

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

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Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,  
Aliganj, Jor Bagh Road,  
New Delhi: 110003  
Dated: January, 2025

To

The Addl. Chief Secretaries of Forests/Principal Secretary (Forests),  
All States Governments and Union territory Administrations

**Sub: Streamlining the approval process with regards to survey and exploration in the forest area – reg.**

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the above subject and to inform that a meeting between the Ministry of Mines and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change was held on 6.01.2025 to review the various issues pertaining to mining sector including coal mining. The issues related to streamlining the processes involved in diversion of forest land for surveys and explorations was also deliberated in the aforesaid meeting. to. Based on the deliberations held in the said meeting, the Central Government, in accordance with the provisions of section 2(2) and 3C of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and in continuation of the guidelines issued dated 29.11.2023, 19.11.2024 and 17.12.2024, hereby issues the following additional Guidelines/clarifications:

- i. The NPV deposited by the User Agency @0.1 ha per bore hole, shall be adjusted against the total estimated NPV proposed to be levied in such cases where approval for diversion of the same forest land is required to be obtained by User Agency in future for commercial extraction of minerals. Such adjustment of NPV shall be carried out irrespective of whether the User Agency is the original applicant for such diversion or subsequent applicant to whom the Mining Lease has been transferred and the same may be included in the condition for diversion of forest land by the Authorities concerned at the time of auction or leasing out the forest land for drilling of bore holes for the purposes of exploration for mining.
- ii. No cost other than NPV is to be charged from the User Agency in case of survey and explorations.
- iii. Number of bore holes to be allowed in the total area applied for survey and exploration, as specified in the guidelines dated 29.11.2023 and 19.11.2024, is the upper limit which is exempted from permission in accordance with the provision of section 2(2) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. The number of bore holes which is permitted for exemption from permission as per the aforesaid guidelines should not be assessed by the processing authorities in the State/UTs on a pro rata basis i.e. linking the number of bore holes to the area under exploration but based on actual number required by the User Agency within the permissible upper ceiling.
- iv. No separate application under Form-C is required to be submitted for survey and exploration by the User Agency in the already broken up forest area for which approval for non-forestry use has already been obtained by the same User Agency under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam,

1980. However, during the transition phase, there may be cases where existing mining lease has expired but requisite permission for diversion of forest land continues to exist and where fresh mining lease has not been executed after the expiry of existing mining lease. In such cases, prior permission for exploration in such already diverted areas can be obtained by the concerned Central/State Government Department from the State Forest Department by submitting the application in Form-C in offline mode.

- v. In respect of proposals for survey and exploration which are not exempted under the Act, the State Government/UT Administrations, shall authorise Nodal Officer dealing with the matter related to Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 to forward such proposals directly to the Regional Office or MoEF&CC, New Delhi, as the case may be, for obtaining the requisite prior approval of Central Government under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.

In view of the above, the State Government and Union territory Administrations are requested to take into consideration the guidelines mentioned hereinabove while considering the proposals submitted under section 2 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. The guidelines issued on 29.11.2023 stands amended to the extent of the guidelines/clarification as specified above.

This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.

Yours faithfully,

**(Charan Jeet Singh)**  
Scientist 'E'

Copy to:

1. Secretary, Ministry of Mines /Coal /Steel/ Power/ Railways/ MoRT&H/ Defence/MHA
2. Secretary, Ministry of Defence, Government of India
3. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF, All States Governments and Union territory Administrations
4. Dy Director General of Forests (Central) All Regional Offices of the MoEF&CC
5. Nodal Officers, dealing with the matters related to the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, All States Governments and Union territory Administrations
6. Head, NIC, MoEFCC for aligning the PARIVESH 2.0 as per above