Tahasil Hemgiri, Lephripada, Badagaon and Balisankar and in village Bailma, Karuabahal, Khatrubahal, Tunumura, Kandeimunda, Kutra under Tahasil Kutra and Balisankar under Sundargarh Forest Division is 20 nos. of patches.

**(e) Map with details:**

The DGPS map and SoI Toposheet indicating location of identified non-forest Govt. land & DLC land and degraded forest land for C.A. has been submitted by the State Govt.

**(f) Total financial outlay:**

The PCCF (Nodal), Odisha has technically approved the C.A. Scheme over 448.942 ha non-forest Govt. land and DLC land for financial outlay of Rs.34,84,54,600/- and Addl. C.A. Scheme over 160 Ha degraded forest land for financial outlay of Rs.9,62,04,700/- as per approved onetime cost norms with 10 years maintenance.

**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, Sundargarh, no violation has been committed by the user agency under Forest (Conservation) Act 1980.

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

Yes. The State Govt. has reported that the project involves displacement of 190 families (127 nos. in kathaphala and 63 nos. in village Paramanandapur) out of which 127 Scheduled Tribes, 04 Scheduled Castes and 59 other category of families. The DFO, Sundargarh has reported that the socio-economic survey for preparation and finalization of R&R Plan for the project displaced families/project affected families is under progress. The user agency has furnished an undertaking to submit the approved R&R Plan prior to final approval of the diversion of 342.87 ha of forest land.

**11. Reclamation plan:**

The State Govt. has reported that the Mining Plan including Mine Closure Plan has been approved by the Ministry of Coal, Govt. of India vide letter No.34011/15/2018-CPAM dated 26.09.2019. Subsequently one corrigendum has been made vide letter No.34011/15/2018-CPAM dated 01.10.2019, further following change made in Part-I that Mining Plan Revision-2 to Mining Plan Revision-3 being mentioned as Mining Plan (Revision-3) for Manoharpur and Manoharpur Dip side Coal Block in IB valley of Sundargarh District of OCPL. The period of Mining Lease is for 30 years. The Mining operation has started as per the Mining Plan (Rev-III) ON 01.11.2018 and the life of the mine is estimated as 44 years @ 16 MTPA production.

As per the submitted Mining Plan, the biological reclamation of mine out land is proposed to commence from 3<sup>rd</sup> year of mining operation.

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

During site inspection it was found that two nala named Garia nalla and Lapani nalla flows in the proposed site. The representative from OCPL present during inspection said that they have got approval for diversion of the nala.

It is very important to stabilize the banks to avoid siltation and flood. At the same time it is essential to ensure that no discharge from the mining site enters to the natural nala.

**13. Cost benefit ratio:**

As reported, the estimated cost and benefit of forest diversion is calculated as per guidelines of MoEF&CC, comes to as Rs.20797.61 Crore and Rs.4606954.60 Crore respectively. The C-B Ratio is 1 : 221.514.

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

The forest area proposed for diversion has been duly recommended by PCCF.

**15. Utility of the project:**

As reported by the user agency, the project will generate permanent employment to 205 persons and temporary employment of 500 persons.

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

Not reported.



**16.**

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

Not reported.

**(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:**

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

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

During site inspection, DFO, Sundargarh and project proponent have said that the nearest protected area is Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary, which is about 29 Kms from the project site.

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

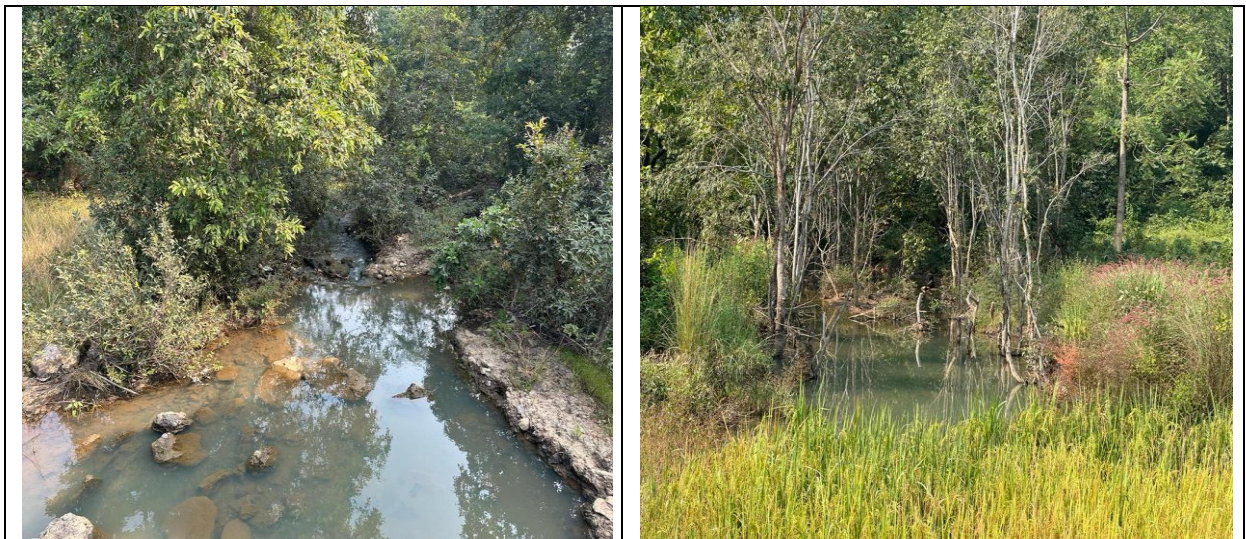


**Proposed site for diversion**





**Proposed OB Dump Site**



**Nala (Garia and Lapani)**



**Proposed CA Site**



**19. Recommendations of Dy. Director General of Forests (Central) along with detailed reasons:**

1. The instant proposal is for diversion of 342.87 Ha of forest land comprising of 176.59 Ha of Reserved Forest land and 166.28 ha of Revenue Forest land. The total project area is 780.44 Ha. During mining plan approval for Dip side Manoharpur Coal Block, the Technical Committee of the Ministry of Coal directed OCPL on 27.08.2018 to integrate both the coal block into one mine. Accordingly, the Mining Plan (Revision-III) with 16 MTPA PRC has been prepared by CMPDIL integrating both the coal blocks into one mine which was approved by the Ministry of Coal, Govt. of India on 26.09.2019
2. The proposed site does not come under any Protected Area or within the Eco-Sensitive Zone. The nearest P.A. is Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary, which is about 29 kms from the project To mitigate the impact of mining on wild animals, Wildlife Conservation Plan has been approved by the PCCF (WL) & CWLW, Odisha with financial forecast of Rs.847.307 Lakh.
3. This proposal will involve rehabilitation and resettlement of families. The user agency shall submit approved Rehabilitation & Resettlement Plan prior to final approval of the proposed forest land.
4. The number of trees to be felled is large. To minimize the adverse ecological impact, trees should be felled in a phased manner and when become absolutely necessary. During discussion the project authorities said that the mining operation will start in the Kanhupahad RF (10.52 Ha) block after 12<sup>th</sup> year of commencement of mining operation and mining in the Hunadarkhola RF block comprising an area of 166.06 Ha will commence after 25<sup>th</sup> years of mining operation.

Accordingly, for the protection and development of the above forest land a management plan should be prepared involving forest department and should be implemented at the project cost.

5. Garia Nalla is flowing in south eastern side boundary of lease is being diverted. The nalla shall be diverted in consultation with the Water Resource Department of the State Govt. Lapani nala will also be affected. The project authorities said that they have obtained permission for diversion of Garia and Lapani Nala.
6. Since, there is diversion of two nalas, so the State Govt. shall carry out study on impact of mining on hydrology, modification of natural drainage, diversion and channelling of the existing rivers/water courses flowing through the ML and adjoining the lease/project and impact on the existing users and impacts of mining operation on thereon.
7. The user agency shall carry out mitigate measure on impact of mining and water abstraction and mine water discharge in mine on the hydrogeology and ground water regime within the core zone and 10 Km buffer zone including long term modelling studies on the impact of mining on the ground water regime. Details of rain water harvesting and measures for recharge of ground water should be done. No mine water should be discharged to natural water course outside the lease area.

8. There are many water bodies (mostly village ponds) likely to be affected. So, soil and moisture conservation with special emphasis on creating water harvesting structure may be created in and around 10 Km of forest area of the lease boundary.
9. The user agency has identified 448.942 Ha of land (Non-forest Govt. land 245.318 Ha and DLC land of 203.624 Ha) for raising Compensatory Afforestation in lieu of diversion of 342.87 Ha of forest land.
10. The forest land proposed for dumping is 51.64 Ha, which appears large. In reply, the project proponent stated that for this a study has been done by CMPDI. CMPDI has reported that out of total overburden of 1747.71 Mcum, 1579.49 Mcum of overburden can be dumped internally and the remaining overburden of 167.92 Mcum, which is 9.6% of the total overburden is required to be dumped externally in the coal mine within mine lease area which also non-coal bearing. There are no other space available for external dumping as both the blocks are surrounded by the other coal blocks in all it's remaining three side. Considering the technical and safety point of view, the forest patches is minimum requirement. Thus, total exclusion of the forest land in OB dump is unavoidable considering the site condition and bare minimum use of forest land has been planned.
11. Total 3,39,000 nos. of seedlings has been proposed for plantation in both the C.A. Schemes against diversion of 342.87 Ha of forest land. However, as per Ministry's guideline letter No.FC-11/151/2022-FC dated 25.09.2023 provision of the raising CA will be applicable in lieu of forest land located in the safety zone. Thus, for 342.87 of forest land proposed for diversion, total 3,42,870 nos. of seedlings will be required to planted against the instant project. So, additional land should be identified by the State Govt. to accommodate the balance 3,870 nos. (3,42,870 nos. – 3,39,000 nos.) of seedlings.
12. Planting of 10 times of trees to be felled from the non-forest land may be done by the user agency.

Mining of coal is a site specific activity. In view of the above, the proposal is recommended with standard general conditions and observation made during site inspection.

  
**(A.T. MISHRA)**  
**DDGF (CENTRAL)**