

I/8991/2022

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

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

Dated: 22nd June, 2022

To

The Principal Secretary (Forest),
Government of Jharkhand,
Ranchi.

Sub: Proposal for non-forestry use of 1,006.17 ha, comprising of 633.19 ha and 372.98 ha of forest land for Kotre, Basantpur Open Cast Mining Project in favour of M/s Central Coalfields Limited in Ramgarh and Bokaro district of Jharkhand.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the State Government of Jharkhand's letter No. Van Bhumi-07/2022-1457/V.P. dated 24.05.2022 and letter No. Van Bhumi-06/2022-1521/V.P. dated 31.05.2022 on above mentioned subject, seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and to say that after examination of the proposal revealed the following:

- i. Proposal has been submitted into two parts for two separate districts, while as per guidelines given under the chapter 7 of the Handbook proposal for a mining lease should be submitted in its entirety. Rationale for submitting isolated proposals for a single project needs to be informed by the State.
- ii. Analysis of the CA area using DSS analysis revealed the following:
 - a. CA has been proposed in 157 patches, 75 patches have area smaller than 5 ha (as small as 0.21 ha). Further, in 22 villages either cultivation, settlement, plantation, etc are visible (list enclosed).
 - b. Further, out of total area proposed for CA, 3 ha is classified as Very Dense Forest and 26 ha as Moderately Dense Forest as per DSS while no such areas are visible on the Google Imagery.
 - c. The State Government may therefore confirm the suitability of such area for raising afforestation and their contiguity with the existing RF/PF.
 - d. Ministry vide its letter dated 17.10.2019 has conveyed its 'in-principle approval to accept the mined out and reclaimed non-forest lands available with the CIL subsidiaries. The Ministry of Coal vide their letter dated 20.01.2022 informed the availability of 300.75 ha of non-forest land, biologically reclaimed, available with the M/s CCL. The State Government may therefore assess the suitability of such non-forest land to include the same in the CA proposal.
- iii. Detail of degraded forest identified in lieu of 1.5 times the area of safety zone of the mining leases for raising afforestation has not been submitted along with

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the proposal. Same needs to be submitted along with complete detail of supporting attributes such as afforestation scheme, suitability certificate, KML files, etc.

- iv. As the area has schedule-I and schedule-II species comments of PPCCF (Wildlife) and CWLW Jharkhand on the likely impact of the project on the movement of wildlife in general and elephant in particular needs to be furnished by the State.
- v. From the purpose wise breakup of forest land, the following may be ascertained:
 - a. An area of 26.96 ha of forest land, comprising of 14.95 ha in Ramgarh Forest Division and 12.01 ha in Bokaro Forest Division, has been proposed for infrastructure while only 0.88 ha only has been proposed in non-forest land. The State Government may therefore assess the legitimacy of site-specificity of various infrastructural components and possibility to shift non-site specific components to the non-forest land.
 - b. A total forest land of 134.47 ha of forest land, comprising of 68.86 ha in Ramgarh Forest Division and 65.61 ha in Bokaro Forest Division, has been proposed for Green belt which is in addition to 10.58 ha of forest land earmarked for safety zone. Rationalise for including green belt area in the project which could other wise be excluded from the project and be managed by the Forest Department. Considered view of the State Government in this regard needs to be furnished.
 - c. No area has been earmarked for the storage of top soil.
- vi. Separate cost benefit ratio have been estimated for 633.19 ha and 372.98 ha of forest land indicating the cost benefit ratio of 19.31 and 1:26.73 , respectively for a single project. Consolidated CB ratio for the entire forest land of 1006.17 involved in the project needs to be submitted by the State.
- vii. Nearest Railway Station Dania has been reported to be located at a distance of 4 km from the proposed area for diversion. Detail of evacuation of Plan from the mine head to nearest railway sidings may be informed by the State.
- viii. Diversion of nalla has been proposed in the proposal. However, proposed course for diversion, conspicuously depicted on a map (KML file) has not been submitted, the same needs to be submitted. Further, comments of the Department of Water Resources on the efficacy of proposed diversion of nallah by the user agency needs to be informed by the State.
- ix. Forest area has been identified for OB. Non-forest area can also be used for OB. In this context, justification may be given for particularly including 44 ha (as ascertained from KML file) of very dense forest as forest site-specific requirement for dumping OB.

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

(Charan Jeet Singh)
Scientist 'D'

Copy to:

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1. The Principal Chief Conservator Forests, Government of Jharkhand, Ranchi
2. The Regional Officer (Central), Integrated Regional Office, Ranchi.
3. The Nodal Officer, O/o the PCCF, Government of Jharkhand, Ranchi
4. User Agency
5. Monitoring Cell of FC Division, MoEF&CC
6. Guard file