

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi – 110003
Dated: August, 2023

To,

The Principal Secretary (Forests),
Government of Maharashtra,
Mumbai.

Subject: Diversion of 99.95 ha protected forest land for Manganese Ore Mining and allied works in Guguldoh Block in Nagpur District of State of Maharashtra in favour of M/s Shanti G.D. Ispat and Power Pvt. Ltd. (Online No. FP/MH/MIN/42236/2019) – regarding.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Government of Maharashtra's letter no. FLD-3223/CR-179/F-10 dated 02.08.2023 on the above cited subject. In this regard following shortcomings have been observed in the proposal submitted by the State Govt.:

- i. The State Govt. reported that the validity of Letter of Intent issued by the Industries Department, Govt. of Maharashtra is expired. In case the Lol has expired the justification for submission of the proposal shall be submitted. The status of LOI validity along with the relevant details needs to be examined by State Govt. which shall submit a detailed report in this regard.
- ii. The copy of Site Inspection Report by CF/CCF, Nagpur has not been submitted which needs submission.
- iii. As per DSS analysis, KML file of the forest land proposed for diversion has not been uploaded online. Therefore, the same shall be uploaded.
- iv. Satellite imagery shows that the plantation work has been carried out in proposed forest land for diversion. The state shall submit the details of the plantations carried out.
- v. The Mining Lease (ML) Boundary needs to be verified on ground because two tanks/ earthen dam are located next to proposed mining area. Therefore, the State Govt. shall ensure that the Mining lease area shall not include the area of other projects.
- vi. As per the DSS analysis, two earthen dams are situated near the proposed mining area and two water bodies are situated within the lease boundary. Therefore, comments of the water resource department on the proposed measures and impact of the project on the hydrological regimes are required to be submitted. The details of any study done in this regard shall also be submitted.

- vii. KML files indicating the different components of the projects have not been submitted and mentioned in online Part-I of the proposal. The same needs to be submitted/ updated conspicuously depicting the various projects component vis-à-vis total lease area as per the approved mining plan.
- viii. The KML file of 7.5 meter safety zone area has not been uploaded and the safety zone area details are not mentioned in the component wise breakup in online Part-I which needs submission.
- ix. KML files and afforestation scheme of the degraded forest land proposed for afforestation in lieu of 1.5 times the area of safety zone have not been provided in the proposal. The same needs to be submitted along with the afforestation scheme and suitability certificate.
- x. Legible copy of the approved Mining plan along with progressive mine closure plan shall be uploaded on PARIVESH portal. The State Government may also confirm whether the land use proposed in the proposal is in conformity with the Mining Plan. The details of proposed reclamation/back-filled area at the end of mine life also needs submission.
- xi. As per DSS report, part of the non-forest land identified for raising CA overlaps with the Reserved Forest land. The State shall therefore revise the area proposed for CA and ensure that area identified for CA is not within the forest area.
- xii. Satellite imagery shows the presence of Agriculture land within the CA land and an earthen tank is also situated at the boundary of proposed CA land. Therefore, the State shall ensure that proposed CA land is free from all encumbrances.
- xiii. As per DSS analysis an area of 6 ha proposed for Compensatory Afforestation is found to be Medium dense forest which can not accommodate 1000 plants/ha. The State shall therefore provide the details of degraded forest land identified for afforestation of additional saplings which can not be accommodated within the Non-forest land. The same needs to be submitted along with the afforestation scheme, KML file and suitability certificate.
- xiv. Copy of the ownership proof of the proposed CA land on the NFL has not been submitted/ uploaded with the proposal. Therefore, complete documentary evidence of the proposed CA land needs submission. The certified translated copies of the documents in Hindi or English shall be submitted.
- xv. Details of mineral evacuation plan and how the requirements of electricity and water will be met shall be submitted. The detail of additional forest land (if any) required for the purpose shall also be submitted.
- xvi. The State Govt. recommended the proposal subject to the fulfilment of Wildlife mitigation plan. However, copy of undertaking from the user agency to bear the cost of plan has not been submitted.
- xvii. Keeping in view that the proposed area is having the presence of Schedule-1 species and also the project site is home to many endangered species including Tiger. The project site is in the Wildlife corridor identified by WII (Wildlife Institute of India) which connects Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) and Navegaon Nagzira Tiger Reserve (NNTR). The comments/ views of the CWLW along with justification for allowing mining in the area shall be submitted.

- xviii. In online Part-II, it has been reported that the forest is a vulnerable due to biotic pressure. Comments of the State Forest Department along with mitigation measures shall be submitted.
- xix. The State Govt. reported that total 35703 number of trees are involved in the Project whereas as per the project report total 36,964 number of trees will be affected due to extant project. The above variation needs clarification.
- xx. The State has submitted that the project be allowed after a technical study is carried out by the WII. In this regard the details of study if any instituted by the State and its status shall be submitted.

Accordingly, it is requested to furnish the above mentioned information to this Ministry for further consideration of the proposal. Moreover, it appears that proposal has not been examined at state level especially the KML of the proposed site has not been given and mining plan document is not legible. Further the component wise breakup has not been given in the part-I of the application form. Therefore in future due diligence should be made before sending the proposal to the Ministry.

Yours sincerely,

Encl: As Above

Sd/-

(Suneet Bhardwaj)

Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:

1. The PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forest, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur;
2. The Dy. DGF (Central), Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Nagpur;
3. The Nodal Officer (FCA), Department of Forest, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur;
4. User Agency;
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF & CC, New Delhi for uploading on PARIVESH portal.