

Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
(Forest Conservation Division)

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi – 1100 03.

Dated: 30th January, 2021

To,

The Additional Secretary (Forests),
Government of Uttarakhand,
Dehradun.

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for non-forestry use of 87.0815 ha of forest land for "Expansion of the Jolly Grant Airport" under Forest Division and District Dehradun of the State of Uttarakhand. (Online Proposal No. FP/UK/others 44884/2020) – reg.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Government of Uttarakhand's letter no. 1734/FP/UK/Others/44884/2020 dated 26.12.2020 on the above subject forwarding additional information as sought by the Ministry vide its letter of even number dated 09.10.2020 and to inform that on the examination of the said information it has been found that issues raised by the Central Government in its letter dated 09.10.2020 have not been addressed completely by the State, it is therefore desired that information on the following may be provided by the state:

- i. Reply of the State Government is silent on fragmentation of the riverside forests. Comments provided the State Government on 47 ha of MDF land involved in the project does not seem convincing for want of detail of alternatives sites studied/discarded thereby establishing inescapability of 47 ha of MDF land for the intended purpose. Moreover, reply of the State is largely limited to the proposed forest area only, holistic ecological value of the area vis-à-vis impact of the proposed project has not been commented upon by the State as envisaged in point no. (i) of the letter dated 9.10.2020.
- ii. On the examination of the old proposal KML file and newly proposed area it has been found there is some area/gap in-between the boundaries of already diverted forest land and currently proposed forest land for expansion of the airport. The area has been analysed with the help of high-resolution time series satellite images of Google Earth and it is observed that non-forestry activities have been done in-between gap area of the two boundaries and along the periphery of already diverted forest land. As per the Recorded Forest Area (RFA) boundary for the State of Uttarakhand available on DSS application, it is found that the gap available between the two boundaries is also part of notified forest land. The State Government is silent on the violation of FC, Act, 1980. The State Government may provide the full details of Violation Report and action taken on the willful violation.
- iii. Examination of the compliance of approval dated 17.02.2003 revealed that in respect of condition no 12 of the approval regarding rehabilitation of the

project affected families, it is reported that it will be complied with imply that condition is yet to be complied with. It is therefore, desirable that the State Government may intimate the status of rehabilitation of PAPs, if any, to the Ministry along with the justification for non-compliance of the same.

- iv. In compliance to condition no 2 of the approval dated 17.02.2003, the State Government has reported that CA has been raised over 140 ha of degraded forest land. However, present status of the plantation viz. its survival percentage, expenditure incurred as per CA scheme, etc. have not been intimated. The same needs to be intimated along with KML/Shape files of the CA land.
 - v. Results of DSS analysis revealed that CA site namely Nahi-0, involving 10 ha of degraded forest land for CA, has forest falling in VDF category which may not be suitable for CA. Therefore, the State Government may re-confirm the suitability of the sites and if needed alternate CA site may be identified for raising CA along with site suitability certificate.
 - vi. Certificate issued by the Chief Secretary with regard to the non-availability of non-forest land is in contravention to the provisions provided in the relevant guidelines issued under the FC Act as the certificate is issued in respect of Dehradun District only while as per guidelines, the Chief Secretary is suppose of issue such certificate only after getting the revenue records assessed for the entire state for the non availability of non-forest land. Certificate as per the format prescribed may be submitted failing which proposal of CA may accordingly be changed, in case non-forest land/revenue forest land is available in the State.
2. Recently, Hon'ble High Court of Uttarakhand has made crucial observation in respect of wildlife values of the area. The State Government may, therefore, re-visit the proposal in light of observations contained in the Hon'ble High Court of Uttarakhand at Nainital order dated **11.01.2021**, specially with reference to issues pertaining to the conservation and protection of wildlife and fragmentation of the forest area serving as connecting link for intermittent or stray movement for charismatic wildlife species of the State.

In view of the above, I am directed to request the State Government to submit information on the above to the Ministry for further necessary action in the matter.

Yours Sincerely,
Sd/-
(Charan Jeet Singh)
Scientist 'D'

Copy to:

1. PCCF (HoFF), Government of Uttarakhand, Dehradun.
2. Regional Officer, Integrated regional Office of MoEF&CC at Dehradun.
3. The APCCF cum Nodal Officer (FCA) Government of Uttarakhand, Dehradun.
4. User Agency.
5. Monitoring Cell.