

File No.: 8-07/2024-FC
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(Forest Conservation Division)

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj
New Delhi - 110003.
Dated:07-11-2024

To

The Addl. Chief Secretary (Forests),
Government of Odisha,
Bhubaneswar

Sub: 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 134.69 ha of forest land for expansion of Kulda Open Cast Coal Mining Project of Basundhara Area of Mahanandi Coalfields Limited in Sundargarh District under Sundargarh Forest Division (Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/50293/2020)

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the PCCF (Forest Diversion and Nodal Officer, FC Act). vide letter No. dated 20827/9F (MG)-49/2023 dated 18.10.2024 for submitted the additional information on the proposal mentioned in above subject seeking prior approval of the Central Government in accordance with Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and to say that after examination of the proposal the following shortcoming has been observed in the instant proposal:

- i. As per the proposal the lease area is mentioned as 921.35 ha however, as per DSS analysis the area of Kulda OCP lease (including additional area) is found 831.885 ha. The state shall examine and submit the correct area details and correct KML file of the lease area is required to be submitted.
- ii. After the examination of the reply of point (iii) (a) of the Ministry's observation dated 11.06.2024 it has been observed that the Ministry has accorded earlier approval vide letter dated 08.08.2007 for diversion of 227.86 ha. (as against initially proposed 280.86 ha) for Kulda OCP. Later the Ministry has accorded 29.41 ha of forest land (20.89 ha fresh area and 8.52 ha of land for re-diversion out of already diverted forest area of 227.89 ha for Kulda OCP of MCL) for construction of Basundhara Coal Washery (10 MTY). In this regard as per the record available with the Ministry, the total forest area of Kudla OCP will be $(227.89 - 8.52 = 219.37 + 134.69$ ha for current proposal and $20.89\text{ha} + 8.52$ ha for washery) which comes out to be 383.47. However, the State Govt. has informed that the total forest area is 354.06 ha. This needs clarification.

- iii. Further, the details of 20.89 ha has not been provided by the State Govt. The KML file of 20.89 and 8.52 ha and CA area against the said proposal is also required to be submitted.
- iv. Further, a report on the compliance of the conditions stipulated in all the past approvals is required to be submitted after verification from RO.
- v. After the analysis of the KML file of the proposed forest land it has been observed that habitation, cultivation land, mined out area and road is visible in the proposed revenue forest patches. In this regard the comments of the State Government shall be provided along with action report as applicable.
- vi. KML file of earlier diverted 227.89 ha forest land and safety zone is required to be submitted.
- vii. Revenue Forest patch nos. 2264, 2235, 2233, 2217 and 2188 are falling outside the lease boundary and their total area is found 1.671 ha. This needs clarification and corrective action is to be taken accordingly.
- viii. As per the analysis on DSS, the area proposed for CA namely Patch 2 (56.5 ha) and Patch 3 (131.545 ha) is having density more than 0.4. Out of 56.5 ha area, 51.0 ha in Patch 2 and out of 131.545 ha, 65.0 ha area in patch 3 (total 116 ha) is found as MDF. Therefore the revised CA area is required to be submitted with all requisite details for plantations.
- ix. After the analysis of the KML file of the proposed CA land it has been observed that road is passing through patch no. 3 & 4. Further, encroachment in the form of cultivation land, habitation, man-made water body is visible in patch no.1 and plantation in patch no.3 (during year 2022). In this regard the comments of the State Government shall be provided (**DSS report is enclosed for reference**).

In view of above, the State Government is requested to furnish information, as indicated above, for further consideration of the proposal in the Ministry.

Yours faithfully,

Encl: As above

Sd/-
(Suneet Bhardwaj)
Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:

1. PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forests, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar.
2. Dy. DGF (Central), Regional Office of the MoEF&CC at Bhubaneswar **with a request to provide the monitoring report of the conditions stipulated in the past approvals wrt Kulda OCP.**
3. Nodal Officer (FCA), Department of Forests, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar.
4. User Agency
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi for uploading on PARIVESH portal.