

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

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

Dated: 7th July, 2022

To

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

Sub: Proposal for non-forestry use of 331.198 ha of forest land in favour of M/s NPTC Limited for Pakribarwadih (North West) Opencast Coal Mining Project in West Forest Division, District Hazaribagh (Jharkhand) – reg.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the State Government of Jharkhand's letter No. Van Bhumi-10/2021-1664/V.P. dated 14.06.2022 on the above mentioned subject, seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and to say that the examination of the proposal reveals the following shortcoming:

- i. Area of forest land estimated as 248.11 ha by the KML file submitted along with the proposal instead of 331.198 ha. Correct KML file corresponding to 331.198 ha depicting the forest land needs to be provided by the State.
- ii. DSS analysis (copy enclosed) of the forest cover of the area reveals that corresponding area falling under VDF, MDF, OF, Scrub and Non-wooded category is 1 ha, 9 ha, 138 ha and 100 ha respectively. Weighted average density of 240 ha of forest land is worked out to be 0.1625 only. Moreover, given the number of trees, the claim of higher crop density by the Forest Department seems to be untenable. It is, therefore, desirable that density and project affected trees may be re-visited by the State and correct information in the matter may be intimated to the Ministry.
- iii. Analysis of the CA area using DSS analysis (report enclosed) reveals the following:
 - a. Area of CA land estimated using DSS tool is 631.73 ha while the total area proposed for CA is 663.84 ha. Discrepancy in the area needs to be rectified by the State.
 - b. CA has been proposed in 52 patches out of which 12 patches have area less than 5 ha. 2 patches are observed to be isolated.
 - c. Cultivation, settlement, road, water bodies are observed in certain sites; the suitability of such sites for CA and their contiguity with the existing RF/PF needs to be reconfirmed by the State.
- iv. As Schedule-I & II species have been reported in the area, comments of PCCF (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. Comments of the State on the measures proposed to be undertaken for the protection and conservation of hydrological regimes of the nallah may be given.
 - vi. R&R Plan for 8339 families affected from the project has been submitted. R&R Plan prepared, if any, in respect of 791 families reported in the extant proposal may be intimated along with progress of implementation of R&R prepared corresponding to the area of 1026.438 ha approved in the past.
 - vii. Cost benefit Ratio has been estimated to be 1:73:841 which appears to be on higher side. Examination of analysis revealed that estimation of cost component has been done in respect of 331.198 ha while benefits seem to have been largely estimated for the entire project area; the calculation needs to be revisited by the State by appropriate use of various parameters in the analysis on a *pro rata* basis.
 - viii. As the proposal involves re-diversion of 20.692 ha of forest land from the already diverted forest area of 1026.438 ha, a digital Differential GPS map of the area (KML file) indicating the 20.692 ha vis-à-vis total lease area may be submitted by the State. State Government may also submit request for re-diversion of area 1026.438 ha approved in the past for the purpose of proper records and future monitoring.
 - ix. Perusal of the Mining Plan, revealed the following:
 - a. Total forest area involved in the project of user agency is 1787 ha while the approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 has been obtained in respect of 1026.438 ha and the area of 331.198 ha is currently under consideration. Therefore, status of approval under the FC Act, 1980, if any, obtained in respect of balance forest area of 429.364 ha may be intimated by the State.
 - b. Details furnished in Part-I mentioned the total lease area as 464.468 ha while the Mining Plan mentioned the total area of the block as 4695 ha. Therefore, rectified detail of project of lease area, as the case may be, may be informed by the State.
 - c. Mining Plan uploaded online is illegible. Legible copy of the same may be uploaded. State Government may submit its comments on the consistency of the land uses proposed in the Mining plan and in the extant proposal submitted under the FC Act, 1980.
 - x. Approval dated 17.09.2010 was granted over an area of 1026.438 ha by the Ministry in the past. The following details in respect of said approval may be provided by the State:
 - a. Updated status of compliance of conditions stipulated in the approval dated 17.09.2010.
 - b. Progress of implementation of Wildlife/Conservation Plan, as envisaged in condition no. 11 of the approval dated 17.09.2010, supported with year wise activities covered and expenditure incurred thereof, photograph etc.
 - c. Detail of safety zone maintained in lieu of diversion of 1026.438 ha and activities viz., plantation, ANR and afforestation over 1.5 times the area of safety zone.
 - d. Detail of NPV realized from the user agency in lieu of diversion of forest land accorded in the past and in pursuance to Ministry's guidelines dated 31.03.2020.
- In view of above, the State Government is requested to furnish information as

indicated above for further consideration of the proposal in the Ministry.

Encl: As above.

Yours faithfully

(Charan Jeet Singh)
Scientist 'D'

Copy to:

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 Forest Conservation Division, MoEF&CC
6. Guard file