

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Aliganj, Jor Bag Road,
New Delhi - 110003.

Dated: 28th December, 2022

To

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

Sub: Proposal for non-forestry use of 194.683 ha of forest land in favour of M/s Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) involved in total mining lease area of 358.258 ha of Guali Opencast Iron Ore Mines located in District Keonjhar (Odisha) - reg.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the State Government's letter no. FE-DIV-FLD-0034-2022-8065/FE&CC dated 30.04.2022, seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and letter no. 21921/9F (MG)-65/2021 dated 29.10.2022 forwarding therewith additional information sought by Ministry vide letter dated 08.06.2022. The proposal was examined by the Forest Advisory Committee in its meeting held on 09.12.2022. The Minutes of the FAC meeting may be accessed at www.parivesh.nic.in. The FAC after detailed discussion and deliberation, desired the following information from the State:

- i. As per the detail provided in the Mining Plan, the forest area has been indicated as 229 ha; the same should be rectified to match to the forest area estimated as per DGPS survey. Accordingly, land use of various components proposed in the forest as well as non-forest land may be intimated by the State.
- ii. Revised Cost Benefit Analysis i.e. 1:1130.46 is still exorbitantly high. The same needs to be revisited to make it more realistic.
- iii. A Site Specific Wildlife Management Plan has been reported to be already in place; the status of progress of its implementation needs to be informed by the State.
- iv. Details of notification of non-forest land identified for raising CA, in lieu of diversion of forest and accorded in the past, as RF/PF under the IFA or local Act may be informed by the State.
- v. The State Government in its letter dated 29.10.2022 mentioned that process for transfer of approval from M/s R.P. Sao (erstwhile agency) to M/s OMC Ltd., in respect of 42.417 ha and 95 ha of forest land approved in the past, is still under consideration in the State. Therefore, on 12.01.2021 the date of execution of lease, no

approval under the FC Act, 1980 was available in favour of M/s OMC. A justification for executing the lease in favour M/s OMC without formal FC approval in their favour needs to be furnished by the State.

- vi. The Committee also desired that issues related to rationalization of project components specially with regards to OB dump and progress made in the implementation of provisions of the Site Specific Wildlife Management Plan prepared in 2009 and its updates proposed in the extant proposal, justification for assignment of lease without prior approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, etc. will be examined by the Integrated Regional Office of the Ministry at Bhubaneswar and Nodal Officer (FCA), Odisha and a report on the same will be submitted along for the consideration of the Committee.

2. The Committee also desired that recommendation made by the Committee in the case of Netrabandha Pahar Iron Ore Block allotted to M/s Bhusan Power and Steel Limited (As per agenda items no. 3 in the minutes of meeting of FAC dated 09.12.2022), after examination of the report of the team of officers of the MoEF&CC and Wildlife Institute of India on the elephants habitat, there movement and mitigation measures, shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the extant case.

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

Encl: As above.

Yours faithfully,

sd/-
(Charan Jeet Singh)
Scientist 'D'

Copy to:-

1. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar
2. Regional Officer (Central), Integrated Regional Office of the MoEF&CC at Bhubaneswar
3. Nodal Officer (FCA), Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar
4. User Agency
5. Monitoring Cell of FC Divisions, MoEF&CC, New Delhi
6. Guard file.