

Government of Maharashtra

By Speed Post

No. FLD-2022/C.R.272/F-10
Revenue and Forest Department,
Mantralaya, Mumbai- 400 032.
Date: 03.03.2023

To,

✓ The Secretary,
Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change,
Government of India,
New Delhi.

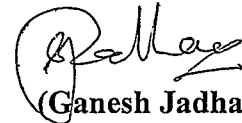
Sub.:- Forest Land-Chandrapur

Diversion of 63.540 ha. Forest land under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for development of Green Field Airport at village Vihirgaon and Murti, Taluka.Rajura of District Chandrapur in the State of Maharashtra. (FP/MH/Road/25848/2017).

- Ref:** 1. Your Office Letter No. 8-29/2022/FC, Dt.26.12.2022
2. APCCF & Nodal Officer Letter No. Desk-17/Nodal/Chandrapur/ID-12781/3293/22-23, Dt.02.03.2023

Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India has sought additional information with respect to proposal for diversion of 63.540 ha. Forest land under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for development of Green Field Airport at village Vihirgaon and Murti, Taluka Rajura of District Chandrapur vide letter under reference No.1.

2. The Compliance Report of the Government of Maharashtra, in this regard is being attached herewith as enclosure. It is requested that the compliance note may kindly be taken into consideration and accordingly the proposal for diversion of 63.54 ha. may be approved at the earliest possible.



(Ganesh Jadhao)

Under Secretary to
the Government of Maharashtra

Under Secretary
Revenue and Forests Department
Hutatma Rajguru Chowk
Madam Cama Road, Mantralaya
Mumbai 400 032

Encl: As above.

Copy to:

1. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), Maharashtra State, Nagpur.
2. Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Nodal Officer, Nagpur.
3. Chief Conservator of Forests (T), Chandrapur.



महाराष्ट्र शासन

Office of The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest, (HoFF) Maharashtra State,
Ramgiri Road, Civil Lines, Nagpur 440 001.

The Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests And Nodal Officer, Maharashtra State,
Ramgiri Road, Civil Lines, Nagpur 440 001.

0712-2556916

Email: apcstnodal@mahaforest.gov.in

Speed Post/Email

No. Desk-17 Nodal/Chandrapur LD 12781/3293/22-23
Nagpur 440 001 Dated 02/03/2023.

To,
The Principal Secretary (Forests),
Revenue and Forests Department,
Mantralaya Mumbai-32.

Sub: Proposal for diversion of 75.24 ha. (Revised Area 63.540) Reserved / Protected Forest land under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for development of Green Field Airport at village Vihirgaon and Murti, Taluka.Rajura of District Chandrapur in the State of Maharashtra. (FP/MH/Road/42471/2019).

Ref: 1. Govt. of India letter no. F.No.8-29/2022-FC, dtd.26th December 2022.
2. Maharashtra Airport Development Company Ltd. Letter dtd.28.02.2023.

Govt. of India vide letter under reference 1 had raised 3 queries on the proposal mentioned under subject above. They are as follows:

1. The State Government shall examine the financial viability of the project and submit a detailed analysis / report in this regard.
2. The construction of Greenfield airport is a non-site specific activity and the proposed site is surrounded by Non-forest land. The State Government shall therefore explore other options of using non-forest land instead of using Forest land for the project. The State shall also explore the possibility of expanding the already existing Chandrapur (Morwa) Airport. In this regard the State Govt. shall provide a detailed presentation along with DGCA and MADDC before the FAC.
3. Keeping in view the ecological importance of the area, the Ministry shall seek detailed comments from WII, Dehradun and NTCA on the instant proposal for the construction of Greenfield airport.

The User Agency has submitted point wise reply to Deputy Conservator of Forests (I) Central Chanda vide letter under reference 2 regarding the queries raised by Govt. of India Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change :

The user agency has already submitted the proposal for 75.24 Ha earlier but as per WII Dehradun, recommendations to reduced 200 m area from Varaspindi Nala to reduced runway and safety

area (RESA) in northern side. The Total reduced area is 11.70 Ha and the revised area for the proposed Greenfield Airport is 63.54 Ha.

After resubmission of the proposal with corrected area (reduced area), Forest Department, Government of Maharashtra recommended the proposal to the Secretary, MOEF, Government of India for stage clearance. The MoEFCC, New Delhi office raised 3 queries through letter no. F.No.8-29-2022-FC, dated 26/12/2022.

Compliance of the queries is submitted as follows:

Information submitted below is already part of the MADC Tender Document and Pre-feasibility report by the Airport Authority of India (Site Visit Dated : 03/01/2018), enclosing the related documents.

1) *The State Government shall examine the financial viability of the project and submit a detailed report in this regard.*

➤ *ABOUT THE DISTRICT ECONOMY, INDUSTRY & TOURISM POTENTIAL :*

ECONOMY : Agriculture and Industries are the largest parts of the state's economy. Major industries include chemical products, electrical and non- electrical machinery, textiles. Petroleum and allied products.

INDUSTRY: The region is very rich in mineral wealth such as coal and limestone. The city is also known as Black Gold city. Many cement factories are also located in this region. About 6000 small, medium and large-scale industries are located at Chandrapur district. Chandrapur has large deposits of coal and lime stone. The mammoth coal mines around the city also contribute to the heavy industrialization of the city. Western Coalfields Limited (WCL), a subsidiary of Coal India, has many mines here. Chandrapur Super Thermal Power Station by Maharashtra State Power Generation Company Limited is its biggest pithead thermal power station. The city houses various cement factories in its vicinity. They are Manikgarh Cement, a division of Century Textile and Industries, part of the BK Birla group of companies, Ultra Tech Cement (formerly L&T Cement), a division of Grasim Industries, part of the Aditya Birla Group; Chandrapur Cement Works, a division of Associated Cement Companies, part of Holcim Group; and Maratha Cement Works, part of Ambuja Cements Limited. The district also boasts of having Ballarpur Industries Limited, the largest manufacturer and exporter of paper in India. Other major industries include a Chandrapur ferro alloy plant (formerly Maharashtra Elektrosmet Ltd), a ferro-manganese plant, and a silico-manganese plant of Steel Authority of India Limited. Chandrapur's ferro alloy plant is the largest manganese-based ferro alloy producer in the country.

TOURISM POTENTIAL:

There are many places located around. One of the most famous tourist attractions located in the district is the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve. The city of Chandrapur has ancient temples of the goddess Mahakali and of Anchaleshwar, a form of the god Shiva. The Following are some famous places in Chandrapur.

- a) Anandvan Ashram, Warora*
- b) Ballapur Fort*
- c) Bhadravati Jain Temple*
- d) Chandrapur Fort*
- e) Ghora Jhuri Lake*
- f) Junona Lake*

- g) Mahakali Mandir
- h) Manikgarh Fort
- i) Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve
- j) Vijusan Hills

NEAREST RAIL, ROAD & AIR TRANSPORT CENTERS AS PER TABLE MENTIONED BELOW :

Name & Distance of the proposed site to Nearest city centre	Nearest Railw station	Name of Operational Airport and Approx. aerial distance
40 km south of Chandrapur Town	Chandrapur Railway Station	Nagpur Airport - 86 Nautical Miles (NM) (159.272 KM) Amravati Airport- 117 NM (216.684 KM) Gondia Airport- 118 NM (218.536 KM) Raipur Airport- 154 NM (285.208 KM)

2) The construction of Greenfield Airport is a non-site specific activity and the proposed site is surrounded by non-forest land. The State Government shall therefore explore other options of using non-forest land instead of using forest land for the project. The State shall explore the possibility of expanding the already existing Chandrapur (Morwa) Airport. In this regard, the State Govt. shall provide a detailed presentation along with DGCA and MADC before the FAC.

- Existing Morwa Airport is 39 km away from the proposed Murti Airport, however the scope of extension / development of Morwa Airport is limited due to the following facts.
 - a. All sides of (Morwa) Airport are connected to the boundaries of residential and industrial areas.
 - b. Heighted chimneys of Dhariwal Power plant.
 - c. No Government land is available for expansion.
 - d. The nearest area is covered with high tension power lines connected from Chandrapur super thermal power centre.
 - e. Only chartered flights / small aircraft of limited capacity over can be handled at this airport. The new proposed Greenfield Airport will facilitate movement of chartered flights & cargo flights.

Thus, to cater to the future needs of air transportation, Greenfield Airport is proposed near Rajura town. Before selecting the site, following alternate locations were surveyed and studied by MADC but except Murti other sites are not suitable for an airport.

A. Village - Mouza Sushi Daabgaon and Kelzar, Taluka - Mul, District - Chandrapur - Site visit date - 30/09/2013.

MADC team surveyed the site on 30/09/2013 and total land 388.62 ha was proposed for Greenfield Airport but the land of Kelzar, as per revenue records, belongs to the Samudayak Society & Ambedkar Society and Sushi Daabgaon land belongs to the forest department and also has nuisance of Naxalities. The forest area required in this site was more than 100 ha.

B. Village - Visapur, Taluka - Ballarpur, District - Chandrapur - Site visit date - 18/07/2009.

Surrounded by the chimney of Ballarsha paper mill, Telephone antennas, High tension electric towers, difference in level with surrounding area, obstructions in approach & inner horizontal surface. Most of the area is reserved and protected forest.

C. Village - Kothari, Palasgaon, Amodi, Taluka - Ballarpur, District - Chandrapur - Site visit date - 18/07/2009.

Surrounded by Antena (Telecom etc), Low elevation causes floods due to the nearby Nullah & River, major state road passes through the area, approach on the Eastern side has obstruction, hills on the outer horizontal surface. The forest area in this site was quite high.

D. Village - Vihirgaon/Murti, Taluka - Rajura, District - Chandrapur - Site visit date - 10/06/2017.

After being surveyed by the MADC team, no major obstacles like high tension line chimneys, Hills, where not found nearby area, also Government Revenue land was easily available for handover and minimum forest land was required in this alternative, as compared to other three options. Due to this reasons, this site was finalized for the Greenfield Airport project by MADC.

3) Keeping in view the ecological importance of the area, the Ministry shall seek detailed comments from WII, Dehradun and NTCA on the instant proposal for the construction of greenfield Airport.

- > Already received a detailed report of Wildlife study regarding Greenfield Airport Chandrapur from WII report letter No: WII/AE&CB/BII/MADC/2019/01/2020/01, Dated 19th March 2020 for earlier considered area (75.24 Ha). Report attached for your reference only. Re-submitting revised proposal as per WII Dehradun, Mitigation Measures. To reduced 200 m area from Varaspindi Nala to reduced runway and safety area (RESA) in northern side. The Total reduced area is 11.70 Ha and the corrected area for the proposed Greenfield Airport is 63.54 Ha.


The following benefits and developments possible because of this project.

- i. Employment generated consequent to the activities in the Greenfield Airport Project will benefit around 600 people.
- ii. The project will have tremendous boost to the local and the regional economy benefiting population over 2 lakhs.
- iii. Ample commercial opportunities will become available for economic development in the Chandrapur District through ancillary services and cottage industries.
- iv. The State Govt. will directly benefited the revenue on account of Greenfield Airport Project.
- v. Unlike the financial benefits, the social benefit arising out of this proposal can be expressed only as value judgment. This includes increases in the standard of living local population, educational opportunities, training and development of skills etc.
- vi. The project will provide wide opportunities for increase interaction in one side world and will draw the local population out of their shell and encourage them to join the national mainstream.
- vii. This will also help medical emergencies in the Naxalite area of Gadchiroli District.
- viii. The most important benefit from Greenfield Airport will be the creating of an industrial channel that will defuse the potentially grave social problems that the district faces in the form of illiteracy which thrives on ignorance, poverty and isolation of the local people.

- ix. *In India, DGCA is the regulatory Authority for Civil Aviation. As per norms, minimum distance between two nearby Airports should be minimum 150 kms. The distance between Nagpur Airport and the proposed Greenfield Airport is 180+ kms. Also, proposed airport falls in the under developed part of the Vidarbha Region. Nagpur Airport caters to Central India and its probably the busiest airport in Central India. The proposed Greenfield Airport will ease the pressure of air traffic on Nagpur Airport and also provide an alternate option for travellers.*
- x. *Chandrapur District already has established Defence Industry, and some related product manufacturing industries since 1970. With access to airport facilities, these industries and other sectors will have huge scope for development. It will also help the "Make In India" movement, as Government is supporting every sector with Flexible Policies as part of Make In India movement.*
- xi. *Various Industries like Chandrapur Thermal Power Station, Electrolux, Ballarpur Paper Mill, Western Coalfields Ltd. are located in and Around Chandrapur. This Airport will facilitate movement of manpower and resources.*
- xii. *This Airport will also help boost up the tourist and passenger movement to TADoba and ANDHARI TIGER RESERVE. Which will directly help elevating the economic condition of this backward area.*
- xiii. *Chandrapur/Gadchiroli and some parts of Telangana are affected by Naxalite Activities. Having Airport access will help take immediate and just action against the Naxalites, whenever needed.*
- xiv. *It will also boost the Sainik School established and managed by the Sainik Schools Society under the Ministry of Defence.*

This office with the point wise detailed reply submitted by the User Agency and it is requested that the same may please be forwarded to Govt. of India for in-principle approval of the proposal.

Encl: as above

 2/3/23

(Naresh Zurmure)
Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Nodal Officer
Maharashtra State, Nagpur

Copy forwarded to Maharashtra Airport Development Company Ltd. Central Facility Building, B-Wing(North), 1st floor, MIDHAN SEZ, Khapri (Rly), Nagpur 441 108 along with the copy of letter under reference for further necessary action.