



Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Minutes of Meeting for Advisory Committee



MoM ID FC/MOM/AC/278834/2025
Agenda ID FC/AGENDA/AC/111951/2025
Title of Meeting 7th Meeting of the Advisory Committee
Meeting Venue Krishna Conference Hall 4th Floor Jal Wing
Meeting Mode Physical
Meeting Dates & Time Start Date : 30/07/2025
End Date : 30/07/2025

List of AC Members:

S.No.	Name	Designation	Email ID
1	Shri Sushil Kumar Awasthi	DGF&SS, MoEFCC	dgfi****@nic.in
2	Shri Ramesh Kumar Pandey	Additional Director General of Forest, MOEFCC	rame*****@nic.in
3	Nityanand Srivastav	AC MEMBER	nity*****@yahoo.co.in
4	Shri R Raghu Prasad	Inspector General of Forest, MEF	ragh*****@gov.in
5	Manoj Pant	AC MEMBER	mpan*****@gmail.com
6	Kr Sree Harsha	Member (EAC)	sree*****@gmail.com
7	Dr. Mehraj A. Shaikh	AC MEMBER	ac.n*****@gov.in

Proposals considered during Meeting:

1. Project Name Diversion of 0.2309 ha. of roadside protected forest for construction of proposed 400 kV S/C on D/C Transmission line from Adani Renewable Energy Holding Four Limited SS at Badi Sid to Power Grid Corporation India Limited Bhadla-II SS near Village Kaansingh ki Sid, Taluka Bap, District Jodhpur, Rajasthan

Proposal Number FP/RJ/PWR_TRANS/451503/2023

User Agency ADANI RENEWABLE ENERGY HOLDING FOUR LIMITED

Forest Land Area(Ha) 16.5972

Division Jodhpur Territorial Division

Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

defer

2. Project Name Denotification of 1501.88 ha of forest land in Compt. No.465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472 and 473 of Bacharam RF of Lingal Range in Achampet Division for Relocation of Kollam penta, Sarlapally, Kudichinthala bailu, Thatigundal penta and Vatvarlapally villages from Core area of Amrabad Tiger Reserve, Nagarkurnool District, Telangana State.

Proposal Number FP/TG/REHAB/504796/2024

User Agency Rohith Gopidi

Forest Land Area(Ha) 1501.88

Division NAGARKURNOOL DIVISION

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

recommended

3. Project Name Munjri Irrigation Project
Proposal Number FP/MP/HYD/IRRIG/471582/2024
User Agency Subhash Gupta
Forest Land Area(Ha) 740.1592
Division Sheopur(T) Division
Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

defer

4. Project Name PANCHPATMALI CENTRAL AND NORTH BLOCK BAUXITE MINE
Proposal Number FP/OR/REDIV/499340/2024
User Agency Anil Kumar Panda
Forest Land Area(Ha)
Division Koraput Division
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended

5. Project Name Gourangdih ABC Coal Mine
Proposal Number FP/WB/MIN/QRY/452568/2023
User Agency Arun Acharya
Forest Land Area(Ha) 109.459
Division Durgapur Division
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

recommended

6. Project Name Four Laning of Road from Km 4/8 to Km 24/6 of Nizamabad to Armour of Nizamabad of Jagadapur Section of NH - 63 in Nizamabad District
Proposal Number FP/TG/ROAD/492664/2024
User Agency Ravi Prasad
Forest Land Area(Ha) 7.4494
Division NIZAMABAD DIVISION
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

recommended

7. Project Name For obtaining Stage-I clearance for capacity enhancement of Sponge Iron Plant to Integrated Steel Plant by M/s B R Sponge & Power Limited under FC Act 1980 in village Badatumkela under Lahunipara Tahasil of Sundargarh District.

Proposal Number FP/OR/IND/422562/2023

User Agency SHASHANK GARG

Forest Land Area(Ha) 4.775

Division Rourkela Division

Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Defer

8. Project Name Proposed access road connecting from Sijimali bauxite mines (Hill Top) to SH-44

Proposal Number FP/OR/OTHERS/523366/2025

User Agency Ashok Kumar Mishra

Forest Land Area(Ha) 4.911

Division Rayagada Division

Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Defer

9. Project Name Sijimali Bauxite Mines
Proposal Number FP/OR/MIN/QRY/470250/2024
User Agency Purnendu Pandey
Forest Land Area(Ha) 708.204
Division Kalahandi South Division
Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Defer

10. Project Name CIC Balancing Reservoir (Pandhurna Dam)
Proposal Number FP/MP/HYD/IRRIG/458645/2024
User Agency Kumkum Kaurav Patel
Forest Land Area(Ha) 136.724
Division Chhindwara South(T) Division
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended

11. Project Name Diversion of 61.45 ha forest land for Ramdongri Manganese ore mine
Proposal Number FP/MH/MIN/QRY/409811/2022
User Agency JAYASWAL NECO INDUSTRIES LIMITED
Forest Land Area(Ha) 61.45
Division Nagpur Division
Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Defer

12. Project Name AMNS 15.6 / 21 MTPA Steel Complex Expansion
Proposal Number FP/GJ/OTHERS/464635/2024
User Agency ANKIT SINGH
Forest Land Area(Ha) 48.6512
Division Surat Division
Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Defer

13. Project Name Sharavathy Pumped Storage Project (2000 MW)
Proposal Number FP/KA/HYD/IRRIG/447501/2023
User Agency Shilpa D Raj
Forest Land Area(Ha) 54.155
Division Shimoga Wildlife Division
Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Defer

14. Project Name Diversion of Forest Land For access to the existing petrol pump of HPCL ON GULHA-PE HOWA ROAD, AT VILLAGE CHEEKA, NEAR KM STONE NO. 134, TEHSIL GULHA, DISTRICT-KAITHAL, STATE-HARYANA. Bearing Khasra No.- 45//2/2.

Proposal Number FP/HR/PetrolPump/482689/2024

User Agency VAIBHAV MITTAL

Forest Land Area 0.022

a(Ha)

Division Kaithal Division

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Recommended

15. Project Name Project Name: Change of land use for placement of crusher unit for 0.50 ha. within already diverted land of Sunni Dam Hydroelectric Project (382 MW).

Proposal Number FP/HP/REDIV/532704/2025

User Agency

Forest Land Area(Ha)

Division Shimla Division

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended

16. Project Name Construction of road from Poh Maidan to Dankhar Helipad km 0/00 to 12/460
Proposal Number FP/HP/ROAD/514215/2024
User Agency Vireder kumar
Forest Land Area(Ha) 7.5479
Division WL Spiti Division
Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Defer

17. Project Name Diversion of 0.02025 ha of forest land for construction of approach road for opening retail outlet of Reliance BP Mobility Ltd. on Muzaffarpur-Darbhangha Road in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar.

Proposal Number FP/BR/PetrolPump/414702/2023

User Agency VIJAY JAISWAL

Forest Land Area(Ha) 0.0203

Division Tirhut Division

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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nd the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended

18. Project Name DIVERSION OF 0.0225 HA OF FOREST LAND FOR CONSTRUCTION OF APPROACH ROAD FOR OPENING BIOFUEL RETAIL OUTLET ON SIDE OF NH-57 MUZAFFARPUR-DARBHANGA IN MUZAFFAPUR DISTRICT OF BIHAR

Proposal Number FP/BR/PetrolPump/415328/2023

User Agency RAHUL JHA

Forest Land Area(Ha) 0.0225

Division Tirhut Division

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended

19. Project Name Forest Clearance for the location BWNA

Proposal Number FP/AS/MINOIL/422315/2023

User Agency LILY P CHAWANG

Forest Land Area(Ha) 2.2864

Division Golaghat Division

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office a

nd the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended

20. Project Name ONGC, Exploratory Drilling Location BWNB.
Proposal Number FP/AS/MINOIL/426584/2023
User Agency LILY P CHAWANG
Forest Land Area(Ha) 1.709
Division Golaghat Division
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended

21. Project Name ONGC,Exploratory Drilling Location KHBN
Proposal Number FP/AS/MINOIL/426530/2023
User Agency LILY P CHAWANG
Forest Land Area(Ha) 1.904
Division Golaghat Division
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended.

22. Project Name ONGC, Exploratory Drilling Location CJAA
Proposal Number FP/AS/MINOIL/424232/2023
User Agency LILY P CHAWANG
Forest Land Area(Ha) 1.77
Division Golaghat Division
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended

23. Project Name ONGC, Exploratory Drilling Location KHBO
Proposal Number FP/AS/MINOIL/426742/2023
User Agency LILY P CHAWANG
Forest Land Area(Ha) 1.74
Division Golaghat Division
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended

24. Project Name ONGC, Exploratory Drilling Location DPAAE
Proposal Number FP/AS/MINOIL/426966/2023
User Agency LILY P CHAWANG
Forest Land Area(Ha) 1.877
Division Golaghat Division
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended

25. Project Name Forest Diversion Proposal for oil & gas well drilling at Loc. OCKA located in Lohit Reserved Forest in Namsai District under OALP Block AA-ONHP-2017/13 in the State of Arunachal Pradesh
Proposal Number FP/AR/MINOIL/451999/2023
User Agency RUPAM JYOTI SUTRADHAR
Forest Land Area(Ha) 4.88

a)

Division Namsai Forest Division, Namasi

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended

26. Project Name Diversion of 3.33 Ha. of Forest land for drilling at Location KHAR in the Namphur Reserve Forest under Nampong Forest division, Arunachal Pradesh

Proposal Number FP/AR/MINOIL/431651/2023

User Agency RUPAM JYOTI SUTRADHAR

Forest Land Area(Ha) 3.33

Division Nampong Forest Division, Jairampur

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended.

27. Project Name Pumped Storage Project(9X150MW) at Upper Sileru village , Godem Kotha Ve
edhi (M)
Proposal Number FP/AP/HYD/IRRIG/423651/2023
User Agency Yakama Koteswara Rao
**Forest Land Area(
Ha)** 193.01
Division Chintapalli
Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the Advisory Committee has already been approved by the DGF&SS through E-Office and the same is attached herewith for completing the process through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.

Recommendation Remark:

defer

(PARIVESH 2.0)**Minutes of the Meeting of the Advisory Committee (AC) meeting held on
30.07.2025****Agenda No. 1****Online Proposal No. FP/AP/HYD/IRRIG/423651/2023**

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for non-forestry use of 193.01 ha of forest land for construction of Pumped Storage Project (9X150MW) at Upper Sileru Village in between existing Guntawada Reservoir (Upper reservoir) and existing Donkarayi Reservoir (lower reservoir) in favour of Andhra Pradesh Power Generation Corporation Limited (APGENCO) in Chintapalli Division of Alluri Sitharama Raju (ASR) District of Andhra Pradesh.

1. The above stated agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The IGF (Central), Sub office Hyderabad (representing RO Chennai) and Nodal Officer, Government of Andhra Pradesh attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the Advisory Committee. The Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee after through deliberation and discussion observed that:
 - i. The Govt. of Andhra Pradesh has submitted the proposal on the above mentioned subject through the PARIVESH 2.0 Portal on 23.12.2024 for construction of Pumped Storage Project (9X150MW) at Upper Sileru Village in between existing Guntawada Reservoir (Upper reservoir) and existing Donkarayi Reservoir (lower reservoir) in favour of Andhra Pradesh Power Generation Corporation Limited (APGENCO).
 - ii. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has informed that the State Government vide G.O.MS No. 954, Forest & Rural Development (For-I) Department, Dt. 28.10.1976 have issued order for dis-reservation of 1635 acres of forest land for Upper Siler Hydro Electric Project. The State Government vide G.O.MS No. 366, Forest & Rural Development (For-I) Department, Dt. 20.05.1978 in partial modification of above orders dt.28.10.1976 issued dis-reservation of a total area of 2715 acres i.e., 1635 acres already ordered to be dis-reserved plus 154.9 acres of forest bay reservoir area plus 925 acres of Guntawada reservoir area.
 - iii. As per the proposal, from the above two government orders, it is stated that forest land was taken over by the then APSEB (now APGENCO) enactment of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.
 - iv. As reported by the State Govt. that in order to meet the COP targets of controlling the temperature rise to meet the INDC commitments, renewable energy options like Solar and Wind power generation are being developed in Andhra Pradesh. In line with the Government of India's (Gol's) ambitious target of achieving 500 GW of non-fossil

energy plants by the year 2030, Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP) has targeted for development of 120 GW renewable energy projects. The targeted capacity of renewable projects for Andhra Pradesh is about 38 GW by the year 2029-30. Generation from renewable sources (like solar, wind and NCEs) will be available partially (i.e., seasonal, or intermittently in a day) and cannot be relied upon entirely to meet the power requirements throughout the day/year. Also, this will result in grid stability Issues. Hence, large-scale addition of renewable energy necessitates implementation of a suitable system for storing surplus energy generated during off peak generation period and utilizing the same during peak period as per the demand scenario.

- v. To prevent impact on the Grid and to minimize the greenhouse gases emissions and toxic by-products into the Environment by burning fossil fuels in conventional Thermal Power Plants, pumped storage Projects and energy storage devices are required to be made available as reserve to ensure that demand at any time is fully met. Bulk Storage batteries are under R&D stage and technology has not been proven for wide commercial use. Pumped storage projects are proven viable current technology to use as balancing power to minimize Impact on the grid. Pumped storage project absorbs the surplus power during additional solar/wind power generation and surplus energy in the grid during off-peak periods and stores it as potential energy, which will be used during peak demand hours, based on the grid requirement.
- vi. The present installed capacity of solar and wind power generation is 8212.50 MW In the state of Andhra Pradesh. Proposals for Installation of 10,000 MW solar power plants are in process and another 10,000 MW in the planning stage. Pumped Storage Project requires an Upper reservoir, Lower Reservoir, availability of water and suitable head (natural gradient to convert it into Head for pump mode and Turbine mode operation). The GoAP has accorded '*in-principle*' approval vide Lr.dt. 20.12.2022 for the project.
- vii. The Central Electricity Authority (CEA), Gol has accorded Techno Economic Clearance (TEC) for the project vide File No.CEA-SY-25-24/1/2020-PAC Division- Part-I. Dt. 13.06.2023.
- viii. The Upper Sileru Pumped Storage Project (USPSP) 1350 MW is proposed to be located in between two existing reservoirs i.e. Guntawada Reservoir (Upper Sileru Hydro Electric Scheme) and Donkarayi Reservoir (Lower Sileru Hydro Electric Scheme) of APGENCO which have been in operation since 1970's for power generation and will be more advantageous and require less land requirement for the scheme.
- ix. The Upper Sileru Pumped Storage Project is proposed utilising 1.70 TMC of water of the existing Guntawada reservoir which acts as Upper Reservoir and Donkarayi reservoir located on the downstream side, which acts as lower reservoir. Preliminarily, four alternatives have been studied before finalising on the present alignment, with minimum length and maximum advantages. The advantages of locating the project in this area are:
 - a. The existence of upper and lower reservoirs.

- b. This will enable to reduce the cost of the project substantially apart from saving in the construction time.
 - c. Further the utilisation of construction materials for these reservoirs is avoided thus indirectly contributing to social and environmental benefits.
 - d. The utilisation of existing reservoirs reduces the requirement of forest land substantially thus saving the environment and avoiding possible R&R.
 - e. APGENCO is already operating three power houses (Upper Sileru -
 - f. 240 MW, Donkarayi - 25 MW and Lower Sileru - 460 MW (230 MW under expansion)) in the vicinity, and hence the man power utilisation can be optimised.
 - g. The project will provide impetus to the social, economic and Infrastructural environment of this area during the construction period of 60 months and operation period of forty years.
 - h. This project will provide employment to 1000 personnel during construction and 500 personnel during operation stage.
 - i. It is estimated that coal reserves will be saved to an extent of 3.50 million tons per annum and 140 million tons during the 40 years life period of PSP. Emission of CO₂ into the atmosphere to an extent of 2853 million tons per annum and 1.15 lakh million tons during 40 years life period of PSP can be avoided compared to generation of power through conventional Thermal Power projects.
 - j. Can generate low-priced peak power @ ₹7.24 per unit during lifetime of PSP when compared with purchasing of varying unit cost of ₹8/- to 18/- from power exchange.
- x. In view of the existing upper & lower reservoirs, water and head the project site is found to be best suitable for locating utilising the forest area of 193.01 Ha. In this connection, it is submitted that non forest land is not available in and around this complex, up to minimum of 100 Km, to locate the project. The project is useful for improving the socio-economic conditions in the state and Country. Hence, the project location is site specific and Justified in the identified area involving an extent of 193.01 ha of forest land.
 - xi. The total area of the project is 326.47 ha including 193.01 ha of forest and 133.46 ha of non-forest land. This land falls in the Alluri Sitharama Raju (ASR) District and Chintapalli forest division of the Andhra Pradesh State.
 - xii. The name of the user agency is Andhra Pradesh Power Generation Corporation Limited (APGENCO) which is a State PSU. The total period for which the forest land is proposed to be diverted is 100 years.
 - xiii. The legal status of the proposed forest land is RF and the reported density is 0.9 of Eco Class -I. However, the RO in his SIR has reported that The entire Forest land proposed for diversion falls under RF in four bits in Sileru Beat, Sileru Range, Chintapalli Division, ASR District. The Crown density is mentioned as 0.9 in Part II of the proposal but the crown density varies in all the four bits. 38.58 ha of forest land is earmarked for dumping of muck. In this site, Teak plantation was done

in 1978 and 1979. The teak plantation is prescribed a 50-year rotation and the plantations are due for harvest in the year 2028 and 2029 respectively. The muck dumping site has to be ameliorated with a proper reclamation plan with plantation over the years. In this regard the bit wise density may be provided by the State Govt. and necessary correction in the online form may be done.

- xiv. As per the information provided by the State Govt. a total no. of 90926 trees have been reported to be felled. However, during the discussion in the Meeting the Nodal Officer has reported that total no. of enumerated are 90926 and actual no. of trees to be felled are 24205. Further, the Nodal officer in the meeting has explained that most of the area will be under ground and no trees will be felled over the ground. Only trees are required to be felled at the starting and end point of the tunnel. However, as per the land use provided in the proposal there is no mention of which activity is going to be underground.
- xv. As per the information provided in the online form following land use has been reported:

Particular	Forest	Non-forest
Dumping Area at Turbine Intake	38.58	0
Turbine Intake	5.8	0
HRT	80.88	30.18
Primary Surge Shaft	2.96	0
Pressure Shafts	19.68	0
Power House Including DT area	7.39	0
Secondary Surge Shaft	3.91	0
TRT Part-2	7.03	0
TRT Part-3	9.42	103.28
Pump Intake &TRC	17.36	0
Total	193.01	133.46
Grand Total		326.47

- xvi. There is vulnerability of forest area to erosion, as the areas are having steep and gentle slopes in Bit-II & III. The area proposed for diversion is not forms part of national park, wildlife sanctuary, biosphere reserve, tiger reserve, elephant corridor, wildlife migration corridor etc and the area is not part of any national park, wildlife sanctuary, biosphere reserve, tiger reserve buffer zone, elephant corridor, wildlife migration corridor etc., is located within 10 Km. from boundary of the forest land proposed to be utilized for prospecting or diversion. No rare/endangered/ unique species of flora and fauna found in the area. No protected archaeological/heritage site/defence establishment or any other important monument is located in the area. The requirement of forest land as proposed by the user agency is unavoidable and bare minimum for the project.
- xvii. As reported by the State Govt. that no work in violation of the Adhiniyam, 1980 has been carried out by the User Agency.

- xviii. The user agency has identified the non-forest land of an extent of 291.84 ha (Ac.721.16 cts.) in Land Parcel Map No.333 of Donnikota village of Nallamanda Mandal of Kadiri Range in Satya Sai district for Compensatory Afforestation purpose. The proposed CA area is a hillock with existing vegetation and small rocky patches in Charupalli beat of Kadiri Range of Satya Sai district. Out of 291.84 ha of non-forest land identified for CA by the user agency, nearly 40 ha area is rocky, 40 ha area is saline and about 48 ha has steep slope which is not suitable for planting. The balance area of 163.84 ha is having vegetation suitable for Compensatory Afforestation through Aided Natural Regeneration method treating the natural vegetation, gap planting and for undertaking SMC works. As some portion of non-forest land i.e.. 30 ha identified by the user agency is not suitable for planting, an extent of 60.68 ha. of degraded forest land in Compt.No.433 & 434 of Badhrapuram RF in Badhrapuram Beat of Penukonda Range in Sri Satya Sai Division was identified towards CA duly following Rule 13 (1) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023.
- xix. The CA site suitability certificate has been provided by the concerned DFO.
- xx. The user agency has furnished the muck restoration plan duly taking up engineering and biological measures by earmarking ₹710 lakh for this activity.
- xxi. The User Agency has given an undertaking for covering conductors and transformers with anti electrocution material.
- xxii. The User Agency has submitted Resettlement & Rehabilitation (R&R) Plan for the settlement of land falling in the proposed project area with an outlay of ₹3.60 crores.
- xxiii. Regarding the requirement of Cumulative Impact Assessment and Carrying Capacity Study of the river basin the State Govt. has informed as per MOEF &CC in its OM dated 28.05.2013 stated that requirement of CIA & CCS shall be stipulated in the ToR stage itself. However, the TOR on 03.06.2019 does not stipulate these studies. As per the State Government, there is no change in reservoir capacity (FRL, Dam Height), environmental flow and modification in key components like spillway, Intake Gates, the CIA & CCS study is unwarranted and hence not carried out.
- xxiv. The State Govt. has informed that the National Dam Safety Authority classified these dams as Category III, requiring only minor repairs that can be completed this year. The downstream dam at Donkarayi is 20 Km from the project exit structure. Hence, the impact of the project downstream is not to be considered. The preliminary designs at DPR stage were approved by CWC while according to the Techno Economic Concurrence for this project. The CWC did not make any suggestions on the alterations for the existing dams in view of the new project. As such, the existing dams are safe for operation of the newly proposed project in the existing condition. The Central Electricity Authority (CEA, GOI) vide email dt. 25.02.2025 also mentioned that no further approval is required from NDSA in respect of Upper Sileru Pumped Storage Project.

- xxv. Regarding the requirement of the CAT Plan, the State Govt. has informed that there is no additional increase of reservoir capacities of the upstream and downstream reservoirs on account of the proposed project. The MFL and FRL of the upstream and downstream reservoirs are not being changed. Hence, a new catchment area will not be formed due to the proposed project. Therefore, Catchment Area Treatment for USPSP does not arise. However, the UA undertook to implement Catchment Area Treatment Plan (if any) proposed by the advisory committee, MOEF&CC, GOI to the extent required, at the cost of APGENCO for the subject proposal.
- xxvi. **Wildlife Mitigation Plan:** The Prl. CCF (WL) & Chief Wildlife Warden, A.P. Mangalagiri has approved the Wildlife Mitigation Plan proposed for an outlay of ₹498.50 lakhs for a period of 5 year's. The PCCF (WL) vide letter dated 25.07.2024 has approved the WLMP subject to the following conditions:
- a. The User Agency is requested to submit an undertaking that "if any Conductors, Transformers are proposed in and around the project area should have to be covered with anti-electrocution material to avoid Wildlife collisions".
 - b. The Chief Conservator of Forests, Visakhapatnam and Divisional Forest Officer, Chintapalli are requested to ensure that the proposed measures works are sufficient to mitigate the impacts on Wildlife due to construction of the proposed Transmission line. Further, they shall submit a compliance report in this regard.
 - c. The Chief Conservator of Forests, Visakhapatnam and Divisional Forest Officer, Chintapalli are requested to submit and take approval on the site and location details for the various habitat improvement and other works proposed to be taken up, before commencing the works.
- xxvii. The User Agency has given an undertaking for covering conductors and transformers with anti electrocution material.
- xxviii. The PCCF (WL) & CWLW, A.P., Mangalagiri in his letter dated 06.03.2025 has informed that on perusal of the request made by the Chief Engineer, APGENCO vide letter dated 03.03.2025 to offer remarks/comments of the Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden, A.P, Mangalagiri on the point No. 8 as sought by the Government of India, MOEF & CC, it is informed that, the Comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (CEIA) Study for the Upper Sileru Pumped Storage Project (9x150 MW) in Andhra Pradesh which covers aquatic ecology, fish fauna, socio-economic aspects and environmental impacts made by M/s. WAPCOS (a Gol undertaking) has been verified and found feasible for the aquatic fauna. However, as per the ground report received from DFO Chintapalli vide letter dated 05.03.2025, presence of crocodiles/muggers are recorded in the vicinity of the Upper Sileru Reservoir and suggested to take suitable measures by using caution boards and signages to avoid human animal conflict.
- xxix. The DDGF (Central), RO Chennai has recommended the proposal subject to the following observations:

- a. The Proposal for Diversion of 193.01 Ha of Forest Land (in Sileru Range, Chintapalli Division, ASR District) in favour of M/s Andhra Pradesh Power Generation Corporation Limited, Vijayawada for Establishment of Pumped Storage Project (9X150MW) at Upper Sileru village, Gudem kotha Veedhi mandal, ASR District, Andhra Pradesh is examined and site inspection of the project site is carried out by the officials of the Regional Office and Sub Office Vijayawada. The Compensatory Afforestation proposed on NFL and DFL in lieu of the forest land diverted was also inspected by the AIGF, Sub Office Vijayawada and the NFL is found suitable.
 - b. The Upper Sileru Pumped Storage Project (USPSP) 1350 MW(9X150MW) is proposed to be located in between two existing reservoirs i.e. Guntawada Reservoir (Upper Sileru Hydro Electric Scheme) and Donkarayi Reservoir (Lower Sileru Hydro Electric Scheme) of APGENCO which are in operation since 1970's for power generation and hence locating a PSP at this area will be more advantageous, economical and requires less land for the scheme as the project is mostly designed underground to save the adverse effects on the local environment.
 - c. The entire Forest land proposed for diversion falls under RF in four bits in Sileru Beat, Sileru Range, Chintapalli Division, ASR District. The Crown density is mentioned as 0.9 in Part II of the proposal but the crown density varies in all the four bits. 38.58 ha of forest land is earmarked for dumping of muck. In this site, Teak plantation was done in 1978 and 1979. The teak plantation is prescribed a 50-year rotation and the plantations are due for harvest in the year 2028 and 2029 respectively. The muck dumping site has to be ameliorated with a proper reclamation plan with plantation over the years.
 - d. The User Agency had identified the non-forest land over an extent of 291.84 Ha in land parcel Map No.333 of Donnikota Village, Nallamada Mandal of Charupalli Beat of Kadiri Range of Sri Sathya Sai District. AP Forest Department identified 60.68 ha of Degraded Forest land (DFL) in Compartment no. 433 & 434 of Bhadrapuram RF in Bhadrapuram beat the Penukonda Range in Sri Satya Sai Division for plantation as some portion of above CA land (30 ha) is not suitable for CA purpose. The Non-forest land can be accepted for Compensatory Afforestation and it can also add to the wildlife habitat in the landscape.
- xxx. The above facts were considered in the The above facts were considered in the Advisory Committee on 26.05.2025. The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the Dy. DGF (Central), RO, Chennai and Nodal Officer, Government of Andhra Pradesh. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Andhra Pradesh, the Committee deferred the proposal and sought clarification/information on the following for further consideration in the matter:

- a. The State Govt. shall provide the exact no. of trees to be felled in the proposed area.
 - b. The State Government shall provide a detailed layout plan indicating the extent of area sought for underground and above ground works.
 - c. The DFO has reported the density of vegetation is 0.9. However, the RO in his SIR has reported that the entire forest land proposed for diversion falls under RF in four bits with varying crown density. The State Government shall provide bits /patch wise density along with no. of trees proposed to be felled in each patch.
 - d. The State Government shall explore the possibility of carrying out muck dumping on non-forest land.
- xxxi. The State Govt. has replied to all the above points raised by the Advisory Committee.
- xxxii. The State has informed that the forest land underground portion- 117.01 ha. (60.60%), Forest Land above ground portion- 76.00 ha. (39.40%) **Total: 193.01 ha. (100%). The details are as below:**

Bit No.	Area (in ha)	Under Ground (in ha)	Area Above Ground (in ha)
1	5.8	0	5.8
2	38.58	0	38.58
3	121.85	107.59	14.26
4	26.78	9.42	17.36
Total	193.01	117.01	76.0

- xxxiii. The State Govt. has informed that by mistake, it was mentioned as 0.9 in PART-II information in the PARIVESH portal which is regretted. The crown density of the forest area proposed for diversion shall be considered as 0.1 to 0.8 only. The bit wise density and no. of trees to be felled for the project is as follows:

Bit No.	Area (in ha)	Crown density	Trees enumerated (no.)	Trees to be felled (no.)
1	5.80	0.1	812	970
2	38.58	0.7	15626	16734
3	121.85	0.8	72078	23887
4	26.78	0.4	2410	1682
Total	193.01		90926	43,273 Trees to be felled

- xxxiv. The State Govt. has informed that there is no scope to shift the OB dump on NFL in the 100 km radius.
- xxxv. The user agency has furnished the muck restoration plan duly taking up engineering and biological measures by earmarking ₹710 lakh for this activity.
- xxxvi. Regarding the requirement of Cumulative Impact Assessment and Carrying Capacity Study of the river basin the State Govt. has informed as per MOEF &CC in its OM dated 28.05.2013 stated that requirement of CIA & CCS shall be stipulated in the ToR stage itself. However, the TOR on 03.06.2019 does not stipulate these studies. As per the State Government, there is no change in reservoir capacity (FRL, Dam Height), environmental flow and modification in key components like spillway, Intake Gates, the CIA & CCS study is unwarranted and hence not carried out.
- xxxvii. The State Govt. has informed that the National Dam Safety Authority classified these dams as Category III, requiring only minor repairs that can be completed this year. The downstream dam at Donkarayi is 20 Km from the project exit structure. Hence, the impact of the project downstream is not to be considered. The preliminary designs at DPR stage were approved by CWC while according to the Techno Economic Concurrence for this project. The CWC did not make any suggestions on the alterations for the existing dams in view of the new project. As such, the existing dams are safe for operation of the newly proposed project in the existing condition. The Central Electricity Authority (CEA, GOI) vide email dt. 25.02.2025 also mentioned that no further approval is required from NDSA in respect of Upper Sileru Pumped Storage Project.
- xxxviii. Regarding the requirement of the CAT Plan, the State Govt. has informed that there is no additional increase of reservoir capacities of the upstream and downstream reservoirs on account of the proposed project. The MFL and FRL of the upstream and downstream reservoirs are not being changed. Hence, a new catchment area will not be formed due to the proposed project. Therefore, Catchment Area Treatment for USPSP does not arise. However, the UA undertook to implement Catchment Area Treatment Plan (if any) proposed by the FAC, MOEF&CC, GOI to the extent required, at the cost of APGENCO for the subject proposal.
- xxxix. The User Agency has submitted Resettlement & Rehabilitation (R&R) Plan for the settlement of land & cultivation in Sandkori Area falling in the proposed project area with an outlay of ₹3.60 crores.
- xl. **Wildlife Mitigation Plan:** The Prl. CCF (WL) & Chief Wildlife Warden, A.P. Mangalagiri has approved the Wildlife Mitigation Plan proposed for an outlay of ₹498.50 lakhs for a period of 5 years and uploaded the same in S.No. 1 of column 13 (Additional documents). The PCCF (WL) vide letter dated 25.07.2024 has approved the WLMP subject to the following conditions:
- a. The User Agency is requested to submit an undertaking that "if any Conductors, Transformers are proposed in and around the project area should have to be covered with anti-electrocution material to avoid Wildlife collisions".

- b. The Chief Conservator of Forests, Visakhapatnam and Divisional Forest Officer, Chintapalli are requested to ensure that the proposed measures works are sufficient to mitigate the impacts on Wildlife due to construction of the proposed Transmission line. Further, they shall submit a compliance report in this regard.
- c. The Chief Conservator of Forests, Visakhapatnam and Divisional Forest Officer, Chintapalli are requested to submit and take approval on the site and location details for the various habitat improvement and other works proposed to be taken up, before commencing the works.
- xli. The User Agency has given an undertaking for covering conductors and transformers with anti electrocution material.
- xlii. The PCCF (WL) & CWLW, A.P., Mangalagiri in his letter dated 06.03.2025 has informed that on perusal of the request made by the Chief Engineer, APGENCO vide letter dated 03.03.2025 to offer remarks/comments of the Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests(Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden, A.P, Mangalagiri on the point No. 8 as sought by the Government of India, MOEF & CC, it is informed that, the Comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (CEIA) Study for the Upper Sileru Pumped Storage Project (9x150 MW) in Andhra Pradesh which covers aquatic ecology, fish fauna, socio-economic aspects and environmental impacts made by M/s. WAPCOS (a GOI undertaking) has been verified and found feasible for the aquatic fauna. However, as per the ground report received from DFO Chintapalli vide letter dated 05.03.2025, presence of crocodiles/muggers are recorded in the vicinity of the Upper Sileru Reservoir and suggested to take suitable measures by using caution boards and signages to avoid human animal conflict.
- xliii. Regarding the area falling in the high conservation zone as per the DSS, the State Govt. has informed that *M/s WAPCOS, a GOI undertaking and a consultant for APGENCO* conducted required studies and surveys as a part of CEIA studies and prepared a Comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (CEIA) report for the proposed project. *The sociological and economic benefits of the project are given in the EDS reply of the State Government.*
- xliv. *Further, during the discussion the committee sought details of the breadth of the forest area where the laying of tunnels are being proposed. In this regard the Nodal Officer intimated the details as per the approved DPR (which is sent by e-mail by the State Nodal Officer). The same are as as below:*
- a. *As per the approved DPR the width of the power house is 297 m which is maximum in the project layout. The same width has to be maintained for the entire length of the project water conductor system to accommodate all components.*

The details of HRT are tabulated below:
1. Number of tunnels of HRT: 3 Nos
2. Diameter of tunnel : 12 m
3. C/C between tunnels : 63 m
4. Distance between outer faces of tunnels : 162 m

5. Distance on either side of outer tunnels : 45 m
6. Total with required (162 + 45 + 45) : 252 m
7. Width required for services on either side : 25 m
8. Total width required (252 + 25 + 25) : 302 m

- xliv. Further, the Committee observed that the proposed muck disposal area of 38.58 Ha appears to be a non-site specific activity and may not be permitted for muck disposal. The Nodal Officer stated that the 38.58 Ha forest land designated as muck dumping area can be excluded from the proposal. He further stated that the User Agency shall utilize other non-forest areas for muck dumping. By reducing this area the No. of trees to be felled would reduce to $(43273 - 16734) = 26539$ Nos. Moreover, the proposed area sought for diversion shall reduce to $(193.01 - 38.58) = 154.43$ Ha. The Committee noted the same.
- xlvi. Further, the committee sought the evacuation plan of the electricity generated from the newly proposed HEP. The nodal officer informed that the existing facility will be used for this purpose and no additional forest area shall be used.
- xlvii. The committee further noted that even though the project involved underground and overground works, since underground work will require breaking of the earth, the entire project may be considered as a normal diversion case.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the IGF (Central), Sub-Office, Hyderabad and Nodal Officer, Government of Andhra Pradesh. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Andhra Pradesh, the Committee deferred the proposal and sought clarification/information on the following for further consideration in the matter:
- i. The State Government shall submit the revised requirement of forest land and the modified land use plan excluding forest area of 38.58 Ha sought for Muck dumping. The State Government shall also ensure that the width of the area sought for project water conductor system shall be limited to 300 meters or less in the Modified Land use plan.
 - ii. The State Government shall provide KML file and details for alternate non-forest land to be used for Muck dumping.

Agenda No. 2

Proposal No. FP/AR/MINOIL/431651/2023

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980

in favour of M/s Oil India Ltd. for non-forestry use of 3.33 ha Reserved Forest land for Oil & Gas Exploration Drilling at location KHAR in Namphur Reserved Forest under Nampong Forest Division in Village- Injan, District- Changlang in the State of Arunachal Pradesh (Online Proposal No. FP/AR/MINOIL/431651/2023)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DIGF, Regional Office, Shillong, and Nodal Officer, Government of Arunachal Pradesh attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation on the proposal, note the following:
 - i. Proposal involves diversion of 3.33 ha Reserved Forest land for Oil & Gas Exploration Drilling at location KHAR in Namphur Reserved Forest under Nampong Forest Division in Village- Injan, District- Changlang in the State of Arunachal Pradesh.
 - ii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 0.26 ha is required for approach road, 2.98 ha for plinth including safety zone, 0.047 ha for boiler, 0.040 ha for flare and 0.003 ha for line joining boiler to plinth.
 - iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.2 of Eco class 1 with no tree felling involved during implementation of the project.
 - iv. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. No endangered, Schedule-I species, etc. have been reported in the area proposed for diversion. No protected archaeological / heritage site / defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the area has been reported. Certificates to this effect have been submitted by DFO concerned.
 - v. As per decision Rule- 1 and 2, the area does not falls into in High Conservation value Zone. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, entire area is classified as non-forest (land without tree cover).
 - vi. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 6.7 ha degraded forest land in Miao RF. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO.
 - vii. No violation of the Adhiniyam have been reported. Authorities in the State Government have recommended the proposal.
 - viii. Proposal involves drilling of one bore hole of 26 inch diameter. The life of mineral oil reservoir is 35 years. The PML was granted on 23.01.2004 for 35 years till 26.11.2038.
 - ix. The Ministry, after preliminary examination of the proposal, observed shortcomings viz. status of renewal of Ningru PML, approved

- mining/exploration plan, comments on visibility of structures like roads, and cultivations in the proposed area, comments on visible encroachment, revised kml file of CA area, safety measures proposed, etc. which were requested from the State Government on 21.01.2025. The Regional Office was also requested to submit an inspection report.
- x. The State Government submitted its reply online on 19.06.2025 on all the observations of the MoEF&CC.
 - xi. The Regional Office also submitted its inspection report reporting no violation of the Adhiniyam. The DDGF has recommended the proposal with certain conditions.
 - xii. The Committee, keeping in view the safety concerns related to such activities in the forest areas, opined that the user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation, recommended the proposal for grant of '***in-principle***' approval for diversion of 3.33 ha Reserved Forest land for Oil & Gas Exploration Drilling at location KHAR in Namphur Reserved Forest under Nampong Forest Division in Village- Injan, District- Changlang in the State of Arunachal Pradesh subject to the general, standard and following additional conditions:
- (i) The State Forest Department shall undertake appropriate action in consultation with the local Administration to vacate the encroachment from the forest land and a report in the same shall be submitted along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
 - (ii) To avoid avert disasters, the hazardous zone around the bore well, oil pads or pipelines or other ancillary infrastructure should be maintained by the various user agencies engaged in the mining or transportation of mineral oil as per the norms stipulated in the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948, and rules framed thereunder.
 - (iii) The user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.

Agenda No. 3

Proposal No. FP/AR/MINOIL/451999/2023

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of M/s Oil India Ltd. for non-forestry use of 4.88 ha Reserved Forest land for Oil & Gas Exploration Drilling at location OCKA in Lohit Reserved Forest under Namsai Forest Division, District- Namsai in the State of Arunachal Pradesh (Online Proposal No. FP/AR/MINOIL/451999/2023)-regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DIGF, Regional Office, Shillong, and Nodal Officer, Government of Arunachal Pradesh attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation on the proposal, note the following:
 - i. Proposal involves diversion of 4.88 ha Reserved Forest land for Oil & Gas Exploration Drilling at location OCKA in Lohit Reserved Forest under Namsai Forest Division, District- Namsai in the State of Arunachal Pradesh.
 - ii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 1.13 ha is required for approach road, 2.99 ha for plinth, 0.59 ha for safety zone and 0.17 ha for flare pit.
 - iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.3 of Eco class 1, 623 trees are proposed to be felled during implementation of the project.
 - iv. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. No endangered, Schedule-I species, etc. have been reported in the area proposed for diversion. No protected archaeological / heritage site / defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the area has been reported.
 - v. Nodal Officer informed that Committee that proposed area is located at distance of 30 km from the elephant corridor identified by the Wildlife Institute of India.
 - vi. As per decision Rule- 2, the area does not falls into in High Conservation value Zone, however, as per Hydrological rule of Decision Rule 1, proposed approach road is falling within 250 m buffer of a river. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, 3 ha of land is classified as open forest and 2 ha of land as non-forest land (land without tree cover).
 - vii. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 10.0 ha degraded forest land in Lohit Reserve Forest under Chowkham Forest Range of Namsai Forest Div. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is

provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO.

- viii. No violation of the Adhinyam have been reported. Authorities in the State Government have recommended the proposal.
 - ix. Proposal involves drilling of one bore holes of 26 inch diameter. The life of Mineral oil reservoir is 20 years, the mining lease was granted on 17.12.2022 which was subsequently extended till 4.06.2025. The Nodal Officer informed the Committee that location is under explorations under Petroleum Exploration License (PEL) and the requisite PEL or PML will be extended by the State Government in accordance with the provisions of the Oil fields (regulation and Development) Act, 1948 and rules made thereunder.
 - x. The Ministry, after preliminary examination of the proposal, observed shortcomings viz. status of Petroleum Exploration License (PEL), exploration plan, details of elephant corridor along with comments from PCCF (Wildlife) , comments on the road falling within 250 meters of buffer of a river, etc. which were requested from the State Government on 18.03.2025. The Regional Office was also requested to submit an inspection report.
 - xi. The State Government submitted its reply online on 24.06.2025 on all the observations of the MoEFCC&CC. The Nodal Officer informed that although the proposed approach road is falling within 250 m buffer of river, yet the alignment of approach road is best suited in the present position along with existing contours.
 - xii. The Regional Office also submitted its inspection report reporting no violation of the Adhinyam. The DDGF has recommended the proposal with certain conditions.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation, recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval for diversion of 4.88 ha Reserved Forest land for Oil & Gas Exploration Drilling at location OCKA in Lohit Reserved Forest under Namsai Forest Division, District- Namsai in the State of Arunachal Pradesh subject to the general, standard and following additional conditions:
- i. The State Forest Department shall undertake appropriate action in consultation with the local Administration to vacate the encroachment from the forest land and a report in the same shall be submitted along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
 - ii. To avoid avert disasters, the hazardous zone around the bore well, oil pads or pipelines or other ancillary infrastructure should be maintained by the various user agencies engaged in the mining or transportation of mineral oil as per the norms stipulated in the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948, and rules framed thereunder.
 - iii. The user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.

Agenda No. 4

Proposal No. FP/AS/MINOIL/426966/2023

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in f/o M/s Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. for non-forestry use of 1.877 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location DPAA in Village- Dalang Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam (Online Proposal No. FP/AS/MINOIL/426966/2023)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DIGF, Regional Office, Shillong, and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation on the proposal, note the following:
 - i. Proposal involves diversion of 1.877 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location DPAA in Village- Dalang Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam.
 - ii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 0.187 ha is required for approach road and 1.69 ha for drill area including safety zone of 0.41 ha.
 - iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.1 of Eco class 1 with no tree felling involved during implementation of the project.
 - iv. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. No endangered, Schedule-I species, etc. have been reported in the area proposed for diversion. No protected archaeological / heritage site / defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the area has been reported. Certificates to this effect have been submitted by DFO concerned.
 - v. As per decision Rule- 1 and 2, the area does not falls into in High Conservation value Zone. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, entire area is classified as non-forest (land without tree cover).
 - vi. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 1.88 ha non-forest land in Survey No. G46/10, Village- Baghetapa, Range- Lawkhowa WL, Tehsil- Tezpur, Division- Nagaon WL, District- Sonitpur identified inside compensatory afforestation land bank of 830 ha. of evicted non forest land adjacent to Burahchapory Wildlife Sanctuary under Nagaon Wildlife Division, Nagaon. CA scheme with 10 years of

maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO.

- vii. No violation of the Adhinyam have been reported. Authorities in the State Government have recommended the proposal.
 - viii. Proposal involves drilling of one bore holes of 8.5 inches diameter. The life of Mineral oil reservoir is 8 years. The PML was approved on 06.07.2023 for 13 years.
 - ix. The Ministry, after preliminary examination of the proposal, observed shortcomings viz. approved exploration plan, status of realization of 2% NPV in Kasomarigaon PML, details of earlier approvals granted, study on flora and fauna etc. which were requested from the State Government on 6.05.2025. The Regional Office was also requested to submit an inspection report.
 - x. The State Government submitted its reply online on 22.06.2025 providing information on the all observations of the MoEF&CC.
 - xi. The Regional Office also submitted its inspection report reporting no violation of the Adhinyam. The DDGF has recommended the proposal with certain conditions.
 - xii. The Nodal Officer informed the Committee total area of the land bank is 830 ha. The said revenue land was recently vacated from the unauthorised occupation of encroachers. The land is being used for compensatory afforestation in lieu of various diversion proposals. The proposed land is suitable for CA and is free from all encumbrances. Some of illegal or temporary settlements visible in the area are also being removed and area will be cleared soon.
 - xiii. The Committee observed that compensatory afforestation has been proposed from the land bank created by the State Government after removing the encroachment. Therefore, to prevent likely encroachment of the CA area in future, the CA the proposed CA land should be properly fenced and accordingly, the CA scheme should be modified, if needed, and same may be informed to the Ministry
 - xiv. The Committee, keeping in view the safety concerns related to such activities in the forest areas, opined that the user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation, recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval for diversion of 1.877 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location DPAE in Village- Dalang Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam subject to the general, standard and following additional conditions:
- i. The State Forest Department shall undertake appropriate action in consultation with the local Administration to vacate the encroachment

from the forest land and a report in the same shall be submitted along with the compliance of in-principle approval.

- ii. A Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan, including measures for mitigating human-elephant conflict, shall be prepared and implemented at the project cost. Cost of implementation of the Comprehensive Plan shall be deposited into the account of State CAMPA. An approved copy of the same shall be submitted to the MoEF&CC along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
- iii. To avoid avert disasters, the hazardous zone around the bore well, oil pads or pipelines or other ancillary infrastructure should be maintained by the various user agencies engaged in the mining or transportation of mineral oil as per the norms stipulated in the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948, and rules framed thereunder.
- iv. Recommendations made in the Nineteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Petroleum & Natural Gas (2022-23 (Safety and Security of Oil Installations of Public Sector Oil companies with specific reference to Baghjan Blow -out incident) shall be strictly adhered to by the user agency to avoid disaster in future.
- v. The user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.

Agenda No. 5

Proposal No. FP/AS/MINOIL/426742/2023

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of M/s Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. for non-forestry use of 1.74 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location KHBO in Village- Rengma Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam (Online Proposal No. FP/AS/MINOIL/426742/2023)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DIGF, Regional Office, Shillong, and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation on the proposal, note the following:
 - i. Proposal involves diversion of 1.74 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location KHBO in Village- Rengma Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam.

- ii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 0.05 ha is required for approach road and 1.69 ha for drill area including safety zone of 0.41 ha.
- iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.1 of Eco class 1 with no tree felling involved during implementation of the project.
- iv. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. No endangered, Schedule-I species, etc. have been reported in the area proposed for diversion. No protected archaeological / heritage site / defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the area has been reported. Certificates to this effect have been submitted by DFO concerned.
- v. As per decision Rule- 1 and 2, the area does not falls into in High Conservation value Zone. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, entire area is classified as non-forest (land without tree cover).
- vi. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 1.74 ha non-forest land in Survey No. G46/10, Village- Baghetapa, Range- Lawkhowa WL, Tehsil- Tezpur, Division- Nagaon WL, District- Sonitpur identified inside compensatory afforestation land bank of 830 ha. of evicted non forest land adjacent to Burahchapory Wildlife Sanctuary under Nagaon Wildlife Division, Nagaon. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO.
- vii. No violation of the Adhinyam have been reported. Authorities in the State Government have recommended the proposal.
- viii. Proposal involves drilling of one bore hole of 17.5 inch diameter for exploratory purpose. The life of Mineral oil reservoir is reported to be 22 years. The Petroleum Mining Lease (PML), was granted on 17.07.2020 for 20 years i.e. upto 16.07.2040.
- ix. The Ministry, after preliminary examination of the proposal, observed shortcomings viz. approved exploration plan, status of realization of 2% NPV in Kasomarigaon PML, regrant of PEL, clarification regarding two proposals for same purpose, comments from PCCF (Wildlife)/CWLW, comments on visibility of cultivation in the proposed area, etc. which were requested from the State Government on 6.05.2025. The Regional Office was also requested to submit an inspection report.
- x. The State Government submitted its reply online on 23.06.2025 inter-alia informing the following:
 - a) Life cycle of reservoirs in exploratory locations is subject to the size of the oil pool which may vary. In some cases the well may end up as dry well if the well is successful then further development wells may be drilled after taking required permission/intimation from competent Govt. Authority at a later date.
 - b) Undertaking exploration activities at various locations within a PML block is a standard and essential practice in the hydrocarbon industry. This is because exploratory drilling is inherently aimed at

identifying the presence of hydrocarbons within a given block, which often necessitates the drilling of multiple wells. Therefore, both diversion proposals and are justified and integral to the ongoing exploration efforts.

Furthermore, in the event that hydrocarbons are not discovered in these specific wells, it is important to recognize that the block remains geologically prospective. As such, there may be a requirement to drill additional wells in future within the same block to fully assess its hydrocarbon potential.

- c) Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan, including measures for mitigating human-animal conflict, has already been submitted for Golaghat district in connection with ONGC's forest diversion proposals within the reserve forest areas of Doyang RF, Nambor South RF and Rengma RF.
- d) As regard to visibility of cultivation in the proposed area, the same is being done by the local villagers for several decades without formal approval from the Forest Department. These areas, which are devoid of any forest cover, have primarily been utilized for seasonal agriculture, including paddy cultivation.

Nevertheless, the Forest Department, in coordination with the district administration, is undertaking necessary steps to reclaim the area and facilitate its formal transfer to the User Agency as and when any application for diversion of forest land with proper justification is received. It is pertinent to mention that in instances where unauthorized occupation of forest land is detected, appropriate actions are taken either through amicable resolution with the occupants or by initiating formal eviction procedures as per prevailing norms.

- xi. The Regional Office also submitted its inspection report reporting no violation of the Adhinyam. The DDGF has recommended the proposal with certain conditions.
- xii. The Nodal Officer informed the Committee total area of the land bank is 830 ha. The said revenue land was recently vacated from the unauthorised occupation of encroachers. The land is being used for compensatory afforestation in lieu of various diversion proposals. The proposed land is suitable for CA and is free from all encumbrances. Some of illegal or temporary settlements visible in the area are also being removed and area will be cleared soon.
- xiii. The Committee observed that compensatory afforestation has been proposed from the land bank created by the State Government after removing the encroachment. Therefore, to prevent likely encroachment of the CA area in future, the CA the proposed CA land should be properly fenced and accordingly, the CA scheme should be modified, if needed, and same may be informed to the Ministry
- xiv. The Committee, keeping in view the safety concerns related to such activities in the forest areas, opined that the user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest

area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.

4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval for diversion of 1.74 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location KHBO in Village- Rengma Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam subject to the general, standard and following additional conditions:
- i. The State Forest Department shall undertake appropriate action in consultation with the local Administration to vacate the encroachment from the forest land and a report in the same shall be submitted along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
 - ii. A Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan, including measures for mitigating human-elephant conflict, shall be prepared and implemented at the project cost. Cost of implementation of the Comprehensive Plan shall be deposited into the account of State CAMPA. An approved copy of the same shall be submitted to the MoEF&CC along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
 - iii. To avoid avert disasters, the hazardous zone around the bore well, oil pads or pipelines or other ancillary infrastructure should be maintained by the various user agencies engaged in the mining or transportation of mineral oil as per the norms stipulated in the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948, and rules framed thereunder.
 - iv. Recommendations made in the Nineteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Petroleum & Natural Gas (2022-23 (Safety and Security of Oil Installations of Public Sector Oil companies with specific reference to Baghjan Blow -out incident) shall be strictly adhered to by the user agency to avoid disaster in future.
 - v. The user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.

Agenda No. 6

Proposal No. FP/AS/MINOIL/424232/2023

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of M/s Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. for non-forestry use of 1.77 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location CJAA in Village- Namram Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam (Online Proposal No. FP/AS/MINOIL/424232/2023)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DIGF, Regional Office, Shillong, and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam attended the meeting.

2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation on the proposal, note the following:
 - i. Proposal involves diversion of 1.77 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location CJAA in Village- Namram Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam.
 - ii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 0.08 ha is required for approach road and 1.69 ha for drill area including safety zone of 0.41 ha.
 - iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.1 of Eco class 1 with no tree felling involved during implementation of the project.
 - iv. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. No endangered, Schedule-I species, etc. have been reported in the area proposed for diversion. No protected archaeological / heritage site / defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the area has been reported. Certificates to this effect have been submitted by DFO concerned.
 - v. As per decision Rule- 1 and 2, the area does not fall into in High Conservation value Zone. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, entire area is classified as non-forest (land without tree cover).
 - vi. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 1.77 ha non-forest land in Survey No. G46/10, Village- Baghetapa, Range- Lawkhowa WL, Tehsil- Tezpur, Division- Nagaon WL, District- Sonitpur identified inside compensatory afforestation land bank of 830 ha. of evicted non forest land adjacent to Burahchapory Wildlife Sanctuary under Nagaon Wildlife Division, Nagaon. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO.
 - vii. No violation of the Adhinyam have been reported. Authorities in the State Government have recommended the proposal.
 - viii. Proposal involves drilling of one bore hole of 17.5 inch diameter for exploratory purpose. The life of Mineral oil reservoir is 19.5 years. The PML was approved on 25.07.2022 for 4 years which is valid till 24.07.2026.
 - ix. The Ministry, after preliminary examination of the proposal, observed shortcomings viz. approved exploration plan, clarification regarding two proposals for same purpose, comments from PCCF (Wildlife)/CWLW, comments on visibility of cultivation in the proposed area, etc. which were requested from the State Government on 05.05.2025. The Regional Office was also requested to submit an inspection report.
 - x. The State Government submitted its reply online on 23.06.2025 providing information on the all observations of the MoEF&CC.
 - xi. The PCCF (Wildlife)/CWLW has recommended the proposal inter-alia stipulating that 2% of the project cost will be deposited as CORPUS fund to

be utilized by the CWLW for Wild Life Conservation & Management and Mitigation of Human-Animal Conflict including preparation of plans.

- xii. The Regional Office also submitted its inspection report reporting no violation of the Adhinyam. The DDGF has recommended the proposal with certain conditions.
 - xiii. The Nodal Officer informed the Committee total area of the land bank is 830 ha. The said revenue land was recently vacated from the unauthorised occupation of encroachers. The land is being used for compensatory afforestation in lieu of various diversion proposals. The proposed land is suitable for CA and is free from all encumbrances. Some of illegal or temporary settlements visible in the area are also being removed and area will be cleared soon.
 - xiv. The Committee observed that compensatory afforestation has been proposed from the land bank created by the State Government after removing the encroachment. Therefore, to prevent likely encroachment of the CA area in future, the CA the proposed CA land should be properly fenced and accordingly, the CA scheme should be modified, if needed, and same may be informed to the Ministry
 - xv. The Committee, keeping in view the safety concerns related to such activities in the forest areas, opined that the user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation, recommended the proposal for grant of ***'in-principle'*** approval for diversion of 1.77 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location CJAA in Village- Namram Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam subject to the general, standard and following additional conditions:
- i. The State Forest Department shall undertake appropriate action in consultation with the local Administration to vacate the encroachment from the forest land and a report in the same shall be submitted along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
 - ii. A Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan, including measures for mitigating human-elephant conflict, shall be prepared and implemented ant the project cost. Cost of implementation of the Comprehensive Plan shall be deposited into the account of State CAMPA. An approved copy of the same shall be submitted to the MoEF&CC along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
 - iii. To avoid avert disasters, the hazardous zone around the bore well, oil pads or pipelines or other ancillary infrastructure should be maintained by the various user agencies engaged in the mining or transportation of mineral oil as per the norms stipulated in the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948, and rules framed thereunder.

- iv. Recommendations made in the Nineteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Petroleum & Natural Gas (2022-23 (Safety and Security of Oil Installations of Public Sector Oil companies with specific reference to Baghjan Blow -out incident) shall be strictly adhered to by the user agency to avoid disaster in future.
- v. The user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.

Agenda No. 7

Proposal No. FP/AS/MINOIL/426530/2023

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of M/s Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. for non-forestry use of 1.904 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location KHBN in Village- Rengma Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam (Online Proposal No. FP/AS/MINOIL/426530/2023)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DIGF, Regional Office, Shillong, and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation on the proposal, note the following:
 - i. Proposal involves diversion of 1.904 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location KHBN in Village- Rengma Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam.
 - ii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 0.214 ha is required for approach road and 1.69 ha for drill area including safety zone of 0.41 ha.
 - iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.1 of Eco class 1 with no tree felling involved during implementation of the project.
 - iv. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. No endangered, Schedule-I species, etc. have been reported in the area proposed for diversion. No protected archaeological / heritage site / defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the area has been reported. Certificates to this effect have been submitted by DFO concerned.
 - v. As per decision Rule- 1 and 2, the area does not fall into in High Conservation value Zone. Out of total forest area proposed for

diversion, entire area is classified as non-forest (land without tree cover).

- vi. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 1.904 ha non-forest land in Survey No. G46/10, Village- Burachapari, District-Sonitpur identified inside compensatory afforestation land bank of 830 ha. of evicted non forest land adjacent to Burahchapory Wildlife Sanctuary under Nagaon Wildlife Division, Nagaon. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO.
 - vii. No violation of the Adhinyam have been reported. Authorities in the State Government have recommended the proposal.
 - viii. Proposal involves drilling of one bore hole of 17.5 inch diameter. The life of Mineral oil reservoir is 11 years. The PML was granted on 17.07.2020 for 20 years which is valid till 16.07.2040.
 - ix. The Ministry, after preliminary examination of the proposal, observed shortcomings viz. approved exploration plan, details of earlier approvals granted, study on flora and fauna visibility of cultivation in the proposed area, etc. which were requested from the State Government on 5.05.2025. The Regional Office was also requested to submit an inspection report.
 - x. The State Government submitted its reply online on 23.06.2025 providing information on the all observations of the MoEF&CC.
 - xi. The Regional Office also submitted its inspection report reporting no violation of the Adhinyam. The DDGF has recommended the proposal with certain conditions.
 - xii. The Nodal Officer informed the Committee total area of the land bank is 830 ha. The said revenue land was recently vacated from the unauthorised occupation of encroachers. The land is being used for compensatory afforestation in lieu of various diversion proposals. The proposed land is suitable for CA and is free from all encumbrances. Some of illegal or temporary settlements visible in the area are also being removed and area will be cleared soon.
 - xiii. The Committee observed that compensatory afforestation has been proposed from the land bank created by the State Government after removing the encroachment. Therefore, to prevent likely encroachment of the CA area in future, the CA the proposed CA land should be properly fenced and accordingly, the CA scheme should be modified, if needed, and same may be informed to the Ministry
 - xiv. The Committee, keeping in view the safety concerns related to such activities in the forest areas, opined that the user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation, recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval for diversion of 1.904 ha of Reserved Forest for

exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location KHBN in Village- Rengma Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam subject to the general, standard and following additional conditions:

- i. The State Forest Department shall undertake appropriate action in consultation with the local Administration to vacate the encroachment from the forest land and a report in the same shall be submitted along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
- ii. A Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan, including measures for mitigating human-elephant conflict, shall be prepared and implemented at the project cost. Cost of implementation of the Comprehensive Plan shall be deposited into the account of State CAMPA. An approved copy of the same shall be submitted to the MoEF&CC along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
- iii. To avoid avert disasters, the hazardous zone around the bore well, oil pads or pipelines or other ancillary infrastructure should be maintained by the various user agencies engaged in the mining or transportation of mineral oil as per the norms stipulated in the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948, and rules framed thereunder.
- iv. Recommendations made in the Nineteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Petroleum & Natural Gas (2022-23 (Safety and Security of Oil Installations of Public Sector Oil companies with specific reference to Baghjan Blow -out incident) shall be strictly adhered to by the user agency to avoid disaster in future.
- v. The user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.

Agenda No. 8

Proposal No. FP/AS/MINOIL/426584/2023

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of M/s Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. for non-forestry use of 1.709 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location BWNB in Village- Chungajan Block No 3 NC, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam (Online Proposal No. FP/AS/MINOIL/426584/2023)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DIGF, Regional Office, Shillong, and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.

3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation on the proposal, note the following:
- i. Proposal involves diversion of 1.709 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location BWNB in Village- Chungajan Block No 3 NC, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam.
 - ii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 0.019 ha is required for approach road and 1.69 ha for drill area including safety zone of 0.41 ha.
 - iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.1 of Eco class 1 with no tree felling involved during implementation of the project.
 - iv. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. No endangered, Schedule-I species, etc. have been reported in the area proposed for diversion. No protected archaeological / heritage site / defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the area has been reported. Certificates to this effect have been submitted by DFO concerned.
 - v. As per decision Rule- 1 and 2, the area does not falls into in High Conservation value Zone. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, entire area is classified as non-forest (land without tree cover).
 - vi. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 1.71 ha non-forest land has been identified inside compensatory afforestation land bank of 830 ha. of evicted non forest land adjacent to Burahchapory Wildlife Sanctuary under Nagaon Wildlife Division, Nagaon. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO.
 - vii. No violation of the Adhiniyam have been reported. Authorities in the State Government have recommended the proposal.
 - viii. Proposal involves drilling of one bore holes of 8.5 inches diameter. the life of Mineral oil reservoir is 16 years. The Petroleum Mining lease was approved on 25.07.2022 for 4 years.
 - ix. The Ministry, after preliminary examination of the proposal, observed shortcomings viz. approved exploration, clarification regarding two proposals for same purpose, comments from PCCF (Wildlife)/CWLW, comments on visibility of cultivation in the proposed area, etc. which were requested from the State Government on 05.05.2025. The Regional Office was also requested to submit an inspection report.
 - x. The State Government submitted its reply online on 23.06.2025 providing information on the all observations of the MoEF&CC.
 - xi. The PCCF (Wildlife)/CWLW has recommended the proposal inter-alia stipulating that 2% of the project cost will be deposited as CORPUS fund to be utilized by the CWLW for Wild Life Conservation & Management and Mitigation of Human-Animal Conflict including preparation of plans.
 - xvi. The Regional Office also submitted its inspection report reporting no violation of the Adhiniyam. The DDGF has recommended the proposal with certain conditions.

- xvii. The Nodal Officer informed the Committee total area of the land bank is 830 ha. The said revenue land was recently vacated from the unauthorised occupation of encroachers. The land is being used for compensatory afforestation in lieu of various diversion proposals. The proposed land is suitable for CA and is free from all encumbrances. Some of illegal or temporary settlements visible in the area are also being removed and area will be cleared soon.
 - xviii. The Committee observed that compensatory afforestation has been proposed from the land bank created by the State Government after removing the encroachment. Therefore, to prevent likely encroachment of the CA area in future, the CA the proposed CA land should be properly fenced and accordingly, the CA scheme should be modified, if needed, and same may be informed to the Ministry
 - xix. The Committee, keeping in view the safety concerns related to such activities in the forest areas, opined that the user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DIGF (Central), RO, Shillong and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam, recommended the proposal for grant of ***'in-principle'*** approval for diversion of 1.709 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location BWNB in Village- Chungajan Block No 3 NC, District-Golaghat in the State of Assam subject to the general, standard and following additional conditions:
- i. The State Forest Department shall undertake appropriate action in consultation with the local Administration to vacate the encroachment from the forest land and a report in the same shall be submitted along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
 - ii. A Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan, including measures for mitigating human-elephant conflict, shall be prepared and implemented ant the project cost. Cost of implementation of the Comprehensive Plan shall be deposited into the account of State CAMPA. An approved copy of the same shall be submitted to the MoEF&CC along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
 - iii. To avoid avert disasters, the hazardous zone around the bore well, oil pads or pipelines or other ancillary infrastructure should be maintained by the various user agencies engaged in the mining or transportation of mineral oil as per the norms stipulated in the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948, and rules framed thereunder.
 - iv. Recommendations made in the Nineteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Petroleum & Natural Gas (2022-23 (Safety and Security of Oil Installations of Public Sector Oil companies with specific reference to Baghjan Blow -out incident) shall be strictly adhered to by the user agency to avoid disaster in future.

- v. The user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.

Agenda No. 9

Proposal No. FP/AS/MINOIL/422315/2023

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of M/s Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. for non-forestry use of 2.2864 ha of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location BWNA in Village- Namram Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam (Online Proposal No. FP/AS/MINOIL/422315/2023)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DIGF, Regional Office, Shillong, and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation on the proposal, note the following:
 - i. Proposal involves diversion of 2.2864 ha. of Reserved Forest for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location BWNA in Village- Namram Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam.
 - ii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 0.5964 ha is required for approach road and 1.69 ha for drill area including safety zone of 0.41 ha.
 - iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.1 of Eco class 1 with no tree felling involved during implementation of the project.
 - iv. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. No endangered, Schedule-I species, etc. have been reported in the area proposed for diversion. No protected archaeological / heritage site / defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the area has been reported. Certificates to this effect have been submitted by DFO concerned.
 - v. As per decision Rule- 1 and 2, the area does not falls into in High Conservation value Zone. Out of total forest area proposed for

diversion, entire area is classified as non-forest (land without tree cover).

- vi. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 2.2864 ha non-forest land in Survey No. G46/10, Village- Burachapari, District-Sonitpur identified inside compensatory afforestation land bank of 830 ha. of evicted non forest land adjacent to Burahchapory Wildlife Sanctuary under Nagaon Wildlife Division, Nagaon. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO.
- vii. No violation of the Adhinyam have been reported. Authorities in the State Government have recommended the proposal.
- viii. Proposal involves drilling of one bore hole of 17.5 inch diameter. The life of mineral oil reservoir is 18 years. The requisite approval for drilling has been granted on 25.07.2022 for 4 years which is valid till 24.07.2026.
- ix. The Ministry, after preliminary examination of the proposal, observed shortcomings viz. approved exploration plan, comments of PCCF (WL) & CWLW, patch wise CA details, comments on visibility of cultivation and road in the proposed area, etc. which were requested from the State Government on 5.05.2025. The Regional Office was also requested to submit an inspection report.
- x. The State Government submitted its reply online on 23.06.2025 on the all the observations of the MoEF&CC. It has been informed that PCCF (WL) & CWLW has recommended the proposal inter-alia stipulating that 2 % of the total project cost shall be deposited as CORPUS fund to be utilized by the CWLW for Wild Life Conservation & Management and Mitigation of Human-Animal Conflict including preparation of plans.
- xi. The Regional Office also submitted its inspection report reporting no violation of the Adhinyam. The DDGF has recommended the proposal with certain conditions.
- xii. The Nodal Officer informed the Committee total area of the land bank is 830 ha. The said revenue land was recently vacated from the unauthorised occupation of encroachers. The land is being used for compensatory afforestation in lieu of various diversion proposals. The proposed land is suitable for CA and is free from all encumbrances. Some of illegal or temporary settlements visible in the area are also being removed and area will be cleared soon.
- xiii. The Committee observed that compensatory afforestation has been proposed from the land bank created by the State Government after removing the encroachment. Therefore, to prevent likely encroachment of the CA area in future, the CA the proposed CA land should be properly fenced and accordingly, the CA scheme should be modified, if needed, and same may be informed to the Ministry
- xiv. The Committee, keeping in view the safety concerns related to such activities in the forest areas, opined that the user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest

area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.

4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DIGF (Central), RO, Shillong and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam, recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval for diversion of 2.2864 ha. of Reserved forest land for exploration drilling of Hydrocarbon at location BWNA in Village- Namram Reserved Forest, District- Golaghat in the State of Assam subject to the general, standard and following additional conditions:
- i. The State Forest Department shall undertake appropriate action in consultation with the local Administration to vacate the encroachment from the forest land and a report in the same shall be submitted along with the compliance of 'in-principle' approval.
 - ii. A Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan, including measures for mitigating human-elephant conflict, shall be prepared and implemented at the project cost. Cost of implementation of the Comprehensive Plan shall be deposited into the account of State CAMPA. An approved copy of the same shall be submitted to the MoEF&CC along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
 - iii. To avoid avert disasters, the hazardous zone around the bore well, oil pads or pipelines or other ancillary infrastructure should be maintained by the various user agencies engaged in the mining or transportation of mineral oil as per the norms stipulated in the Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948, and rules framed thereunder.
 - iv. Recommendations made in the Nineteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Petroleum & Natural Gas (2022-23 (Safety and Security of Oil Installations of Public Sector Oil companies with specific reference to Baghjan Blow -out incident) shall be strictly adhered to by the user agency to avoid disaster in future.
 - v. The user agency in consultation with the State Forest Department should keep the forest area of optimum width along the boundary of the area proposed for diversion clear of vegetation as a fire control lines.

Agenda No.10

Online Proposal No. FP/BR/PetrolPump/415328/2023

Subject: Proposal for Ex-post facto approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (SanrakshanEvamSamvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 0.0225 ha of forest land in favour of Shri Rahul Jha for construction of approach road for Opening Biofuel Retail Outlet on side of NH-57 Muzaffarpur-Darbhanga in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar (Online No. FP/BR/PetrolPump/415328/2023) - regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF(c), Regional Office (RO), Nagpur in-charge of RO, Ranchi was present in the meeting while the Nodal Officer, Govt. of Bihar was not present in the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
 - i. The Govt. of Bihar vide their letter No. Van Bhumi-29/2024-572/Pa.Va.Ja.Pa. dated 05.02.2025 forwarded a proposal to obtain Ex-post facto approval of the Central Government, in terms of Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (SanrakshanEvamSamvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 0.0225 ha of forest land in favour of Shri Rahul Jha for construction of approach road for Opening Biofuel Retail Outlet on side of NH-57 Muzaffarpur-Darbhanga in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar.
 - ii. The total forest area under the proposal is 0.0225 ha which is located in Tirhut Forest Division, District:- Muzaffarpur, Bihar.
 - iii. The proposed project area is a notified protected forest and does not form part of any national park, wildlife sanctuary, biosphere reserve, tiger reserve, elephant corridor etc. Also no protected archaeological heritage site/ defence establishment or any other monuments are located in the area of the proposed project.
 - iv. Conservator of Forests, Muzaffarpur Circle forwarded the proposal to the Additional PCCF (CAMPA) cum Nodal Officer with recommendation. At this stage, no violation was reported.
 - v. On 08.03.2023, Additional PCCF (CAMPA) cum Nodal Officer, Bihar, Patna wrote to the DFO, Tirhut Forest Division, Muzaffarpur that as per the observation of satellite imagery, petrol pump was already established by the user agency. DFO, Tirhut was asked to inspect the site again and submit a fresh report through the Forest Conservator, Muzaffarpur.
 - vi. DFO Tirhut vide letter No. 2354 dated 03.11.2023 wrote to Range officer, Muzaffarpur East to inspect the site and submit a report. The Range Officer, Muzaffarpur East vide letter No. 718 dated 06.12.2023 has stated that the user agency has taken up the work of felling 22 plants and filling the soil, which is a violation of Sections 33, 41, 42 and 66 of Indian Forest Act, 1927 and Section-2 of Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and prosecution report has been submitted by the Range Officer, Muzaffarpur East. The DFO, Tirhut vide letter No. 2518 dated

07.12.2023 addressed to the Conservator of Forests, Muzaffarpur circle stated that he had inspected the site on 29.11.2023 along with the Range Officer, Muzaffarpur East. During the investigation, it was found that the user agency had filled the area between the inlet and outlet with (34 M x 13.5 M) 459 sq.m. of soil. The Range Officer, Muzaffarpur East filed case number C2 99/2023 against the user agency before Chief Judicial Magistrate. On 11.01.2024, Conservator of Forests, Muzaffarpur Circle has written to the DFO, Tirhut Forest Division that Range Officer, Muzaffarpur East Shri Uma Shankar Roy, has provided a report on 07.08.2023 to the DFO, Tirhut Forest Division regarding non-availability of trees at the previously proposed site but again Shri Roy himself has submitted a report to the DFO, Tirhut Forest Division on 06.12.2023 after on-site investigation, alleging felling of 22 trees and filling of soil.

- vii. The Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed on 0.50 Km Road Strip of notified forest land identified for carrying out plantation work of 100 number of saplings under Range Muzaffarpur East under Muzaffarpur district of Bihar State.
 - viii. As per DSS analysis report, the calculated area of shape file/KML file of forest land proposed for diversion is 0.0228 ha instead of 0.0225 ha.
 - ix. The Site Inspection of the proposal was carried out by Shri Poreddy Sanjeeva Reddy, AIGF, Regional Office, Ranchi on 26.02.2025. AIGF (C), Regional Office, Ranchi has stated that the proposal may be accepted with penal provision of five times NPV for the violation done by the user agency. DDGF, RO, Ranchi recommended with the remark that the ex-post facto approval of 0.0225 Ha of forest land for construction of approach road is recommended with 5 times penal NPV besides the general standard conditions.
 - x. The committee observed that the forest land has been used without prior approval of the central government, and accordingly the penal levies are required to be paid by the user agency. Further, the committee also observed that the Compensatory Afforestation in the instant case be raised on at least an area of one hectare.
4. **Decision of Advisory Committee:** After thorough deliberation and discussion with DDGF (Central), RO, Ranchi and after going through the facts of the proposal, the Committee recommended the proposal for granting '**in-principle**' approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 0.0225 ha of forest land in favour of Shri Rahul Jha for construction of approach road for opening Biofuel Retail Outlet on side of NH-57 Muzaffarpur-Darbhanga in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar subject to the general, standard and following specific conditions:-
- i. The penalty for violation shall be equal to NPV of forest land per hectare for each year of violation from the date of actual diversion as

- reported by the inspecting officer with maximum up to five (5) times the NPV plus 12 percent simple interest from the date of raising of such demand till the deposit is made.
- ii. The matter regarding imposition of penal CA is under consideration for the formulation of a uniform policy guideline in the matter. Keeping this in view, the imposition of penal CA (if any) shall be as per the said guideline, if issued.
 - iii. The Compensatory Afforestation shall be raised over one hectare degraded forest land at the cost of the user agency. The State shall submit the details of the identified land along with the KML file/maps and suitability certificate.
 - iv. (iv) The User Agency responsible for violation shall be prosecuted under relevant local Act of the State and/or Central Act for unauthorized use of forest land without the permission of State authority.
 - v. (v) The State Government will initiate disciplinary action against the officials concerned for not being able to prevent use of forest land for non-forestry purpose.
 - vi. The user agency shall develop a green belt in all areas excluding entry and exit points. The green belt shall be developed at a distance of 1 to 1.5 meters away from the boundary wall of the premises. Shrubby or Ornamental plants shall be planted in the front area of the retail outlet. Additionally, plantation must be carried out along the boundary of the retail outlet.

Agenda No.11

Online No. FP/BR/PetrolPump/414702/2023

Subject: Proposal for Ex-post facto approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (SanrakshanEvamSamvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 0.02025 ha of forest land for construction of approach road for opening retail outlet of Reliance BP Mobility Ltd. on Muzaffarpur-Darbhangga Road in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar State (Online No. FP/BR/PetrolPump/414702/2023) - regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF(c), Regional Office (RO), Nagpur in-charge of RO, Ranchi was present in the meeting while the Nodal Officer, Govt. of Bihar was not present in the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the

Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.

3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
 - i. The Govt. of Bihar vide their letter No. Van Bhumi-15/2024-233/P.V.J.P. dated 16.01.2025 forwarded a proposal to obtain Ex-post facto approval of the Central Government, in terms of Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (SanrakshanEvamSamvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 0.02025 ha of forest land for construction of approach road for opening retail outlet of Reliance BP Mobility Ltd. on Muzaffarpur-Darbhanga Road in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar.
 - ii. The total forest area under the proposal is 0.02025 ha of forest land which is located in Tirhut Forest Division, District:- Muzaffarpur, Bihar.
 - iii. Sri Vijay Kumar Jaiswal and Sri Anil Kumar Jaiswal have submitted an online application for opening retail outlet of Reliance BP Mobility Ltd on the side of Muzaffarpur-Darbhanga Road, Khata No.93, 516, Plot No. 270, 274, 275, Vill-Karnpur North, Thana+ Post-Bochaha, MauzaKarnpur North. On 14.06.2023, DFO Tirhut Forest Division, Muzaffarpur has inspected the site. The area for diversion is 0.02025 ha and the user agency required protected forest land which is to be diverted in district Muzaffarpur. No endangered/unique species of flora and fauna were found at the site. The proposed project area is a notified protected forest and does not form part of any national park, wildlife sanctuary, biosphere reserve, tiger reserve, elephant corridor etc. Also no protected archaeological/ heritage site/defence establishment or any other monuments are located in the area of the proposed project.
 - iv. Conservator of Forests, Muzaffarpur Circle has forwarded the proposal to the Additional PCCF (CAMPA) cum Nodal Officer with recommendation. At this stage, no violation was reported.
 - v. On 12.10.2023, Additional PCCF (CAMPA) cum Nodal Officer, Bihar, Patna has written to the DFO, Tirhut Forest Division, Muzaffarpur that as per the observation of satellite imagery, petrol pump was already established by the user agency. DFO, Tirhutwas asked to inspect the site again and send a fresh report through the Forest Conservator, Muzaffarpur.
 - vi. DFO Tirhut along with Range officer, Muzaffarpur inspected the site on 29.11.2023. On 07.12.2023, DFO Tirhut has submitted a report to the Conservator, Muzaffarpur with a copy to APCCF (CAMPA)-cum-Nodal Officer, Bihar, Patna that the user agency has taken up the work of felling 10 plants and filling soil, which is a violation under Section 33, 41, 42 and 66 of the Indian Forest Act 1980 and Section-2 of the Forest

(Conservation) Act 1980 and prosecution has been submitted by the Range Officer, Muzaffarpur East. The DFO Tirhut has also informed that the Reliance BP Mobility Ltd has done the work of soil filling (50.30mts x 13.5 mts)-679.05 sq. mts between the inlet and outlet site and the main road. The Forest Range Officer, Muzaffarpur East filed case number C2 100/2023 and confiscation case number 188/2023-24 Government of Bihar vs Vijay Kumar Jaiswal and others and also reported to the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Muzaffarpur and DFO Tirhut, APPCF (CAMPA)-cum-Nodal Officer, Bihar, Patna that 10 trees were felled by the user agency without obtaining departmental directions. On 13.07.2024, through National Lok Adalat, the confiscation suit number 188/2023-24 (case number C2 100/2023) has been settled on the basis of compromise by fixing the amount of Rs. 15000/- as damages

- vii. The Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed on 0.50 Km Road Strip of Notified forest land identified for carrying out plantation work of 100 number of saplings under Range Muzaffarpur East under Muzaffarpur district of Bihar State.
 - viii. As per DSS analysis report, the calculated area of of shape file/KML file of forest land proposed for diversion is found 0.0203 ha.
 - ix. The committee observed that the State Government recommended the Proposal with the specific condition that:
"It shall be mandatory for the user agency to develop a green belt in all areas excluding entry and exit points. The green belt shall be developed at a distance of 1 to 1.5 meters away from the boundary wall of the premises. Shrubby or Ornamental plants shall be planted in the front area of the retail outlet. Additionally, plantation must be carried out along the boundary of the retail outlet".
 - x. The Site Inspection of the proposal was carried out by Shri Poreddy Sanjeeva Reddy, AIGF, Regional Office, Ranchi on 07.02.2025. AIGF (C), Regional Office, Ranchi has stated that the proposal may be accepted with penal provision of five times the NPV for the violation done by the user agency. DDGF, RO, Ranchi recommended with the remark that the proposal is recommended with 5 times Penal NPV against the violated area.
 - xi. The committee observed that the forest land has been used without prior approval of the central government, and accordingly the penal levies are required to be paid by the user agency. Further, the committee also observed that the Compensatory Afforestation in the instant case be raised on at least an area of one hectare.
4. **Decision of Advisory Committee:** After thorough deliberation and discussion with DDGF (Central), RO, Ranchi and after going through the facts of the proposal, the Committee recommended the proposal for granting 'in-principle' approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of

0.02025 ha of forest land in favour of Shri Vijay Jaiswal for construction of approach road for retail Outlet of Reliance BP Mobility Ltd. on Muzaffarpur-Darbhanga Road in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar State subject to the general, standard and following specific conditions:-

- i. The penalty for violation shall be equal to NPV of forest land per hectare for each year of violation from the date of actual diversion as reported by the inspecting officer with maximum up to five (5) times the NPV plus 12 percent simple interest from the date of raising of such demand till the deposit is made.
- ii. The matter regarding imposition of penal CA is under consideration for the formulation of a uniform policy guideline in the matter. Keeping this in view, the imposition of penal CA (if any) shall be as per the said guideline, if issued.
- iii. The Compensatory Afforestation shall be raised over one hectare degraded forest land at the cost of the user agency. The State shall submit the details of the identified land along with the KML file/maps and suitability certificate.
- iv. The User Agency responsible for violation shall be prosecuted under relevant local Act of the State and/or Central Act for unauthorized use of forest land without the permission of State authority.
- v. The user agency shall develop a green belt in all areas excluding entry and exit points. The green belt shall be developed at a distance of 1 to 1.5 meters away from the boundary wall of the premises. Shrubby or Ornamental plants shall be planted in the front area of the retail outlet. Additionally, plantation must be carried out along the boundary of the retail outlet.
- vi. The State Government will initiate disciplinary action against the officials concerned for not being able to prevent use of forest land for non-forestry purpose.

Agenda No. 12

Proposal No. FP/HP/ROAD/514215/2024

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in f/o Himachal Pradesh Public Work Department for non-forestry use of 7.5479 ha of Protected Forest for widening of already constructed road from Poh Maidan to Dankhar Helipad km 0/00 to 12/460 in District Lahaul & Spiti in the State of Himachal Pradesh (Online Proposal No. FP/HP/ROAD/514215/2024)-regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis.

Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.

3. The DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Chandigarh and CCF, Government of Himachal Pradesh attended the meeting. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:

- i. The proposal is for diversion of 7.5479 ha of Protected Forest for widening of already constructed road from Poh Maidan to Dankhar Helipad km 0/00 to 12/460 in District Lahaul & Spiti in the State of Himachal Pradesh.
- ii. The component-wise break up of forest land as submitted in SIR by Regional Office, Chandigarh are as under:

Sl. No.	Component	Forest Land (ha.)	Non-Forest Land (ha.)
1	Proposed Road	7.3879	0.8447
2	Dumping site-1	0.04	0
3	Dumping site-2	0.04	0
4	Dumping site-3	0.04	0
5	Dumping site-4	0.04	0
	Total	7.5479	0.8447

- iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0 of Eco class 6 with no tree felling during implementation of the project.
- iv. Proposed area lies at 7.16 km aerial distance from the boundary of Kibber Wildlife sanctuary and at 3.8 Km aerial distance from the boundary of notified ESZ of Kibber Wildlife sanctuary. Further, the said diversion area also forms part of Cold Desert Biosphere reserve.
- v. Proposed area for diversion is a linear project and it is falling within the habitat of Blue Sheep which is a Schedule-1 species. Comments of CWLW are as under:
 - a. Wildlife Management plan along with animal passage plan is required for this project. The area from which road has been cut is a habitat of Blue Sheep and Blue Sheep in large number have been found to utilize the nearby pastures of Dhar Gangchumi and Nipti Nalla and plain pastures of Baldang. Further, during the Site Inspection by Divisional Forest Officer, Spiti Wildlife Division, Blue Sheep herds were spotted near Nipti Nalla and Newpur Dogri on dated 20/12/2024. Hence, user agency shall create underpasses for the Blue Sheep herds to pass across the pastures (animal passage plan attached).
 - b. Further, the user agency shall also attach noise reduction barriers made of 2 mts high steel wall equipped with green sound barriers and headlight reducers installed on both sides (on the lines of noise reduction barriers put up on NH 44 in Pench Tiger Reserve and NH 72 passing through Rajaji National Park). The plan for noise and headlight reduction barriers should be duly vetted by the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun. The cost for putting up these noise reduction barriers will be solely borne by HPPWD and these reduction barriers shall be attached throughout the road stretch.

- c. The total project cost at current price level as submitted by user agency in Part-I of the FCA case is ₹487.18 Lacs. Further, the cost of animal passage plan and noise reduction barriers will be over and above 2% of Project cost towards Wildlife Management Plan, which will be borne by the user agency.
- vi. No protected archaeological / heritage site / defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the area has been reported. Certificates to this effect have been submitted by DFO concerned.
- vii. Proposed forest area falls under Not-in High Conservation Value (HCV) Zone as per Decision Rule 2. However, as per Decision Rule 1, the Eastern part of the proposed road is falling within 250 meters of Spiti river.
- viii. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 28.8 ha degraded forest land in Survey No, 143X15, Morang UPF, Hull, Tehsil- Spiti, District- Lahaul & Spiti, Division- Spiti Wildlife Division, Kaza. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO.
- ix. The proposal involves violation as mentioned in Part-II.DCF, Spiti Wildlife Division, Kaza has mentioned in his site inspection report that approval to 4 different stretches of road from Poh maidan to Dhankar helipad was given under Section 3 (2) of FRA, 2006 in piecemeal manner which is in contravention of FRA, 2006 as well as FCA, 1980. The Hon'ble NGT in OA No. 173/2022 vide order dated 18.04.2022, constituted a Joint Committee for submission of factual report. The Joint Committee's factual report also observed the same in its recommendation (Copy of report attached). Also, the names of responsible officials for such violation have been conveyed by DFO to the office of CF Wildlife (South) circle Shimla vide letter no. 3278 dated. 24.12.2024 (Copy attached). The fifth and last road stretch from Gecha to Helipad, for which the permission under section 3(2) of FRA 2006 was sought by the user agency on 22.06.2022, but same was not sanctioned as it was found to be part of the composite linear project from Poh Maidan to Dhankar helipad. Further, the damage report for construction of road from Gecha to helipad has been issued under Section 32 & 33 of IFA, 1927 & section 2 of FCA 1980 of penalty amount ₹1,49,10,000 on dated 02.11.2022 and the notice to pay the penalty amount within 28 days was issued to Executive Engineer, HPPWD Kaza by RFO Tabo vide his letter No. 75/T HPFD dated 16.11.2022.

However as the penalty amount was not paid by HPPWD, the matter was recorded in General Diary by Police on 16/12/2022 (Copy attached). The DFO has also written to SP Lahaul & Spiti for recording FIR in the matter vide letter no. 3281 dated 24/12/2024 (Copy attached). Moreover, the whole road's case, which has been built in violation of provisions of FCA, 1980, has been uploaded in PARIVESH portal on 11.12.2024 for ex-post facto sanction by Central government in compliance to NGT Principal Bench, New Delhi's order vide judgement dated 03.01.2023 in OA No. 173/2022. Further, 4 times the diverted area has been proposed for Compensatory afforestation on the User Agency.

- x. Further, the Committee was also informed that the site inspection of the instant proposal was conducted by Deputy Inspector General of Forest (C) of Regional Office, Chandigarh on 04.06.2025 along with the officials of the State Forest Department and representatives of User Agency. The SIR has also been recommended by DDGF (C) of RO, Chandigarh. Summary of the same are as under:

I. Recommendation of DDGF (C), Regional Office, Chandigarh:

The proposal is for diversion of 7.5479 hectare of Forest land in favour of HPPWD for construction of road from Poh Maidan to Dankhar Helipad km 0/00 to 12/460 and has been recommended by the State Government, accordingly same is recommended for consideration in the Advisory Committee as per the extant Rules and Guidelines issued under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.

4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Chandigarh and CCF, Government of Himachal Pradesh and after going through the facts of the proposal, the Committee decided to **'defer'** the proposal with the following observations:

- i. State Government shall complete the action taken against the User Agency under IFA, 1927 and submit an updated action taken report.
- ii. State Government shall submit the action taken against the officials concerned for not being able to prevent the use of forest land for non-forestry purpose.
- iii. State Government shall submit a Wildlife management plan duly approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden, Himachal Pradesh.

Agenda No. 13

Proposal No. FP/HP/REDIV/532704/2025

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in f/o Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam Ltd. (SJVN Ltd.) for non-forestry use of 0.5 ha of Protected Forest for change in land use for placement of crusher unit for 0.50 ha. within already diverted land of Sunni Dam Hydroelectric Project (382 MW) in District Shimla in the State of Himachal Pradesh (Online Proposal No. FP/HP/REDIV/532704/2025)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.

3. The DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Chandigarh and CCF, Government of Himachal Pradesh attended the meeting. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
- i. The proposal is for change in land use for placement of crusher unit for 0.50 ha. within already diverted land of Sunni Dam Hydroelectric Project (382 MW) in District Shimla in the State of Himachal Pradesh.
 - ii. The Committee was informed that original proposal for diversion of 397.8863 ha forest land in favour of SJVN Ltd for the construction of Sunni Dam Hydroelectric Project (382 MW) within the jurisdiction of Shimla, Kotgarh and Karsog Forest Divisions, in District Shimla and Mandi, Himachal Pradesh was accorded Stage- I approval vide Ministry letter No. 8-07/2021-FC dated 22.12.2021 and Stage- II approval was accorded vide Ministry letter No. letter 8-07/2021-FC dated 23.08.2022.
 - iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0 of Eco class 6 with no tree felling during implementation of the project.
 - iv. Comparative Statement of change in land use are as under:

Sl. No.	Component wise breakup as per already approved forest land	Forest Land (ha.)	Component wise breakup after change of land use proposal.
1	Reservoir	337.6145	No change
2	Dam, Power house, Road and bridge	39.1249 (39.1249 + 0.5 = 39.6249)	Khasra no. 247/1 is falling under this land wherein crusher unit is proposed to be shifted.
3	Dumping	4.5576	No change
4	Road to quarry	2.3884	No change
5	Quarry Site including Batching & Crushing Plants	10.3264 (10.3264-0.5 = 9.8264)	Earlier crusher unit was proposed at Khasra nos. 360/1, 536/363/1 under this land which is now proposed to be shifted to Khasra no. 247/1 of sr. no. 02 above after approval of Land use change. Remaining components are unchanged.
6	Colony Site & Road to Quarry	0	No change
7	Underground/Notional Area for Power House & D/Tunnel	3.8743	No change
Total		397.8861	No change

- v. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. No endangered, Schedule-I species, etc. have been reported in the area proposed for diversion. No protected archaeological / heritage site / defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the

- area has been reported. Certificates to this effect have been submitted by DFO concerned.
- vi. Proposed forest area falls under Not-in High Conservation Value (HCV) Zones per Decision Rule 2. However, as per Decision Rule 1, the proposed area is falling within 250 meters of Satluj River.
 - vii. Since proposal is for change in land-use, Compensatory Afforestation has not been proposed. Compensatory levies for earlier proposal has already been deposited by the User Agency. It was further informed that DFO, Shimla has uploaded copy of letter of CEO, HP State Authority CAMPA letter dated 21.06.2025 wherein it is mentioned that total area diverted is 397.1737 ha for which 798.2642 ha CA was stipulated. Out of which 606.7642 ha land has been taken up for plantation in the current year i.e. 2025-26.
 - viii. No violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 have been reported by the DFO concerned.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Chandigarh and CCF, Government of Himachal Pradesh, recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval for non-forestry use of 0.5 ha of Protected Forest for change in land use for placement of crusher unit for 0.50 ha. within already diverted land of Sunni Dam Hydroelectric Project (382 MW) in District Shimla in the State of Himachal Pradesh subject to general and standard conditions.

Agenda No. 14

Proposal No. FP/HR/PetrolPump/482689/2023

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 in favour of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited for non-forestry use of 0.022 ha of Protected Forest land for approach access to Retail Outlet on Gulha-Pehowa road at Village- Cheeka, near Km stone no. 134, bearing Khasra No.- 45/2/2, Tehsil- Gulha, District- Kaithal in the State of Haryana (Proposal No. FP/HR/PetrolPump/482689/2023)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.

3. The DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Chandigarh and officials from the Government of Haryana attended the meeting. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
- i. The proposal is for diversion of 0.022 ha of Protected Forest land for approach access to Retail Outlet on Gulha-Pehowa road at Village-Cheeka, near Km stone no. 134, bearing Khasra No.- 45/2/2, Tehsil-Gulha, District- Kaithal in the State of Haryana.
 - ii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 0.022 ha is required for project site (approach access).
 - iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0 of Eco class 3 with no tree felling during implementation of the project.
 - iv. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. No endangered, Schedule-I species, etc. have been reported in the area proposed for diversion. No protected archaeological / heritage site / defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the area has been reported. Certificates to this effect have been submitted by DFO concerned.
 - v. As per decision Rule- 1 and 2, the area does not falls into in High Conservation value Zone. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, entire area is classified as non-forest (land without tree cover).
 - vi. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 0.1 ha degraded Protected forest in Survey No. H43Q5, Paharpur Minor RD 75-76 L&R, Village- Sotha, Tehsil- Guhla, District- Kaithal. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO.
 - vii. The proposal involves violation as mentioned in Part-II.DFO, Kaithal has mentioned in Part- II that there is violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980. Violation over an area of 0.0083 ha has been done by Shri Krishan Kumar, Chaudhary petroleum during 2020-2021 and over 0.0083 ha during 2021. Further, it is also mentioned that Damage Report No. 0132/020 dated 02.07.2024 has been issued. The same has been verified by Regional Office, Chandigarh in their inspection report also.
 - viii. The Ministry, after preliminary examination of the proposal, observed shortcomings viz. category of the proposal has to be changed and informed to the Ministry, detailed violation report, clearly mentioning the nature, extent, date and details of the persons responsible for violation and action taken against user agency and action taken, if any, against forest officials, State Government shall clarify whether there is violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 or Indian Forest Act, 1927 in the proposal, component wise break up and legal status of land proposed for Compensatory Afforestation etc. Additional information was requested online from the State on 27.03.2025. The Regional Office was also requested to submit an inspection report.

- ix. The State Government submitted its reply online on 30.06.2025 and informed following:
- e) Since there is no option to change category of the proposal, user agency has requested to consider the same.
 - f) Detailed violation report, clearly mentioning the nature, extent, date and details of the persons responsible for violation and action taken against user agency and action taken, if any, against forest officials is not submitted along with the reply.
 - g) Action has been taken against the User Agency under the provision of FC Act, 1980 but the Damage Report has been filed against User Agency under IFA, 1927.
 - h) There is only one component i.e. road with an area of 0.022 ha. The same has been mentioned in Part- I by the user agency.
 - i) KML file of CA site is updated. The same has been verified by DSS and found that CA is carried on degraded forest land without tree cover (non-forest).
- x. Further, the Committee was also informed that the site inspection of the instant proposal was conducted by Deputy Inspector General of Forest (C) of Regional Office, Chandigarh on 03.04.2025 along with the officials of the State Forest Department and representatives of User Agency. The SIR has also been recommended by DDGF (C) of RO, Chandigarh. Summary of the same are as under:

I. Legal status of the forest land proposed for diversion:

Name: Kaithal, Haryana; Protected Forest

Item-wise break-up details of the forest land proposed for diversion: Item-wise break- up:

S.No.	Component	Forest land (ha)	Non Forest Land (ha)
1	Project Site (Village Cheeka, District kaithal)	0.0220	0.1939
2	Other Components	0	0
	Total	0.0220	0.1939

II. Wildlife:

Whether forest area proposed for diversion is important from wildlife point of view or not

As per the details filled at para 9 in part II of PARIVESH portal, the proposed area is not important from wildlife point of view.

III. Vegetation:

- i. Total number of trees to be affected: NIL
- ii. Number of trees which will actually be felled: NIL

IV. Background on the proposal: This proposal is for ex-post facto approval for diversion of 0.0220 ha. of forest land for

access to the existing petrol pump of HPCL bearing Khasra No.-45//2/2 on Guhla-Pehowa road at village Cheeka, near Km stone no. 134, Tehsil- Guhla, District Kaithal, Haryana.

V. **Whether proposal involves violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam 1980 or not. If yes, a detailed report on violation including action taken against the concerned officials.**

The proposal involves violation as reported by DFO in Part-II. As per DFO report, there is Violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and Indian Forest Act, 1927.

- Details of Violation: 83.04 m², Pehowa-Cheeka road, Km 25-26
- Area involved in violation: 0.0083 ha
- Person responsible for violation: Mr. Krishan Kumar S/o Sh. Arjun Dass, Owner of Chaudhary Petroleum, Pehowa-Cheeka road, Kaithal, Haryana.
- Action taken: Damage Report has been chalked against violator vide DR No. 0132-020 dated 02/07/2024.

VI. **Whether land being diverted has any socio-cultural/religious value. Whether any sacred grove or very old grown trees/forests exists in areas proposed for diversion:**

As per record, the land being diverted has no socio-cultural/religious value.

Situation w.r.t. any Protected Area:

As per record, the instant proposal is not falling in or around any protected area.

VII. **Field observations/ Actionable Points/recommendations: -**

- 1) The proposal was submitted by the User Agency online in PARIVESH Portal on 20.06.2024 and as per the Detailed Violation Report submitted in PARIVESH- 2 Portal, Damage report has been chalked against violator vide DR No. 0132-020 dated 02.07.2024. The area involved in violation is 0.0083 ha for approach access to the existing petrol pump of HPCL bearing Khasra No.-45//2/2 on Guhla-Pehowa road at Village Cheeka, near Km stone no. 134, Tehsil- Guhla, District Kaithal, Haryana.
- 2) The petrol pump is in operation since 1996, the project proponent attempted to seek prior approval under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam 1980 during the year 1996 for diversion of forest land for the approach access. The relevant document is uploaded in PARIVESH at SN-13 under Additional Information (SN-8) in Part-II. The document indicates that the User Agency has deposited NPV as well as cost of CA during that time, but both the State Government as

well as Project Proponent could not show a copy of In-principle/Final Approval.

- 3) The instant proposal has not included the area between ingress and egress approximately 200 Sq mtr. Both ingress and egress and the space between these two have already been concretized.
- 4) The proposal may be accepted for processing for ex-post facto approval under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 for approach access subject to removal of encroachment between ingress and egress.

VIII. Recommendation of DDGF (C), Regional Office, Chandigarh:

The proposal is for approach access to petrol pump and has been recommended by the State Government, accordingly same is recommended for ex-post facto approval in the Advisory Committee as per the extant Rules and Guidelines issued under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980.

4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Chandigarh and officials from Government of Haryana, recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval for diversion of 0.022 ha of Protected Forest land for approach access to Retail Outlet on Gulha-Pehowa road at Village- Cheeka, near Km stone no. 134, bearing Khasra No.- 45/2/2, Tehsil- Gulha, District- Kaithal in the State of Haryana subject to the general, standard and following specific conditions:
 - i. The User Agency shall pay the five (5) times penal NPV for the extent of violation done plus 12 percent simple interest from the date of raising of such demand till the deposit is made by the User Agency.
 - ii. Action under section 3A/3B of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 be initiated by Regional Office, Chandigarh, as applicable.
 - iii. State Government shall submit detailed violation report along with Stage- I compliance report.
 - vii. The Compensatory Afforestation shall be raised over one hectare degraded forest land at the cost of the user agency. The State shall submit the details of the identified land along with the KML file/maps and suitability certificate.

Agenda No. 15

Online Proposal No. FP/KA/HYD/IRRIG/447501/2023

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 54.155 ha of forest land in various villages of Sagar, Shivamogga Wildlife and Honnavara Divisions for construction of Hydroelectric project- Sharavathy Pumped Storage-2000 MW power generation in favour of the Chief engineer, Karnataka Power Corporation Limited (KPCI), Bengaluru

5. The above stated agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The DDGF (Central), Regional Office, MoEFCC, Bengaluru and Nodal Officer, Government of Karnataka attended the meeting.
6. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the Advisory Committee. The Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
7. The Advisory Committee after through deliberation and discussion observed that:
 0. The Govt. of Karnataka has submitted the proposal on the above mentioned subject vide letter no. FEE 67 FLL 2025(e) dated 20.03.2025 seeking approval of the Central Government under section-2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam for construction of Hydroelectric project- Sharavathy Pumped Storage-2000 MW power generation in favour of the Chief engineer, Karnataka Power Corporation Limited (KPCL), Bengaluru.
 - i. The proposal is for diversion of 54.155 ha of forest land for construction of Pumped Storage Scheme of 2000 MW which will provide peaking benefits utilizing the existing reservoir at Talakalale as the upper reservoir and Gerusoppa as the lower reservoir. In this proposal, no new reservoir has been proposed. Both the reservoirs are proposed to be connected with a water conductor system (PCC/steel lined) which will act as HRT and TRT. An underground powerhouse cavern with 8 units of 250 MW reversible Francis pump turbine, will be constructed between the two reservoirs and connected with the tunnels.
 - ii. The State clarified that no new dams or submergence are involved, as existing reservoirs are used. Most project components are underground or along existing infrastructure, minimizing surface impact. The site was selected due to its technical suitability and efficiency. The project supports renewable energy integration, reduces carbon emissions, and provides socio-economic benefits while incorporating ecological safeguards.
 - iii. The proposed land falls within the Honavar Division, Shimoga Wildlife Division and Sagar Division and type of forest is reserve forest and others.
 - iv. The project is located in the state of Karnataka, specifically within the Bengaluru Urban District. It is classified under the Hydel/Irrigation category, and forest land is proposed to be diverted for a duration of 99 years.

- v. The user agency responsible for implementing the project is Karnataka Power Corporation Limited (KPCL), which is a State Public Sector Undertaking (PSU).
- vi. The project involves diversion of forest land across three forest divisions—Honavar Division (27.928 ha), Shimoga Wildlife Division (14.582 ha), and Sagar Division (11.645 ha), totaling 54.155 hectares.
- vii. The legal status of the land in Honavar Division is Reserved Forest (RF), while the other two divisions include forest types classified under other categories. All three divisions fall under Eco-Class I, indicating high ecological sensitivity. Vegetation density is relatively high, ranging from 1.0 in Honavar and Shimoga, to 0.3–0.7 in Sagar.
- viii. The project will utilize a total of 54.155 ha of forest land and 88.608 ha of non-forest land. The land will be used for infrastructure such as the penstock, power house, tunnels (head race, tail race), access roads, transformer cavern, surge chambers, batching plants, contractor's offices, fabrication yards, dumping sites, and labor camps, among others.
- ix. A total of 16,041 trees are proposed to be felled for the project—13,756 trees in Honavar Division, 1,540 trees in Shimoga Wildlife Division, and 745 trees in Sagar Division. Tree enumeration also identified 11 to 57 species in each division, depending on location.
- x. There are no existing working plan prescriptions for the forest land proposed for diversion in any of the three divisions. This indicates that the forest areas are not currently under any structured forest management plan.
- xi. All project components fall within Seismic Zone 3, making the area moderately prone to earthquakes. Construction activities such as road widening (over 20 km), slope cutting (up to 60°), and tunneling (up to 3.2 km in length and 500 m depth) are expected to cause significant soil erosion, habitat fragmentation, and disturbance to forest ecosystems. Blasting activities and regular vehicle movement may further increase environmental degradation.
- xii. The proposed project site lies entirely within the forest, i.e., the distance from the forest boundary is 0 km.
- xiii. The forests in all three divisions support a rich variety of wildlife including several rare and endangered species. Notable species include the Lion-Tailed Macaque, Tiger, Leopard, Sloth Bear, Wild Dogs, King Cobra, Malabar Giant Squirrel, and many others. These animals are highly sensitive to habitat disturbances.
- xiv. Both Honavar and Shimoga Wildlife Divisions fall within protected areas such as wildlife sanctuaries or eco-sensitive zones. The project is likely to cause habitat fragmentation, increased pollution, disruption of animal movement, and loss of biodiversity, particularly affecting arboreal species like the Lion-Tailed Macaque. The Sagar Division, however, is not within a protected area.
- xv. Impact on Rare and Endangered Species: Yes, all three divisions are home to rare, endemic, and endangered species. Project implementation is expected to lead to canopy opening, habitat discontinuity, and behavioural changes in wildlife, particularly in sensitive species. Continuous human activity during construction and

operational phases may result in reduced biodiversity and long-term ecological disturbance.

- xvi. There are no protected archaeological monuments, heritage sites, defence establishments, or important historical landmarks within the project area across any of the three forest divisions.
- xvii. The forest land proposed for diversion has been assessed and found to be unavoidable and minimal, necessary for the successful implementation of the project.
- xviii. There is no record of any work in violation of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 within the project area.
- xix. Site inspections have been completed and documented by the respective Deputy Conservators of Forests (DCFs) for all three divisions. The reports were submitted in January 2025.
- xx. **Compensatory Afforestation (CA):** Compensatory afforestation is proposed in Chikkamagaluru District (Melugiri Village) for both Shimoga and Sagar divisions, covering 54.155 ha. Honavar Division has not proposed any CA land. A CA suitability certificate has been issued, though the date mentioned (06.12.2025) appears to be erroneous. The total cost for the CA scheme is approximately ₹9.94 crore and includes detailed plans, mapping, and agency responsibilities. The CA land details are as given below:

District, Taluk & Hobli	Village	Survey No.	Extent in A-G (ha)	Plants/ha proposed to be planted	Remarks about the adjacent of the proposed land parcel to a notified forest
Chikkamagaluru Chikkamagaluru Jagara	Melugiri	5	54.155	-	Proposed non-forest land is adjacent to the Bhadra Tiger reserve
Total			54.155		

- xxi. The DCF Chikkamagaluru Division has issued the topo Map, Geo-referenced Map along with GPS readings of all corners, CA Suitability Certificate & CA Scheme and stated that the said land has Shola growth and adjoining to the Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary. Hence, planting has to be taken up in degraded forest land.

Forest Division	Name of Forest & Block	District, Taluk & Hobli	Village	Survey No	Extent in (ha)
Chikkamagaluru	Yemmedoddi Reserved Forest	Chikkamagaluru (D) & (T) Biruru Hobli	Yemmedoddi Kaval	70,72 & 73	30.00

	Churchegudd a Reserved Forest	Chikkamagalur u (D) & (T) lakya Hobli	Churchegudd a Kaval	1	24,15 5
Total					54.15 5 ha

- xxii. The cost-benefit ratio has been assessed at 1:2643.25, indicating very high economic benefits compared to environmental costs. The total estimated cost of the project is ₹8,64,400 lakh, which is equivalent to ₹8,644 crore.
- xxiii. No specific catchment area treatment has been proposed; the treatment area is recorded as 0 hectares.
- xxiv. The project also requires wildlife clearance, given its overlap with protected areas and ecologically sensitive zones.
- xxv. A total of 130 families are expected to be affected by the project. The rehabilitation plan has been acknowledged but is yet to be implemented.
- xxvi. Compliance with the Forest Rights Act, 2006 is not required in this case, as per Rule 11(7) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023.
- xxvii. As part of Environment Clearance, the Terms of Reference (ToR) has been received for the Sharavathy PSP during Dec 2023 from MoEF&CC. The EIA studies for three seasons as per the approved ToR has been completed and the draft report is prepared and as on date the EIA report has been submitted to KSPCB for conducting a public hearing meeting.
- xxviii. The Component-wise breakup of the forest land requirement for the project is given below:

S. No.	Component	Forest Land Proposed for Diversion (ha)	Non-forest Land (ha)
1.	Penstock	1.466	0
0.	Power House	0.68	0
0.	Transformer cavern	0.496	0
0.	Down Stream Surge Chamber	0.33	0
0.	Extended Draft tube	0.464	0
0.	Adit	0.032	0
0.	Tail Race Tunnel	7.629	0
0.	Adit to TRT	0.805	0
0.	Main access tunnel	1.786	0
0.	Cable access tunnel	1.513	0
0.	Portal to CAT	0.206	0
0.	Pot head yard	1.328	0
0.	Batching plant	0	0.5
0.	Contractor office	0	4.279
0.	Aggregate processing plant	0	4.309
0.	Labour camp	0	7.006
0.	Sand Quarry	0	0.5

0.	Portal to MAT	0.786	0
0.	Portal to Adit to TRT	0.322	0
0.	Upstream Surge	2.722	0
0.	Fabrication Yard	0	19.502
0.	Existing road widening along with drain	12.824	1.388
0.	Adit to Upstream surge	0.604	0.1
0.	Portal of Adit to US surge	0.33	0
0.	Power Evacuation	1.645	0
0.	Head Race Tunnel	4.177	0
0.	Out let Structure	2.504	0
0.	New Road along with Drain	2.586	0.763
0.	Intake Structure	8.92	5.541
0.	Dump Yard	0	44.72
		54.155	88.608

- xxix. The Talakalale dam along with the Linganamakki Dam was constructed during 1960 and was commissioned during 1964. The Gerusoppa Dam was commissioned during 2000. The details regarding the forest diversion are enclosed.
- xxx. The cumulative Impact Assessment study and Carrying Capacity study is a prerequisite for grant of 'in-principle' approval under the Adhinyam and Environment Clearance under the EIA notification 2006. The reply and the documents submitted by the User Agency are verified. The report submitted is with respect to overall safety of the dams. It does not highlight the cumulative impact of the projects existing and upcoming hydro-power projects in the basin and carrying capacity of the river basin. So, the User Agency may be directed to take up both the studies as part of the EIA report.
- xxxii. The State Dam Safety Organisation (SDSO) has furnished its recommendations to Karnataka Power Corporation Limited (KPCL) regarding the necessary remedial measures to be undertaken to ensure the safety and structural integrity of the Talakalale and Gerusoppa dams. A copy of these recommendations was also forwarded to the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) for information. However, as the NDSA has not raised any observations or additional recommendations concerning the SDSO's report, the recommendations provided by the SDSO are deemed acceptable and valid.
- xxxiii. The State has informed that there is no requirement of approval of NDSA and SDSO.
- xxxiv. Regarding submission of CAT plan the State has informed that the reports submitted by the User Agency obtained from Central Water Commission have recommended both structural and non-structural

intervention in the watershed/ catchment area of both the reservoirs. As per the report the User Agency may be directed to prepare Catchment Area Treatment Plan in consultation with the relevant line departments as well as provide necessary funding for its implementation.

- xxxv. The State has informed that the User Agency has submitted the draft EIA/EMP report prepared by M/s WAPCOS is verified. In that particular report the impacts of the project on aquatic flora & fauna is deliberated. But in the report, the impacts are not discussed in detail. Since there is a possibility of adverse impact on terrestrial and aquatic flora and fauna, both during construction and operational phase, the User Agency may be directed to prepare a mitigation plan and implement the mitigation measures in consultation with the Forest Department. Further, the 19th State Board for Wildlife committee meeting was held on 28-01-2025 and recommended for the approval of the standing committee of the National Board for Wildlife. This proposal is presently under consideration of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Government of India.
- xxxvi. The User Agency is required to pay the Net Present Value (NPV) of forest land proposed for diversion as per para 3.1 to 3.4 of the FC guidelines communicated by Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, New Delhi vide F.No. 5-3/2011-FC (Vol-I) dated 06.01.2022 and 23.03.2022. The user agency has submitted an undertaking agreeing to pay the Net Present Value (NPV) of the forest land proposed for diversion.
- xxxvii. The State Government has submitted that as per the User Agency, evacuation of the power generated is proposed through an existing transmission line from Gerusoppa to Talagoppa. However, as per the SIR of the RO, records of whether FC approval has been accorded for the said transmission line is neither available with the Forest Department nor with the User Agency. **Prima facie, the transmission line erected from Gerusoppa to Talagoppa (which is within the sanctuary limits) appears to be a violation of FC Act, 1980.**
- xxxviii. The committee noted the SIR has been carried out by the DIGF (Central), RO Bengaluru and has not recommended the proposal due to following reasons:
- a. The proposed forest area falls inside the Sharavathi Valley Lion Tailed Macaque Wildlife Sanctuary, which is located in the central regions of the Western ghats.
 - b. The Western Ghats constitute one of the 34 global biodiversity hotspots on account of its exceptional level of floral and faunal endemism (Conservation International, 2005).
 - c. "The flora of the Western Ghats comprises more than 12,000 species, of which, more than 4000 species are flowering plants and 1500 species are endemic to the Western Ghats (Nayar, 1996). The proposal involves the felling of more than 15,000 trees, many of which are endemic to the Western Ghats. Construction of new road, widening of roads, construction of the surge shaft, adits, pot head

- yards, power evacuation etc would result in complete destruction of the wet evergreen forests of canopy density ranging from 0.7 to 1.
- d. Similarly, the Western Ghats is rich in its faunal diversity (Daniels, 2003; Sreekantha et al, 2007) and harbors rare, endangered and highly endemic faunal species, many of which feature in the IUCN red list. It accounts for more than 120 species of mammals (12% of which are endemic), 508 species of birds (4% of which are endemic), 156 species of reptiles (62% endemic), 157 species of amphibians (85% endemic) and 289 species of fishes (41% of which are endemic to Western ghats).
 - e. This landscape also harbors a number of flagship mammals like the Asian Elephant, Gaur and Tiger. It is also one of the last remaining habitats for the Lion-Tailed Macaque (*Macaca Silenus*), Malabar pied horn bill (*Anthracosceros coronatus*) and King Cobra (*Ophiphagus hannah*). The 2022-23 census of the Lion Tailed Macaque, jointly carried out by the Karnataka Forest Department and SACON, Coimbatore estimated that the single largest population of Lion Tailed Macaque (730 individuals) is found in the Sharavathi Valley Lion-tailed Macaque Sanctuary (Copy of the report attached)
 - f. Lion-Tailed Macaque's (LTM) are primarily arboreal and their distribution is heavily influenced by the distribution of plant species diversity, which in turn is determined by the regional climate and topography. LTMs are found exclusively in wet-evergreen forests, where they have evolved to feed on certain rainforest plant species, such as the fruits of *Cullenia exarillata*, *Ficus* sps, *Artocarpus* sps etc found in these forests. The continuous degradation of rainforest habitats has created isolated populations that form islands, which in turn limits the resources for the LTM and constrains them from dispersing, which is an inherent natural history trait. As the proposed project involves felling of more than 15,000 trees, opening up of forests of very high canopy densities, widening and formation of roads, **it would result in further fragmentation and creation of isolated populations of the Lion Tailed Macaque and other endemic species which may eventually lead to its extinction. Alternate CA land proposed, being a shola grassland, will not be able to compensate for the loss of habitat of the Lion Tailed Macaque.**
 - g. The proposed area consists of climax forests of tropical wet evergreen, semi-evergreen and shola grasslands, with very high canopy densities varying from 0.7 to 1.0. under Eco class 1. **They are highly vulnerable and complex ecosystems, which, if destroyed, cannot be restored back to their original state. The proposed project, if implemented, would lead to irreplaceable damage to these forests.**

- h. Geologically, the Western Ghats are composed primarily of Precambrian rock formations, including gneiss, schist, and charnockite, which are over a billion years old. The region also features laterite soil, which is prone to erosion, especially when vegetation cover is removed (Subramanian, 1993). Amphibolite a metamorphic rock, found in the proposed area, when exposed to the environment, can contribute to landslides. Thus, these geological formations are unstable, particularly in areas that have been subjected to human activities such deforestation, tunnelling etc. **As the project involves steep slope cutting of up to 60 as degrees for formation of new roads, widening of existing roads, felling of over 15,000 trees, and blasting of subsurface rocks, high rainfall coupled with exposure of steep slopes and the soil, would make the region particularly vulnerable to landslides.**
- i. As per the Geological Survey of India, the Western Ghats falls within the Seismic Zone 3. Studies show an increase in the frequency of earthquakes, due to the impoundment of reservoirs built for hydroelectric power generation. (Simpson, 1976, McGarr and Simpson, 1997, Gupta, 1992). Out of 28 reservoirs in the Western Ghat escarpment region, 15 are reported to be associated with earthquakes (Guha, 2000, Rastogi, 2003). It has been suggested that induced stresses and pore pressure due to the reservoir water load may cause triggering of earthquakes in the region. As the project involves two reservoirs, and the drilling and blasting for construction of under ground tunnels of diameter up to 9mts, length up to 3.2 kms and depth ranging to 500 mts below, it can be disastrous not only to ecology of the area, but also to human habitations in the area.
- j. "The Western Ghats also forms an important watershed for the entire peninsular India, being the source of 37 west flowing rivers and 3 major east flowing rivers. The central Western Ghats of Karnataka (where the project is located) is extremely important both agriculturally and horticulturally with rice, coffee, tea, cardamom, pepper, ginger, arecanut being the notable crops. No studies have been undertaken to determine the effect of such projects on the watershed of these areas.
- k. Implementation of this project would result in regular movement of vehicles, heavy machineries and personnel during construction, operation and maintenance of the project during its 20-year lease period, which would completely and permanently alter the ecology of the area negatively.
- l. The project does not clearly state the modus operandi of power evacuation. As per the User Agency, the existing transmission line from Gerusoppa to Talagoppa would be used by increasing its capacity. Whether increasing the capacity would further result in

felling of additional trees is not known. Moreover, records of whether FC approval has been accorded for the said transmission line is neither available with the Forest Department nor with the User Agency. Prima facie, the transmission line erected from Gerusoppa to Talagoppa (which is within the sanctuary limits) appears to be a violation of FC Act, 1980.

- m. The economic feasibility of the project is questionable. As per the User Agency, the power generated through this project is 2000 MW, while the power that would be required to pump water upstream is 2500 MW.
 - n. **As per the CWLW's report, more than 18000 ha of forest land has been leased out in the past to this User Agency (Karnataka Power Corporation limited) for various projects across rivers in the Uttara Kannada District. Implementation of this project in Sharavathi Valley Lion Tailed Macaque Sanctuary can cause enormous damage to the flora and fauna of the landscape. (Copy of the report attached)**
 - o. As the ecological fallout far outweighs the economic benefits that may be accrued by commissioning this project, **it is recommended that the project should not be approved.**
 - p. Above information on Western Ghats is based on the research paper namely "Exploring biodiversity and ecology of Central Western Ghats" by Ramachandra et al, ENVIS Technical Report 39, March 2012, Energy and Wetlands Research Group, Centre for Ecological Studies, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.
- xxxix. However, the DDGF (Central), RO Bengaluru has recommended the proposal subject to the following
- a. The objective is to generate 2000 MW of hydroelectric power by linking the existing Talakalale Dam (as the upper reservoir) with the Gerusoppa Dam (as the lower reservoir) through the construction of penstocks, a powerhouse, tunnels, roads, and other infrastructure. A detailed site inspection was conducted by the Deputy Inspector General of Forests (DIGF) from the Regional Office in Bangalore, and the inspection report is attached.
 - b. The forest area proposed for diversion lies in the Western Ghats and is characterized by dense vegetation with a canopy density exceeding 0.7. The project would result in the felling of over 15,000 trees, many of which are endemic to this ecologically sensitive region. The area is also home to significant endemic wildlife species, including the Lion-Tailed Macaque (LTM) and the Malabar Pied Hornbill, both of which rely on tall, undisturbed canopy forests. There is no alternative alignment as the project depends on utilizing existing reservoirs and gravity for hydroelectricity production.
 - c. The non-Forest land proposed for compensatory afforestation (CA), is a 54.155 hectares land in the Chikmagaluru Forest Division which is a Gomala Land (grazing land for livestock). The proposed NFL has Shola vegetation and is adjacent to Bhadra Tiger Reserve. An additional 54.155 hectares of degraded forest land has also been

proposed for CA in two patches of 30 ha and 24.155 ha respectively. These two additional sites are reported to be well stocked and not degraded.

- d. The proposed project site lies within the Sharavathi Valley Lion-Tailed Macaque Wildlife Sanctuary, which harbors the largest known population (730 individuals) of LTM as per the 2022-23 wildlife census. A separate proposal (WP/KA/HYD/507286/2024) has been submitted for wildlife clearance, which is currently pending. The Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW) has recommended modifications to the design, including adopting underground structures, and minimizing surface openings to avoid felling approximately 518 trees in the Surge Tank area and by constructing an underground road from Nagar Basti Kere to Bagodi to preserve approximately 12,000 out of the 13,756 trees marked for removal. Building an overground road would disrupt the free movement of canopy-dependent species such as the LTM. Revision in the design to minimize tree felling and protect the ecological integrity of the area may be considered. **The proposal is recommended.**
- xi. The Standing Committee of the National Board of Wildlife in its 84th meeting held on 26.06.2025 recommended the proposal for use of 42.51 ha of forest land and 60.534 ha non-forest land from Sharavathi Valley Lion Tailed Macaque Wildlife Sanctuary and 11.645 ha forest land and 28.074 ha non-forest land from eco-sensitive zone around the sanctuary for construction of Sharavathi Pumped Storage Project (2000 MW) in favour of Karnataka Power Corporation Limited in Shivmogga and Uttara Kannada Districts '*in-principle*' with the following conditions, as inter alia below:
 - a. The project proposal shall be placed before the Standing Committee for its appraisal upon its approval under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
 - b. The project involves removal of trees for two main purposes namely construction of surge tank and widening of approach road of 12.3 km from Nagar basti kere to Begodi village from where the underground road commences.
 - c. Most of the 518 trees of Surge tank area can be saved if an alternate underground structure is constructed with a narrow opening for air outlet is designed.
 - d. More than 12000 trees out of 13756 trees enumerated to be felled for 12.3 km road from Nagar basti kere to Begodi can be saved if the road that is proposed underground till pump house can be extended from Nagar basti kere to base of pump house. This will also help the flagship species of the sanctuary i.e. Lion Tailed Macaque to have free ranging canopy which would be otherwise broken due to widening of road. The road length in case of going underground would also reduce from 12.3 km to about 8 km. Maximum attempts should be made to take this road underground even if in part segments.
 - e. Since there is construction of new dam is not involved in the proposal, the User Agency claims that this is not a regular hydroelectric project. The clarification submitted by the User

Agency that the proposed project does not fall under the category of Hydroelectric project is not satisfactory. Therefore, clarification may be submitted by User Agency obtained from competent authority in this regard.

- f. The component of power evacuation from the power house is not included in the project proposal. However, the User Agency stated that the existing power transmission lines would be upgraded and used for power evacuation. Since, the upgradation of the existing transmission lines requires installation of new towers, this involves breaking up of the soil which is not permissible in the existing provisions. This point needs to be considered while processing the proposal at a higher level.
 - xli. The Committee noted that the State Government shall provide its comments on the suggestions of the Standing Committee of the National Board of Wildlife in its 84th meeting held on 26.06.2025.
 - xlii. Further, the committee noted that the proposal has not been recommended by the Inspecting Officer, due to aforementioned reasons. However, DDGF(Central) RO Bengaluru has recommended the proposal. In this regard, the Regional Office shall provide its comments on the issues highlighted in the SIR as well as the issues highlighted in the Minutes of the SC-NBWL.
8. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the Dy. DGF (Central), RO, Bengaluru and Nodal Officer, Government of Karnataka. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Karnataka, the Committee deferred the proposal and sought clarification/information on the following for further consideration in the matter:
- i. The State Government shall provide the status of compliance of point no.3 & point no. 4 of the recommendations of the Standing Committee of the National Board of Wildlife in its 84th meeting held on 26.06.2025 regarding the instant project.
 - ii. The State Government shall provide its comments on the issues raised in the SIR of the Regional Office.
 - iii. The Regional Office shall provide its comments on the issues highlighted in the Inspection report of DIGF, RO Bengaluru regarding the instant project.

Agenda No. 16

Online Proposal No. FP/GJ/OTHERS/464635/2024

Subject:-Proposal seeking Ex-post fact approval under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for non-forestry use of 48.6512 ha Reserved Forest land Survey No 434/A1/2 & 434/A1/1 Village Hazira and Survey No 178 Village Shivrampur for establishment of 15.621 MTPA Steel complex by M/s Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel India Ltd at Hazira, District Surat in the Gujarat State.(Online Proposal No.FP/GJ/OTHERS/464635/2024).

1. The agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The IGF(C), Sub-Office (SO), Hyderabad in-charge of RO, Gandhinagar and Nodal Officer, Govt. of Gujarat was present in the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
 - i. The State Govt. of Gujarat vide letter No.FED/FLP/e-file/6/2025/0425/F dated 03.04.2025 submitted a proposal to obtain Ex-post fact approval under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 for non-forestry use of 48.6512 ha Reserved Forest and Unclassed Forests land in Survey No 434/A1/2 & 434/A1/1 Village Hazira and Survey No 178 Village Shivrampur for establishment of 15.621 MTPA Steel complex by M/s Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel India Ltd at Hazira, District Surat in the Gujarat State. The instant proposal electronically received in the Ministry on 03.04.2025.
 - ii. The total forest area under the proposal is 48.6512 ha (19.8257 Ha- Reserved Forest and 28.8255Ha- Unclassed Forests) of forest land which is located in Surat Forest Division, District:- Surat, Gujarat.
 - iii. The proposed forest area is Reserved Forest and Unclassed Forests with canopy density of 0.04 (Eco Class-3) and 4409 nos of trees (16 species) have been proposed to be felled.
 - iv. Arcelor Mittal and Nippon Steel have established a joint venture (JV) company named Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel India Limited (AMNSI) In India. AMNSI has acquired a fully integrated steel plant at Hazira, Gujarat with a capacity of 8.6 MTPA of finished flat products. Along with iron making, steel making and Rolling facilities, the Hazira ISP also consists of downstream units, namely, cold rolling mill, galvanizing line, steel processing facilities, extra wide plate mill and pipe mill. Additionally, AMNSI also owns significant Iron ore beneficiation and palletization capacities located in Eastern India, with direct access to the region's rich iron ore reserves. AMNSI is undertaking a capacity expansion program of the plant. AMNSI plans to expand the capacity of the Hazira plant from 9.6 MTPA to appx. 21 MTPA of liquid Steel in phased manner.
 - v. The user agency informed that this location was selected after several alternative studies based on technical data, economic considerations, Safety and reducing the risk associated with surroundings. In order to ensure safe and uninterrupted operation of the existing steel plant and to accommodate facilities for proposed expansion, contiguous land is essential. Due to the geographic location of the current AMNS Hazira site which is surrounded by

water (Peninsula) and there is no adjacent open land available other than this forest land. The applied area is contiguous to our existing Plant & Township boundary. The plant road, Rail track for evacuating finished products, periphery greenbelt & Security gates are existing in this area and supporting existing plant operation. These facilities were constructed a long time back by the erstwhile Essar steel Ltd.

- vi. Component Wise Break Up (Including underground works such as tunnel and similar purpose)-if applicable

S. No.	Component	Forest Proposed Diversion (ha)	Land for Non-forest Land (ha)
(i)	Raw Water Reservoir	0.7127	1.9573
(ii)	Coil Service Centre	1.825	0.575
(iii)	Hot Metal Pooling Pit	0.789	1.233
(iv)	Slag Processing Area	0.0791	0
(v)	Gas Cleaning Plant	0.041	1.669
(vi)	Gas Mixing Station	0.6422	0.2469
(vii)	Utility For SMS	0.1159	2.0902
(viii)	RWTP & CETP	0.7436	2.5024
(ix)	Hot Strip Mill (HSM)	3.1877	21.025
(x)	Air Separation Unit (ASU)	1.7077	4.9485
(xi)	Captive Power Plant (CPP)	3.3935	1.7858
(xii)	Lime Plant (LDCCP)	3.5462	0
(xiii)	Internal Roads / Drain	15.0091	0
(xiv)	Railway Network	5.5571	0
(xv)	Green Belt	11.3014	0
	Total	48.6512	38.0331

- vii. The proposal involved violation. A boundary wall, existing plant road, railway track, peripheral greenbelt, security gates, MRSS Switchyard, Processes and unprocessed slag and a truck parking area have been established within the forest area of 48.65 Ha since 2010-11. The period of work starts in 2010 and completed in 2011. The State Government has noted the violation in 2022. On March 23, 2022, the Range Forest Officer (RFO), Dumas, issued a notice to the User Agency regarding the unauthorized encroachment of 39.69 hectares of forest land on Survey no. 434/A/1 and informed of impending action. Similar notice was issued on 18.05.2022, for the 9.26Ha encroachment on Survey No. 178.
- viii. The Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed on 49.7724ha Non-Forest Land at Village: Todi, Tehsil: Sihor and Village: Juna Sarod, Tehsil: Palitana under Bhavnagar District of Gujarat State. Total Cost of CA scheme is INR 4,64,37,300.79/-
- ix. As per DSS analysis of the proposal, calculated area of Shape file/ KML file of Forest land proposed for diversion is found 48.558 (GIS software calculated). The satellite imagery shows the presence of Transmission line, Electric grid, Road, Nala, Settlements, Waste/

muck Disposal, Parking and other infrastructure within the proposed forest land. The CA site has been given in a two patches (3.3790 Ha and 46.3934Ha) located under Bhavnagar District of Gujarat State.

- x. A total of 93.67 Ha of forest land encroached for the instant project by the User Agency has been regularized by the Ministry since 2013, details of which are given below.

S. No.	Details of proposal	Area (Ha)	Date of Stage I	Date of Final Approval	Remarks	
1	Construction of housing accommodation and allied employeesinfra facilities for Ms Essar Steel Limited	20.76	08-06-2013	Final approval not accorded due to non-compliance of condition 2 and 5 of IPA	State government has informed that User agency has not complied with condition to provide NFL for CA 130.76 Ha (CA=20.76Ha ; Penal CA 110Ha)	
2	Construction of Raw material Facilities and Utilities for Ms Essar Steel Limited	27.02	13/7/2021	5	16-03-2021	Change in User Agency to Arcelormittal Nippon Steel India Limited in Jan 2022.
3	Setting up 300 MW Power Plant at Hazira in favour of Essar Steel (Hazira) Limited	38.71	07-04-2014	16-03-2021	Change in User Agency to Arcelormittal Nippon Steel India Limited in jan 2022.	
4	15.6 MTPA Steel Complex Expansion in favour of ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India Ltd (AMNS)	7.18	13-07-2023	13-02-2024		
TOTAL AREA		93.67				

The instant proposal (**48.6512 ha**) is 5th such proposal submitted by the State Government for regularization of encroachment.

- xi. As per comment of Nodal Officer, Government of Gujarat 'There were 4 other proposals wherein encroachment was done and have been approved by invoking penal provisions. In earlier three cases 3 times of NFL has been taken from the company along with penal

NPV and interest as per the provisions of FCA, 1980. One proposal of 20.76 Ha has been accorded in principle approval in 2013. However the User Agency has not yet complied with the condition of providing 131 Ha land for CA.'

- xii. The State Government of Gujrat in reply to Ministry's EDS dated 27/4/2024 have provided two contradictory submissions. In reply to EDS Point (xiii) it is mentioned by the State Government that "The remaining portion of the forest has been eroded by the Tapi River, balance land is Government (Mandli) and private. Therefore, no forest land has been left out." However in reply to point no (xiv), the State Govt have mentioned that there is a 6th proposal for diversion of 92.41Ha of forest land which, as per records, is not yet submitted to this Ministry. It is noteworthy to mention that the Ministry had imposed following condition in the approval accorded for the proposal for diversion of 7.18 ha forest land (FP/GJ/OTHERS/148274/2021).
"The User Agency will not submit any future proposal for diversion of forest land in piece meal, and they will submit a comprehensive single proposal if needed"
- xiii. As per reply submitted by State Government and analysis made by the DSS Cell, the KML file and along with map has not been uploaded indicating the forest area excluded i.e. 0.30 ha [48.96 ha (-)48.6512 ha) from the instant proposal.
- xiv. As per reply submitted by State Government and analysis made by the DSS Cell, the user agency has uploaded the KML files of previously approved forest diversion proposals. Further, the user agency has also uploaded the KML file of forest compartment boundary of Survey No 434 wherein some Non-Forestry work over 29.9 ha area is visible but it has not been clarified/highlighted by the user agency whether this 29.9 ha forest area is also part of their projector otherwise.
- xv. The proposal is non-site specific. The State Government in its reply has submitted that the proposed project area is bounded by the Tapi River on one side, the Arabian Sea on another, and the National Highway on the third side. In view of the geographical constraints and absence of any viable alternative, the proposal for this specific land parcel has been submitted.
- xvi. As per para 1.16 of the Consolidated Guidelines and clarifications on Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan), Adhiniyam, 1980, "Proposals seeking ex-post facto approval of the Central Government under the VSESA, 1980 are normally not to be entertained. The central Government will not accord approval under the Act unless under exceptional circumstances that may justify the case."
- xvii. The NFL CA patch proposed in Kanjarada Kh no 4P1 is of area 3.3790ha and as per the DSS report, it is isolated in nature and located at a distance of 0.19 km from nearest Notified forest land.
- xviii. The site inspection of the proposal was carried out by Shri Shrawan Kumar Verma, RO, Gandhinagar on 31st May, 2025. As per recommendation in SIR. The proposal for diversion of 48.6512 ha

Reserved Forest Survey No. 434/A1/2 & 434/A1/1, Village- Hazira & Survey No. 178, Village-Shivrampur for 15.6/21 MTPA Steel Complex at Hazira, District- Surat in Gujarat State is recommended in two possibilities:

A. The proposal recommended for sending back for submitting comprehensive single proposal by the User Agency as its in piecemeal which is against the condition imposed in the diversion of 7.18 ha forest land (FP/GJ/OTHERS/148274/2021) with the approval of the competent authority which was as condition "(8) The User Agency will not submit any future proposal for diversion of forest land in piece meal and they will submit a comprehensive single proposal if needed."

OR

B. If the specific condition imposed in the diversion of 7.18 ha forest land (FP/GJ/OTHERS/148274/2021) with the approval of the competent authority "(8) The User Agency will not submit any future proposal for diversion of forest land in piece meal and they will submit a comprehensive single proposal if needed." is waved off by the competent authority then the Proposal is recommended with specific conditions mentioned in SIR.

xix. The proposal is not specifically recommended by RO, Gandhinagar in the SIR. The proposal is recommended in two possibilities as mentioned in the para xviii above.

4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the IGF(C), Sub-Office (SO), Hyderabad in-charge of RO, Gandhinagar and Nodal Officer, Govt. of Gujarat. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Gujarat, the Committee '**deferred**' the proposal with the following recommendation:-

- i. The State Govt. shall submit the valid justification for site specificity of the proposal.
- ii. The State Govt. shall submit the detailed justification regarding the waving off the condition no. 13 of the earlier approval letter dated 13.02.2024 given in respect of the proposal no. FP/GJ/OTHERS/148274/2021.
- iii. One proposal bearing No. FP/GJ/ENCRH/3534/2008, for 20.76 Ha has been accorded in principle approval in 2013 for the same steel manufacturing complex. However the User Agency has not yet complied with the condition of providing 131 Ha land for Compensatory Afforestation in the said proposal. The User Agency shall comply with the conditions of Stage-I approval in the said project.

Agenda No.17

Online No. FP/MH/MIN/QRY/409811/2022

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2(1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 61.45 ha forest land for Manganese ore mining project in Survey No. 101, 102, 105 & 106 of Mauza Ramadongari at Village-Ramdongri, Tehsil- Saoner, Nagpur District of Maharashtra State in favour of Jayaswal NecoIndustries Ltd. (Online No. FP/MH/MIN/QRY/409811/2022) – regarding.

1. The above stated agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The representative from RO, Nagpur and Nodal Officer, Government of Maharashtra were present in the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
 - i. The Govt. of Maharashtra vide their letter No FLD-3423/CR-166/F-10 dated 20.07.2023 forwarded a fresh proposal to obtain prior approval of the Central Government, in terms of the Section-2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 61.45 ha Protected forest land for Manganese ore mining project at Village-Ramdongri, Tehsil- Saoner, Nagpur District.
 - ii. A total of 13,553 number of trees are marked for felling and the proposed forest land is having Eco-Class III vegetation with canopy density ranges from 0.4 to 0.5.
 - iii. The instant proposal for Manganese ore mining project involves 61.45 ha Protected forest land and as such there is No Non-forest land or other Private or Govt. land is involved in the lease area.
 - iv. Out of 61.45 ha proposed forest land, 55.60 ha area is required for Mining work, 3.24 ha is proposed for Ore Storage area and Mine Infrastructure, 0.30 ha will be put under Road and remaining 2.31 ha area will be kept as Safety Zone.
 - v. Out of 61.45 ha proposed forest land, 26.14 ha (42%) area is hilly which may likely to accelerate the rates of erosion. In this context, the State Govt. has proposed certain mitigation measures to choke the soil erosion.
 - vi. The extant proposal for diversion of 61.45 ha was originally submitted by the same user agency on dated 20.11.2008 on the PARIVESH vide Proposal No. FP/MH/MIN/4666/2008. This proposal was rejected by the office of APCCF & Nodal officer Maharashtra State, Nagpur on 22.05.2014 owing to rejection of proposal by State Board of Wildlife in its 8th meeting held on dated 20th Feb 2014 considering the existence of proposal in “deemed ESZ” of Mansinghdeo Wildlife Sanctuary, as per guideline of MoEF&CC, GOI dated 09.02.2011, Mining in ESZ area is prohibited. The Proposal was pending since then. Later on MoEF&CC has finally notified the ESZ proposal of Pench National

Park and Mansinghdeo Wildlife Sanctuary vide notification dated 13.09.2017. According to the above notification, the proposed mining area is falling outside the ESZ proposal of Mansinghdeo Wildlife Sanctuary and is 3.5 Km away from the ESZ.

- vii. After the notification of Forest (Conservation) Rules, 2022 published in the Gazette of India on 28.06.2022 the User Agency has submitted a fresh proposal for diversion of 61.45 Ha. Forest land on Parivesh 2.0 portal.
- viii. The Nodal Officer, Govt. of Maharashtra apprised that the instant project is site specific proposal and this area (61.45 ha) was earlier excavated by Manganese Ore India Ltd. and later surrendered. The Survey No. 101 to 107 was notified for Mining Lease by the Govt. of Maharashtra on dated 29.08.2002. Accordingly, the user agency had applied against the notification for mining of Manganese ore over an area of 61.45 Ha covering survey no. 101, 102,105 and 106. The State Govt. vide letter dated 21.01.2007 had issued a letter of intent for grant of mining lease over a period of 30 years. Later on, the Ministry of Mines, Govt. of India vide letter No 5/46/2004-M.IV dated 01.12.2006 conveyed approval under Section 5(1) of the Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 for grant of mining lease over an area of 61.45 ha. Thereafter, Govt. of Maharashtra vide letter dated 24.01.2007 had issued a letter of intent (LoI) for grant of mining lease over an area of 61.45 ha. At present, there are Manganese mines in the adjoining Private/ Govt. revenue lands.
- ix. The Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Govt. of India vide letter No. J-11015/698/2007-IA.II(M) dated 05.02.2009 accorded the Environmental clearance within the Mine lease (ML) area of 61.45 ha for Manganese ore mining in favour M/s Jayaswal Neco Ltd. (present user agency).
- x. The Compensatory Afforestation in the instant proposal has been proposed on the Non-Forest Land. To fulfil this purpose, CA sites have been proposed in Nine (9) patches comprising 61.45 ha area. Out of which 43.75 ha CA area in Village: Jambhulni (Sy No. 67, 68, 69, 74, 79(P), 82/1(A) & 86) and 17.70 ha CA area in Village: Khutaphali (Sy No. 70 & 76) under the Yavatmal District of Maharashtra.
- xi. The State Govt. has informed that there is no wildlife present in and around the forest land proposed for diversion. However, the proposal has been recommended by the State Government with a condition that the wildlife clearance is required as the proposed forest land is part of Tiger Corridor as per Telemetry Corridors.
- xii. The State Govt. has informed that the Mineral will be excavated as per approved Mining Plan by Indian Bureau of Mines vide letter dated 26.04.2007. The requirement of electricity will be fulfilled by transferring the line from the State grid available in the adjoining area after permission from Maharashtra State Electricity Board. The requirement of water will be fulfilled after taking prior permission from Central Ground Water authority. The proposed 61.45 Ha forest

land required for diversion for mining purposes is maximum. There is no additional forest land requirement for this project.

- xiii. The proposed area was earlier inspected by National Tiger Conservation Authority and recommended the project vide their letter F. NO. 7512017-NTCA dated 13.07.2017 with subject to the strict adherence to the following mitigation strategies:
- a. All conditions laid down by Indian Mining Bureau, MoEF&CC, Maharashtra Forest Department, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board shall be complied with to make mining operation less detrimental to the Forest & Wildlife.
 - b. The Environment Management plan (Part of the mining Plan) should be strictly complied with. Reclamation should be done by backfilling and supplementing /assisting the native vegetation rather ihun rehabilitation by creating reservoir.
 - c. 5% of the Project cost and the CSR funding shall be made available to Pench Tiger Foundation for conservation works.
 - d. The concerned Forest authorities shall ensure compliance of the above mentioned conditions.
- xiv. The committee observed that the proposal was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 06.11.2024 wherein the Committee observed that the proposal pertains to the State of Maharashtra wherein presently model code of conduct is in force due to State Assembly Election. The proposal was therefore deferred for discussion in the next Advisory Committee meeting. The same was conveyed to the State Government vide Ministry letter dated 18.11.2024.
- xv. The committee further noted that the proposal was placed before the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 28.11.2024 and the Committee 'deferred' the proposal for want of following information:
- a. The NTCA has submitted their recommendation on the proposal in the year 2017 and since then the land use along with other regional factors/ dimensions in the adjoining forest land proposed for diversion have been changed. Therefore, fresh comments of the NTCA shall be sought by the Ministry in the matter.
 - b. The State Government reported that, there is no wildlife present in and around the forest land proposed for diversion whereas the proposal has been recommended by the State with a specific condition that the wildlife clearance needs to be obtained as the proposed forest land is part of Tiger Corridor as per Telemetry Corridors. Therefore, the comment of the CWLW, Govt. of Maharashtra shall be submitted along with specific recommendations.
 - c. The NOC for Nallah/ Tributary diversion from the Water Resources Department, Government of Maharashtra shall be submitted.

- d. The DDGF, Regional office, Nagpur shall submit his specific recommendation on the proposal.
 - e. The state shall ensure the validity of the lease in view of the provisions of the Section 10A(2)(c) of the amended MMDR Act, 2015.
- xvi. The committee observed that the NTCA vide their O.M dt. 20.05.2025 has submitted their comments wherein it has been reported that as per report of the PCCF and HoFF, Maharashtra, the proposed area lies in a tiger corridor area based on telemetry studies and partly in the Eastern Vidarbha landscape identified by the Wildlife Institute of India. The State has clearly remarked in its letter that final approval shall be granted after wildlife clearance as per provisions of Section 38 O (1)(g) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The said proposal was further analyzed vis-a-vis corridors identified as part of the statutory Tiger Conservation Plan of the Pench Tiger Reserve, mandated under Section 38 V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, provided by the State, wherein the said project area is part of the tiger corridor. Hence, the instant proposal shall require wildlife clearance as per Section 5C, clause (2), proviso (c) r/w section 38 (1)(g) of the Wildlife Protection) Act, 1972.
- xvii. The State Govt. has informed that as per the compliance report submitted by the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Nagpur, and forwarded by the Conservator of Forests (T), Nagpur, the PCCF (WL)/ CWLW vide their letter No. Desk-23(2)/WL/Survey/C.No.237/54 /24-25, dated 03.04.2025 submitted their comments with specific recommendation regarding Ramdongri forest diversion proposal which is as under:
- a. As per para 3 of the Government of India, MoEF&CC (Wildlife Division), New Delhi vide letter no. F. No. WL-6/14/2023 WL dated 18.03.2024, the proposal requiring recommendation / approvals of the SCNBWL and forest clearance under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 shall be placed for consideration on the SCNBWL, only after receipt of forest clearance. In view of this, the proposal can be approved for forest clearance for grant of 'in-principle' approval under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980.
 - b. The final approval will be granted after wildlife clearance by SCNBWL as per section 38-O (1) (g) of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- xviii. The State Govt. has informed that NOC has been obtained from Water Resource Department, Nagpur vide their office letter No. 02/Chisha/Na-Harkat /2024 dated 01.01.2025.
- xix. The DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Nagpur has submitted their recommendation to MoEF&CC, Government of India, New Delhi by email dated 24.12.2024.
- xx. The Industry, Energy, Labour and Mining Department, Government of Maharashtra, Mantralaya Mumbai vide their letter No. MMN-1004/C.R.653/Ind-9 (A) dated 23.08.2024 confirmed that the Letter

of Intent granted by the State Government on 24.01.2007 regarding Ramdongri Mine is still valid as on date.

- xxi. The Industry, Energy, Labour and Mining Department, Government of Maharashtra, Mantralaya Mumbai vide their letter No. MMN-1004/C.R.653/Ind-9 (A) dated 23.08.2024 informed that the M/s. Balaji Electro Smelters Pvt. Ltd, filed petition in the Hon'ble High Court Bombay, Bench Nagpur, against the Government of Maharashtra's letter dated 13/08/2004 sent to the Central Government under Section 5(1) of the MMDR Act for obtaining prior permission for allotment of the subject mining area to M/s. Jaiswal Neco Industries Ltd. In the said W.P.No.5078/2007 filed in the Hon'ble High Court, Nagpur Bench, the Hon'ble High Court Bombay, Bench Nagpur in its order dated 02/11/2007 directed "All other process, may proceed, however, execution of the mining lease shall not be done until further orders.". Similarly, in the order dated 06/01/2017, directed "However, our attention is drawn to the interim orders passed by this Court on 02/11/2007. By that order, this Court has permitted all other steps to be taken except execution of mining lease and directed that lease shall not be executed until further orders. In view of these specific directions, it is apparent that the amendments which have come into force subsequently cannot operate to the prejudice of respondent no.3". In this matter Hon'ble High Court on dated 17/11/2022 passed the following order. *"We may only refer to the order dated 02/11/2007 by which this Court had directed that execution of mining lease in favour of respondent No.3 shall not be executed until further orders while granting liberty to complete statutory process. In view of withdrawal of the writ petition, the respondent Nos. 1 and 2 are free to proceed further in the matter. It may also be noted that on 06/01/2017 after hearing the learned counsel for the parties this Court had clarified that the amendment to the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act. 1957 which came into effect in the year 2015 would not operate to the prejudice of respondent No.3"* and the petition disposed by Hon'ble High Court. In this context it is to mention that, out of the permissions to be obtained by the Company, which were mentioned in the Letter of Intent, only NOC from the Forest Department of the Central Government is yet to be obtained. In view of the above context, as per the order passed in Writ Petition No.5078/2007 dated 06/01/2017 and dated 17/11/2022, the Mining Department has obtained the opinion of Law and Judiciary Department on the matter whether the Letter of Intent is still valid or not. After examining the case in detail, it is to convey you that the Letter of Intent issued by the State Govt. is still valid. Therefore, you are requested to submit the required clearances i.e. Forest Clearance to the State Govt. so that further process the matter for issuance of Mining Lease for Manganese Ore block.
- xxii. The State Government has affirmed the validity of the Letter of Intent (LoI). Further, the Rule 11(7) provides that the State has to ensure the compliance of all other Acts and Rules before issuing

the order for diversion. Moreover, the process of prior approval for diversion of forestland is an independent process and it is incumbent upon the State to ensure the compliance of all other Acts/Rules including the MMDR Act as applicable. The non-compliance if any is to be appropriately dealt as per the provisions of concerned Acts/Rules.

- xxiii. As per DSS analysis, a part of the proposed CA land namely Village Jambhulni 79 (Part) is falling in the Reserved forest compartment no 413, with regard to which it has been informed that the land is actually private land adjoining to the forest boundary. In this regard, the committee observed that a senior officer from the State should examine the matter and give certificates accordingly.
- xxiv. The Committee further observed that the component wise breakup as per the KML file, the mining plan and the proposal submitted by the user agency are at variance, which needs justification. Moreover, a nallah is passing through the proposed area for which the state had initially informed that various conservation and protection measures will be taken by the user agency for rejuvenation of this nallah, whereas now it has been informed that the Nallah will be diverted. The state needs to clearly state whether the Nallah is being retained or it is required to be diverted.
- xxv. The proposal was considered in the Advisory Committee meeting held on 26.5.2025 wherein the Committee 'deferred' the proposal for want of following information:-
 - a. The component wise breakup as per the KML file submitted with the proposal, the mining plan and the proposal submitted by the user agency is at variance, which needs justification.
 - b. A part of the proposed for CA, namely Village Jambhulni 79 (Part) is falling in the Reserved forest compartment no 413 as per DSS analysis, with regard to which it has been informed that the land is actually private land adjoining to the forest boundary. In this regard, the Nodal Officer shall examine the matter and certify that the area proposed for CA is outside the boundary of the forest.
 - c. A nallah is passing through the proposed area for which the state had initially informed that various conservation and protection measures will be taken by the user agency for rejuvenation of this nallah, whereas now it has been informed that the Nallah will be diverted. The state needs to clearly state whether the Nallah is being retained or it is required to be diverted.
- xxvi. The State Government has uploaded the reply of above points on online PARIVESH portal on 02.07.2025. The State Govt. reported that as per the compliance report submitted by the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Nagpur, and forwarded by the Conservator of Forests (T), Nagpur, the components wise break up given in the KML file is for the life of mine, whereas in the mining plan it is proposed for Mining Plan Period (five years only). Once the Mining

- Lease is executed, the mining plan may be modified as per requirement.
- xxvii. xxvii. The State Govt. reported that the Dy. Conservator of Forests, Yavatmal, Forest Division, Yavatmal confirmed the Status of Khasra No. 79 (Part) of Village Jambhulni. Tehsil and District Yavatmal and certified that the Khasra No. 79(P) is a Private Ownership land adjacent to forest land. The said patch is not falling in Reserve Forest.
- xxviii. xxviii. The State Govt. reported that the Water Resource Department, Nagpur already given their No Objection Certificate for Nallah passing through the proposed lease area vide their letter dated 01.01.2025. The State Govt. has also attached a copy of undertaking by the user agency in this regard stating that the Nallah will not be diverted.
- xxix. xxix. The Committee observed that in another proposal pertaining to the state of Maharashtra, the matter regarding the validity of the Letter of Intent (LoI) issued before 2015 was examined by the Ministry of Mines wherein it has been mentioned that the LoI has become void and infructuous in view of the provisions of Section 10A(2)(c) of the amended MMDR Act, 2015. Keeping the same in view it would be prudent to seek the opinion of the Ministry of Mines in this case as well.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the Dy. DGF (Central), RO, Nagpur and Nodal Officer, Government of Maharashtra. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Maharashtra, the Committee decided to **defer** the proposal and sought the following information:
- i. In view of the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2015 the validity of the Letter of Intent (LoI) requires detailed examination. Accordingly, the Ministry shall furnish all relevant details, including the orders of the Hon'ble High Court, to the Ministry of Mines and seek their comments/opinion on the validity of the LoI.

Agenda No.20

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for non-forestry use of 136.724 ha Forest land in favour of Water Resource Department, Chhindwara for the construction of CIC (Chhindwara Irrigation Complex Project) Balancing Reservoir (Pandhurna Dam) under Pandhurna District (Formally in Chhindwara District) of Madhya Pradesh State (Online No.FP/MP/HYD/IRRIG/458645/2024) – regarding.

1. The above stated agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The Dy. DGF (Central), RO, Bhopal and Nodal Officer, Government of Madhya Pradesh were present in the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC. The Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
 - i. The Govt. of Madhya Pradesh vide their letter No. F-3/41/383420/0024/4 dated 30.12.2024 (uploaded on dated 06.01.2025) a fresh proposal to obtain prior approval of the Central Government, in terms of the Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for non-forestry use of 136.724 ha forest land (84.001 ha Protected Forest, 3.974 ha Reserve Forest and 48.748 ha Revenue Forest) in favour of Water Resource Department for the construction of Pandhurna Dam under Pandhurna District (Formally in Chhindwara District) of Madhya Pradesh State.
 - ii. Proposed area is neither a part of any protected area nor it falls within 10 km of the nearest protected area. It also does not fall in any notified Wildlife corridor. The Chhindwara Irrigation Complex (CIC) Balancing Reservoir is proposed on the Kanhan Sub Basin in Pandhurna District (Formerly Chhindwara District) to irrigate 79 villages having command area of 26157 HA of Pandhurna District. The project is proposed on the basis of availability of water, low irrigation facility in the area, demand and other socio-economic factors. There is no dependable water source in the project area. The project area needs water for domestic, agriculture & industrial purpose. As per user agency preliminary and detailed survey it was found the proposed site to be most feasible and suitable for construction of the project with respect to technical, financial & social considerations and accordingly the alignment selected in the proposal has the least forest submergence.
 - iii. The Nodal officer, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh apprised that the construction of this dam would cause increased Agriculture Production and related positive impact on economy and would provide other benefits such as conjunctive use of water to prevent water logging and related salinity, improved Livestock, improved Infrastructure Facilities and prevention of Migration activities etc.
 - iv. Out of 136.724 ha forest land involved in the proposal 84.001 ha is Protected Forest, 3.974 ha is Reserved Forest and 48.748 ha is Revenue Forest wherein the vegetation primarily consist of Eco-Class-1 and tree Canopy Density is 0.3 and total 7672 Number of Trees likely to be affected due to instant project.
 - v. The total permanent land requirement for CIC Balancing Reservoir Project is estimated as 948.965 ha. Out of which, 620.018 ha is private land, 136.724 ha is forest land and remaining 192.223 ha is

government land. Component wise break-up of proposed forest land is as follows:-

S.No	Component	Forest Land Proposed for Diversion (ha)	Non-forest Land (ha)
1	Submergence	134.789	743.661
2	Dam Structure	1.82	57.022
3	Spill Channel	0	6.871
4	Pump House & Approach Channel	0.113	4.685
	Total	136.722	812.239

- vi. The committee observed that being a balancing reservoir wherein the water storage structure will be formed in such a manner which used to regulate the flow of water in irrigation or water supply systems. It acts as an intermediary, storing water during periods of high supply from a river and releasing it during lean periods to meet the demand. This helps to balance fluctuating demand with a constant supply and their concern that the during the lean period the submergence area will be utilized by the farmers to agriculture purpose and may cause encroachment in the area and further noticed whether it is a single project or multi-purpose project not be clarified by the State.
- vii. The Nodal Officer, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh informed the committee that the Project is important for nearby villages to meet drinking water and irrigation requirement for their farm lands. Moreover, Chhindwara Irrigation Complex Project is a major irrigation project across Kanan River and its tributary. Under this project four dams are to be constructed named as Balancing Reservoir Pandhurna Dam, Sangam-1, Sangam-2 and Ramghat Dam. Pandhurna Dam (CIC Balancing Reservoir) site is being proposed across Ganga Nala and Jam River which is a tributary of Kanhan River. The submergence area is drained by North Easterly flowing Jam River (tributary of Kanhan River) and Ganga Nadi (tributary of Jam River) and aided by its meandering tributaries. The drainage pattern is coarse dendritic.
- viii. The submergence area and its surroundings are generally plain with occasional flat topped hills area of Deccan traps with steep slopes representing terrace topography. The maximum level of the ground in the area is 487m. The proposed composite dam is 1906 m in length (including 96.5 m of concrete spillway portion) and 30.0 m in height. The project is about 20km in the East of Pandhurna City/District Headquarter and about 100 kms away from Chhindwara District HQ. The reservoir competency survey was carried out by the Geological Survey of India and the Hydrological assessment study by the Water Resource Department, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh was also carried recently in the area.
- ix. The State further informed that four separate dams are to be constructed at different locations under the Chhindwara Irrigation Complex Scheme. Each dam will be situated at a distinct site and having separate catchment area. In total approximately 2,500

hectares of forest land will be required for these projects. However, owing to the unique catchment areas of each dam, the designs for all four will differ accordingly. Currently, the instant proposal for diversion of 136.724 ha forest land is now under consideration with a separate catchment area. The remaining three dams proposals will be uploaded separately on the portal as well.

- x. Under this project, an underground pipeline network spanning a total of 500 kilometers will be laid to provide irrigation facilities. This work is proposed to be carried out entirely on government revenue land, eliminating the need for any land acquisition. The installation of pipelines will be laid at a depth of 2.5 meters below the surface on private agricultural land. After installation, the land will be restored to its original state, ensuring minimal disruption to the land's usability.
- xi. The construction and operation of CIC Balancing Reservoir Project will result in a range of impacts to the social and human environments of the project area. One of the major impacts of such development requiring land acquisition is loss of land and resettlement of local population in the project area. Based upon the R&R plan, the State Govt. informed that Private land of 7 villages will come under submergence, out of which two villages namely, Bhuli and Khadki will be fully submerged and require resettlement. Total 545 families from Bhuli and Khadki villages will be displaced due to the instant project. The State further informed that the proposed forest land in compartment number P-2028 comprising an area of 0.908 hectares was given on Patta to some individuals under the Forest Rights Act, 2006, to eligible claimants. Moreover, some individuals have been in unauthorized occupation of the forest land for the past 30 years. The user agency has given an undertaking to provide compensation to eligible beneficiaries in accordance with law.
- xii. The State has reported that the proposed scheme is designed to supply water during 4 months of Rabi season to irrigate 26157 ha of the area. Rabi crops are cultivated during October to November and are harvested during April- May. Present cropping pattern in the Rabi season covers wheat, pulses and gram. There will be a change in cropping pattern where more variety of wheat will be added such as wheat local and wheat max along with gram and vegetable. Apart from additional crops, the project will also have positive impacts in terms of improved efficiency leading to bumper crops in otherwise water scarce areas. Total 39427 farmers of 79 villages will be benefited from the irrigation facilities provided with the installation of sprinklers to each farmer's land from CIC Balancing Reservoir (Pandhurna Dam). The existing and proposed Rabi cropping pattern in the region is as under:

Crop	Existing Area (Ha)	Existing Productivity (T/Ha)	Existing Production (Tonnes)	Proposed Area (ha)	Proposed Productivity (T/Ha)	Total Production (Tonnes)
Wheat	1460	4	5840	26157	6	156942
Total			5840	26157		156942

- xiii. The committee observed that the Regional office (RO), Bhopal in their site inspection report informed that there are certain existing black top roads coming under submergence. The black top road which is on the southern side and approaching the Dam will have to be diverted due to submergence as it is connecting to the villages on the downstream side of Jam River. Therefore, the User Agency should submit the plan for diversion of the road to find whether it requires any further diversion of forest area. The hill which is falling on the Dam axis would not be fully submerged. The same may be developed as an excellent spot for ecotourism after taking up suitable plantation and other required infrastructure on the hill. The proposal has been recommended by the DDGF(C), RO, Bhopal in their Site Inspection Report.
- xiv. The committee observed that the Compensatory Afforestation (CA) is proposed in both forest land (42.48 ha) and non-forest land (175.37 ha.) located under Chhindwara District. In this reference, the Nodal officer, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh apprised that out of the total 1,36,724 no. of plants to be planted in the CA land; 21,240 no. of plants are not able to be accommodated in the non-forest CA land because six sites of the Non-forest land proposed for CA are having canopy density above 0.4. Therefore, 42.480 ha of DFL has been provided as CA for planting 21,240 no. of plants.
- xv. The Committee noted that the proposal was considered in the Advisory Committee meeting held on 26.05.2025 wherein the Committee 'deferred' the proposal for want of following information:
- a. The approval from the State Dam Safety Organization under the Dam Safety Act, 2021 has been obtained, however the recommendation of the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) has not yet been submitted. The state shall submit the same.
 - b. The existing black top roads in the proposed submergence area will be affected, and in this regard a clear and comprehensive plan for road diversion has not yet been submitted. The revised plan should also indicate whether additional forest land will be required for such diversion or not.
 - c. The complete details including the location and capacity of all four dams under CIC, including their ecological, social, and hydrological impacts shall be submitted.
 - d. The details about the command area, present cropping pattern, total population of the villages to be benefitted and the likely impact of the project on cropping pattern in future is essential for evaluating the socio-economic benefits of the project. The State shall submit a detailed report on these aspects.
- xvi. The Committee noted that the State Government uploaded the reply of the observation of the Advisory Committee on 10.07.2025 on PARIVESH portal. The State Government informed that the

Government of India published The Dam Safety Act 2021 in the Gazette dated 14/12/2021. The said Act does not mention the procedure for obtaining approval of any dam from NDSA. The First Schedule of this Act contains the details of the duties of the National Committee on Dam Safety and the Second Schedule contains the details of the duties of NDSA. It is clear from this description that the duty of NDSA is to prepare guidelines, provide technical guidance, resolve disputes between two states, etc. There is no mention of approving any dam in these duties. The Third Schedule of this Act mentions the duties of the State Committee of Dam Safety. In point number 1 of these duties, the responsibility of ensuring the quality of the dam as per the guidelines prescribed by NDSA has been given to this committee.

- xvii. The State Government further informed that a single lane road is already built from Mordongri to village Umramukta via village Bhuli. Due to the construction of the proposed dam, some part of this road will be submerged. However, since village Bhuli is being displaced due to submergence, there will be no need for an access road to this village after the construction of the Dam. Village Umramukta is at the other end of this road constructed from Mordongri to Unramukta. There is no other village on this road except village Bhuli and village Umramukka. For the residents of village Upyamukta, a paved road has already been constructed from village Umramukka to village Seoni. Hence village Umranuka is already connected to National Highway 47 via village Seoni at a distance of about 6.5 km. Hence, there will be no adverse effect on traffic/access facilities in any village after the construction of the dam.
- xviii. The Committee noted that the State Govt. has submitted a detailed report on the location and capacity of all four dams under CIC, including their ecological, social, and hydrological impacts. Summary of the same is as under:
- a. **Command area:** Chhindwara Irrigation Complex (CIC) scheme included construction of multiple dams/barrage/balancing reservoir to store 651.33 MCM water & to provide irrigation facilities in an area of 1, 90,500 Ha benefiting 628 villages of Chhindwara & Pandhurna District.
 - b. **Regarding location and Capacity of all four dams under CIC:**

S.No	Dam	Affected Forest (Ha)	Forest Proposal No	Gross catchment (Sq Km)	Available Yield (MCM)	Capacity (MCM)
1	CIC Balancing	136.724	FP/MP/HYD/ IRRIG/458645/ 2024	398	117.76	92.89
2	Sangam Dam 1	82.029	FP/MP/HYD/ IRRIG/540189/	122	34.12	31.77

			2025			
3	Sangam Dam 2	1818.470	Proposal under preparation	1821	539.10	425.64
4	Ramghat Dam	-	Survey/ Investigation work under progress	-	-	-

The catchment areas and command areas for these four dams are independent of each other, allowing each dam to be constructed as a separate project.

c. **Ecological, social, and hydrological impacts of all the above four dams/ projects have been given in the report.**

xix. The State Govt. has submitted a detailed report about the command area, present cropping pattern, total population of the villages to be benefitted and the likely impact of the project on cropping pattern in future is essential for evaluating the socio-economic benefits of the project.

a. **Command area:** The project is a lift irrigation scheme; consisting of lifting water from proposed CIC Balancing Reservoir and distribution through a pressurized piped system to cultivators for irrigation during Rabi season. The project is designed to irrigate a total of 26,157 ha of CCA covering 79 villages of Pandhurna tehsil of Pandhurna district.

b. **Present cropping pattern:** The existing and proposed Rabi cropping pattern in the region is given below:

Crop	Existing Area (Ha)	Existing Productivity (T/Ha)	Existing Production (Tonnes)	Proposed Area (ha)	Proposed Productivity (T/Ha)	Total Production (Tonnes)
Wheat	1460	4	5840	26157	6	156942
Total			5840	26157		156942

c. **Total population to be benefitted:** Total 79 villages and 39427 population will be benefitted.

Socio-economic benefits: The project will cause improved agriculture production, Distribution of income, Improved livestock, Improved infrastructure facilities and Increased Industrial activity.

4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the Dy. DGF (Central), RO Bhopal and Nodal Officer, Government of Madhya Pradesh. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Madhya Pradesh, the Committee 'recommended' the proposal for **In-principle** approval under

section 2 (1) (ii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for non-forestry use of 136.724 ha Forest land in favour of Water Resource Department, Chhindwara for the construction of CIC (Chhindwara Irrigation Complex Project) Balancing Reservoir (Pandhurna Dam) under Pandhurna District (Formally in Chhindwara District) of Madhya Pradesh State subject to general and standard and following conditions:

- i. The State Government shall follow all the regulations of dam safety as per the Dam Safety Act,2021

Agenda No. 24

Online Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/470250/2024

Sub: Proposal seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam SSub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of Central Government under Section 2 (1) ii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 708.204 ha (564.581 ha in Rayagada Forest Division + 143.623 ha in Kalahandi (South) Forest Division) of Forest land (including 11.195 ha earmarked for Safety Zone) within total Mining Lease land in 1548.786 ha of Sijimali Bauxite Mines in Rayagada Forest Division & Kalahandi (South) Forest Division under Rayagada and Kalahandi District respectively in respect of M/s Vedanta Limited (Online Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/470250/2024)-reg.

1. The agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DIGF (Central), Regional Office, Bhubaneswar and Nodal Officer, Government of Odisha attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC. The Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
 - i. The Government of Odisha vide their letter No. FE-DIV-FLD-0017-2025-8268/FE&CC dated 08.04.2025 submitted the above subject proposal through PARIVESH 2.0 portal and uploaded on 09.04.2025 seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
 - ii. Vedanta Limited has been allocated the Sijimali Bauxite mine spread over Kalahandi and Rayagada districts of Odisha in March 2023, having an estimated reserve of around 311 Million Tonnes for meeting the increased requirement of raw material, Vedanta intends to operate Sijimali block for dispatching Bauxite from mines to its Refinery.

- iii. An e-Auction process was conducted in accordance with the tender document for the Sijimali Mineral Block and Vedanta Limited was declared as the "Preferred Bidder" under Rule 9(9)(1) or Rule 10(1A) of Auction Rules dated 09.02.2023. Accordingly, pursuant to Rule 10(2) of the Auction Rules and the terms of the tender document of steel & Mines Department, Government of Odisha, issued Letter of Intent for grant of mine lease for Sijimali Bauxite Block over 1549.022 ha (Geo referenced DGPS Area 1549.022 ha, ROR Authenticated area-1548.786 ha) vide letter No SM-MC2-MC-0006-2023/2103/5&M, Bhubaneswar, dated 01 03 2023.
- iv. M/s Vedanta Ltd has the proposal to operate the Sijimali Bauxite Mine with peak Proposed Bauxite Production Capacity of 9.00 Million TPA. The block is located in 18 villages under Thuamul Rampur Tehsil of Kalahandi district and under Kashipur Tahsil of Rayagada district in the State of Odisha.
- v. As M/s Vedanta Limited has an existing alumina refinery plant at Lanjigarh of Kalahandi district of Odisha which very soon will be operated at granted EC capacity of 6.0 Million TPA, due to which the total bauxite requirement will be 18.0 Million TPA at a ratio of 3:1 to meet the partial requirement of the bauxite, Vedanta Ltd is proposing the Sijimali Bauxite Mine with 9.0 Million TPA Capacity, 3. Million TPA from OMC Kodingamali Mine through long term linkage and remaining 60 Million TPA from import.
- vi. The area under consideration is well connected by rail and road to all important business and industrial centres of the country. Nearest Railway station is Sikarpai Railway station at a distance of 20 km in SE direction. The Nearest Port and International Airport are at Visakhapatnam at a distance of 194 Km in SSE direction, Distance of SH-44 from the lease area is 1.5 km in West direction from the project site.
- vii. The Sijimali Bauxite Block has been explored in different phases with 91 bore holes with a total meterage of 2241.61m The boreholes have been drilled at an interval of about 400m grid pattern within the mineralized land in 12.38 sq. km The bore hole density is about 07 (735) BHs/Sq Km.
- viii. The entire geological block land in 1549.022 Ha (As per DGPS) will be brought under mining and allied activities to excavate bauxite. The cross-sectional method has been adopted for estimation of resources of bauxite in the approved mining plan 15 sets of vertical cross sections namely AA', BB', CC' etc in 1:10000 scale have been prepared in E-W direction taking into account 87 boreholes located along the section lines and a few holes adjacent to the section lines are projected. In order to estimate the mineable reserve, development sections were drawn through the block The non-mineable bauxite portions considered

for estimation of mineable reserve from geological resource are as follows. (a) bauxite occurring within 7.5 m along the lease boundary for the purpose of safety zone (b) Blocked bauxite under and outside the ultimate pit slope Production of maximum 9267402 79 TPA bauxite has been planned in the approved mining plan.

- ix. Mining operations will be carried out by a fully mechanized opencast method. The extractable bauxite reserve of 299.58 Million tonnes is proposed to be excavated in 31 years. Life of mine is considered as 31 years with two years of construction period including surface reorganization.
- x. The total ML area of the Sijimali Bauxite Block is 1548.786 ha. In the applied mining lease area, forest land involved is 708.204 Ha. Non-forest land involved in the Mining Lease is 840.582 ha out of which non-forest private land is 129.089 ha and non-forest Govt. land is 711.493 ha.
- xi. The State Govt. has reiterated / clarified that 0.66 ha of land in village Tadader and 1.57 ha of land in village Tijamali (both under Thuamul Rampur Tahasil of Kalahandi District) have been included in the Forest Diversion Proposal as FRA land. The kisam of the above mentioned land (0.66 ha in Tadader village and 1.57 ha in Tijamali village) are of "Unsurveyed Category" in the Sabik record and 'Donger' in the Hal record over which Title under FRA have been issued to individuals by the Collector, Kalahandi. In this context he has informed that, 0.66 ha of land in village Tadades and 1.57 ha in village Tijamali have been included in the Forest Diversion Proposal as FRA land as reported by the DFO, Kalahandi (South) Forest Division.
- xii. As per the SIR of DFO, Kalahandi (South, it is revealed that the forest land proposed for diversion is located over 11 patches spreading over 04 no of villages. The Tahasildar Rampur has furnished the land schedule as on 25.10.1980 regarding forest and non-forest land involved in the ML coming under Kalahandi district as well as in Kalahandi (South) forest Division, DFO, Kalahandi (South) has furnished a certificate regarding minimum use of forest land over 143.623 ha.
- xiii. The total district wise forest and non-forest land involved in the Mining Lease is tabulated below:

ABSTRACT OF TOTAL LAND of SIJIMALI BAUXITE MINES									
Sl. No.	District Name	Area in Hectares							
		Revenue Forest	PF/FRA Forest	Sabik Forest	DLC Forest	Total Forest	Pvt. land	Non-Forest Govt.	Total

								land	
1	Kalaha ndi	12.408	65.51 2	3.69 9	62.00 4	143.6 23	28.531	565.1 38	737.29 2
2	Rayaga da	0.000	0.000	6.23 6	558.3 45	564.5 81	100.55 8	146.3 55	811.49 4
Total in Ha	area	12.408	65.51 2	9.93 5	620.3 49	708.2 04	129.08 9	711.4 93	1548.7 86

- xiv. The details of Existing Land Use of total lease area in Ha are as mentioned below:

EXISTING LAND USE OF SIJIMALI BAUXITE MINES										
SI No.	Distri ct Name	Item	All figures are in Hectares							
			Reve nue Fore st	PF/ FRA Fore st	Sab ik For est	DLC Fore st	Total Fore st	Pvt. land	Non- Fore st Govt land	Total
1	Kalah andi	Existing Undistu rbed area	12.40 8	65.5 12	3.69 9	62.0 04	143. 623	28.53 1	565. 138	737.2 92
2	Rayag ada	Existing Undistu rbed area	0.000	0.00 0	6.23 6	558. 345	564. 581	100.5 58	146. 355	811.4 94
Total in Ha			12.40 8	65.5 12	9.93 5	620. 349	708. 204	129.0 89	711. 493	1548. 786

- xv. Component wise break up of forest land proposed for diversion in the Sigimali Mining Lease has been mentioned in the SIR of DFO, Rayagada and SIR of DFO, Kalahandi (South) The detailed pattern of use of Forest land is tabulated below:

PROPOSED LAND USE PATTERN (DISTRICT WISE)											
S No.	Distri ct Name	Compo nent	Forest Area in Ha					Non-Forest area in ha			
			Reve nue Fore st	PF/ FRA Fore st	Sa bik For est	DLC Fore st	Tota l Fore st	Govt. land	Pvt. Lan d	Tota l NFL	Total Area Ha
1	Kalah andi	Mined out Area	12.4 08	32.9 00	3.6 99	49.8 52	98.8 59	400.5 57	28.5 31	429. 088	527.9 47
2		Safety		2.97		0.62	3.59	15.11		15.1	18.71

		Zone Area		0		8	8	7		17	5
3		Untouched Area		29.642		11.524	41.166	149.464		149.464	190.630
Total			12.408	65.512	3.699	62.004	143.623	565.138	28.531	593.669	737.292
1	Raya gada	Mined out Area			6.235	475.351	481.586	96.880	98.717	195.597	677.183
2		Safety Zone Area				7.897	7.597	6.558		6.558	14.155
3		Untouched Area			0.001	75.397	75.398	42.917	1.841	44.758	120.156
Total					6.236	558.345	564.581	146.355	100.558	246.913	811.494
Grand Total			12.408	65.512	9.935	620.349	708.204	711.493	129.089	840.582	1548.786

xvi. The consolidated forest land use pattern of the ML area pertaining to both the Forest Divisions is furnished below:

ABSTRACT OF PROPOSED LAND USE PATTERN OF TOTAL AREA											
S. No.	District Name	Component	Area in ha					Non-Forest area in ha			Total Area Ha
			Revenue Forest	PF/FRA Forest	Sabik Forest	DLC Forest	Total Forest	Govt. land	Pvt. Land	Total NFL	
1	Kalahandi Raya gada	Mined out area	12.408	32.900	9.934	525.203	580.445	497.437	127.248	624.685	1205.130
2		Safety Zone Area	0	2.970	0	8.225	11.195	21.675	0	21.675	32.870
3		Untouched Area	0	26.642	0.001	86.921	116.564	192.381	1.841	194.222	310.786
Total			12.408	65.512	9.935	620.349	708.204	711.493	129.089	840.582	1548.786

xvii. The area proposed for diversion is vulnerable to soil erosion due to steep slopes, vegetation loss and mining disturbances leading to rapid

runoff, soil degradation and stream sedimentation Factors like top soil displacement, compaction and blasting will further accelerate erosion.

- xviii. The total extent of safety zone in the ML area over 1548.786 ha is 32.87 ha Out of which, 11.195 ha comes under forest land, 21.675 ha comes under Non-Forest Government land within the limit of both the forest divisions. The classification of safety zone over different KISSAM of land as well as over the different division jurisdiction is furnished below:

Details of safety zone involved within the Sijimali Bauxite Mines NFL in ha											
Sl. No.	District	Component	Forest land in ha					NFL in ha			Total in Ha
			Re v.	PF/ FRA	Sabi k	DL C	Total	Govt	Pvt	Total	
1	Kalahandi	Safety Zone	0	2.97	0	0.628	3.598	15.17	0	15.17	18.715
2	Rayagada	-do-	0	0	0	7.597	7.597	6.558	0	6.558	14.155
				2.97	0	8.225	11.195	21.675	0	21.675	32.870

- xix. The proposed area includes Tropical dry deciduous forest. The vegetation is basically mixed Sal Forest with other miscellaneous species. Further, Wildlife species like Barking deer, wild boar, Monkey, Indian peacock and Indian hare are present in the area.
- xx. The presence of bauxite is characterized by long stretches of Plateau land on hilltop with little or no vegetation and vegetation is usually seen in hill slopes.
- xxi. No rare and endangered species are available in the Mining lease area coming under Rayagada Forest Division However, as per report of DFO, Kalahandi (South), Elephant habitat in Bijepur RF comes within 10 Kms impact zone. The applied area is not found important from an archaeological point of view. The proposed area does not form part of any National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary and Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve, Elephant corridor or any protected area declared under any law of the State or central Government.
- xxii. The DFO, Rayagada has taken up tree enumeration through Range Officer, Kashipur over proposed 564.581 ha forest land of Sijimali Bauxite Block of Vedanta Limited adopting direct counting technique. Due to sparse vegetation on the plateau, the ecological impact of tree felling in this area will be minimal. The plateau's current ecosystem supports limited biodiversity, with most species reliant on valley

vegetation for survival. DFO Rayagada has mentioned that the felling of trees near valley areas could lead to disruption of wildlife habitats and potential displacement of species, increased soil erosion and sedimentation of nearby water bodies.

xxiii. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 724.23 ha of Non-forest Government land measuring 565.50 ha in Rayagada District and 158.73 ha Government NFL in Kalahandi District against the proposed diversion of forest land over 708.204 ha for Sijimali Bauxite Block of M/s Vedanta Ltd.

xxiv. The details of area identified for CA in Rayagada district and Kalahandi district are tabulated below:

Rayagada Division:							
S. No.	Tehsil	RI Circle	Mouza	Khata No.	Plot No.	Area in ha	Total Area (Ha)
1	Muniguda	Raghubari	Alibhata	11	1	9.70	36.75
					2	11.73	
					3 (P)	15.32	
2	Muniguda	Raghubari	Baringpada r	12	1(P)	8.0	38.24
					43(P)	16.01	
					44	14.23	
3	Muniguda	Raghubari	Baringpada r	3	1	14.14	87.81
					2	16.26	
					3	15.68	
					4(P)	5.74	
					10	4.05	
					11	19.77	
					14(P)	12.17	
4	Muniguda	Raghubari	Baratarana	9	4(P)	7.47	34.09
					23(P)	5.84	
					24	9.31	
					25	11.47	
5	Muniguda		Dambalu	21	1(P)	3.27	3.279
6	Muniguda	Raghubari	Demupadar	10	129	9.49	58.00
					132(P)	7.71	
					133	7.08	
					134	7.63	
					135(P)	7.76	
					136	11.48	
					137(P)	6.84	

7	Munigud a	Raghubari	Jambapada fr	7	4(P)	2.388	40.40
					6	8.26	
					25	6.576	
					46(P)	13.242	
					47	9.935	
8	Munigud a	Kumudaba li	Kauguda	9	44(P)	24.136	38.95
					46(P)	14.816	
9	Munigud a	Tikarapad a	Lidipanga	59	208(P)	11.882	46.22
					362	15.714	
					363	12.562	
					364	6.066	
10	Munigud a	Raghubari	Pidel Padar	9	2	16.19	77.81
					3	15.27	
					4	16.39	
					5	15.19	
					219(P)	14.78	
11	Munigud a	Raghubari	Umbere	11	46(P)	7.49	69.66
					87	16.60	
					88(P)	15.24	
					91	12.79	
					92	17.54	
12	Munigud a	Raghubari	Madagalu	4	1	17.179	34.29
					3	5.868	
					5	11.242	

Kalahandi (South) Forest Division							
Sl. No.	Village	Khata No.	Plot No.	Kissam		Area in Ac.	Suitable Area For plantation in Ac
1	Sampala	29	103(P)	Dangar	AAA	25.42	23.65
2			104	Dangar	AAA	32.70	32.70
3			105	Dangar	AAA	36.25	36.25
4			106	Dangar	AAA	42.00	42.00
5			107(P)	Dangar	AAA	41.38	40.07
6			108(P)	Dangar	AAA	38.50	35.28
7	Kanjiguda	32	240(P)	Dangar	Govt. of Odisha	32.50	30.00
8			237(P)	Dangar	Govt. of Odisha	37.50	35.00
9			241(P)	Dangar	Govt. of Odisha	36.15	33.00

10			242(P)	Dangar	Govt. of Odisha	41.73	37.85	
11	Malatipadar	38	302	Dangar	AAA	22.50	22.50	
12			307(P)	Dangar	AAA	31.50	23.78	
Total area in ac							392.08	
Total area in ha							158.73	

- xxv. The CA schemes have been prepared in respect of Rayagada and Kalahandi (South) forest Divisions to the diversion proposal. It has been proposed to adopt chain link wire mesh fencing for the protection of the planted species over the entire area in 17 patches coming under 12 villages. The perimeter proposed for fencing over 17 patches.
- xxvi. The total forest land proposed for diversion in the proposal is 708.204 ha. The user agency has provided 565.50 ha NFL in Rayagada forest Division and 158.73 ha NFL in Kalahandi (South) division against the proposed forest land for diversion. Thus, the user agency has provided 724.23 ha NFL land for CA. It is required to plant 7,08,204 nos. seedlings in the CA. However, both the DFOs have made schemes to plant 2,28,157 + 69,986 = 2,98,143 nos. seedlings. Balance seedlings of 7,08,204 - 2,98,143 = 4,10,061 nos. seedlings will be planted through Additional CA schemes in Rayagada Forest Division. The DFO, Rayagada has identified 546.0 ha of notified degraded forest land in his division to take up the additional CA Plantation.
- xxvii. The financial outlay approved by the APCCF (Nodal) for the Addl. CA plantations proposed in Rayagada Division comes to ₹44,71,21,000/-
- xxviii. The total financial outlay of the CA and Additional CA schemes pertaining to Rayagada and Kalahandi (South) Forest Division come ₹107,63,89,300 (₹53,09,26,800 + ₹9,83,41,500 + ₹44,71,21,000). The user agency has furnished undertaking to pay the amount of ACA plantation as per the demand of DFO, Rayagada.
- xxix. The DFO, Rayagada has prepared the Cost-Benefit analysis of the project pertaining to both the Forest Divisions. The cost of the forest is assessed as ₹42401.893 Lakh and the benefit of the project is estimated at ₹2,76,27,164.65 lakhs. The Cost-Benefit ratio comes to 1:651.554.
- xxx. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (IA Division) have issued Term of Reference (TOR) vide File No IA-J-11015/6/2023-IA-II(NCM) dt 14.08.2023 for mining of Sijimali Bauxite Block over 1549.022 ha for peak rated Capacity of 9.0 MTPA along with installation of two crushers (2x1200 TPH) located at Thuamul and Kasipur Tahasilsof Kalahandi and Rayagada Districts

respectively/MIN/439954/2023 dt 06.11.2023 to the user agency The ToR would be valid for a period of three years.

- xxx. The Mining plan including Progressive Mine closure plan has been approved by the Regional Controller of Mines, Office of the Regional Controller of Mines, BBSR (IBM) over 1549.022 ha in respect of Sijimali Bauxite Block in Tehsil Rampur and Kasipur Tahasils of Kalahandi and Rayagada Districts in the state of Odisha in favour of M/s Vedanta Ltd vide L: No MCDR- MIFLOBXT/4/2023-BBS-IBM RO BBS dt 16.08.2023 with 17 no of terms and conditions The approval of Mining Plan along with Progressive Mine Closure Plan has been accorded by the Indian Bureau of Mines.
- xxxii. The field Inspection envisages that the project involves displacement of 100 nos. of families in 02 villages i. e. Malipadar under Rayagada District and Tijamali Under Kalahandi District In this regard the user agency has furnished an undertaking duly countersigned by the DFO, Rayagada to submit the approved R & R Plan in respect of Sijimali Bauxite Block of M/s5 Vedanta Ltd in Rayagada and Kalahandi Districts to the Competent Authority immediately after its approval under Section 16 of LARR Act, 2013. The user agency has furnished an undertaking duly countersigned by the DFO, Kalahandi (South) to submit the approved R&R Plan in respect of Sijimali Bauxite Block of M/s Vedanta Ltd in Rayagada and Kalahandi Districts to the competent authority immediately after its approval under section 16 of LARR Act, 2013.
- xxxiii. A Site-Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan for the project has been approved by the PCCF (WL) and CWLW, Odisha vide Memo No 9718 dt 16.08.2024 The user agency has furnished an undertaking duly countersigned by the DFO, Rayagada to bear the cost of SSWLCP.
- xxxiv. As stated by the Additional PCCF, Forest Diversion & Nodal Officer, FC Act, O/o the PCCF & HoFF, Odisha, there are no court cases pending against the user agency on the applied area as revealed from the Site Inspection Reports of report of the DFO, Rayagada and DFO, Kalahandi (South) Divisions. **However, a Writ Petition was filed before the Hon'ble High Court vide WP (C) No 3729 of 2025 (Sri Gobinda Majhi & others-Vrs-Union of India & others) by the Petitioners with the following prayers:**
- a. Issue a writ of certiorari or any other appropriate writ quashing the Gram Sabha resolutions dated 08.12.2023 [Annexure 2 (Series) and Annexure 3 (Series)) and the subsequent certificate issued by the Collector, Kalahandi (Annexure 8) as the same are fraudulent and are against the provisions of FRA, 2006 and the Constitution of India.
 - b. Issue of writ of mandamus or any other appropriate writ directing the Ops to accept the resolutions passed by the Gram Sabha

- held between 30.08.2024 to 04.09.2024 [Annexure 9 (series)] wherein no consent for the diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes have been given by the villagers of the said villages.
- c. Issue a writ of mandamus or any other appropriate writ directing the Opposite Parties not to take any further steps pertaining to the Sijimali Bauxite Mine Project till the rights of the villagers in the project affected areas are settled as per the Forest Rights Act, 2006.
 - d. Issue a writ of mandamus or any other appropriate writs constituting a judicial inquiry into the illegalities committed in the alleged Gram Sabhas which took place on 08.12.2023 in the villagers of Kantamal, Sagaban, Dumerpadar, Aligana, Chulbari, Tijimali, Pelanakona, Katibhata, Malipadar and Bondel and an action taken report be submitted before this Hon'ble Court in a time bound manner.
 - e. Union of India through Secretary, MoEF&CC, Ministry of Tribal Affairs through its Secretary, State of Odisha through Secretary, Department of Revenue & Disaster Management, State of Odisha through Additional Chief Secretary, Forest & Environment Department, Department of Steel & Mines, Collector, Kalahandi, Collector, Rayagada and M/s Vedanta Ltd. were Opposite Parties No 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8 respectively.
 - f. The Hon'ble High Court vide Order No 1 dated 12.02.2025 had directed the State to issue written instruction on Petitioners allegation recorded in their order and directed to list on 19.02.2025 In the matter, the Collector & District Magistrate, Kalahandi and Collector & District Magistrate, Rayagada were requested to furnish the instruction/ PWC on the aforesaid Writ Petition to the O/o the AG, Odisha, Cuttack at the earliest under intimation to this Department vide this Department Letter No 6289/FE&CC dated 12.03.2025.
 - g. The Hon'ble High Court vide Judgement dated 05.03.2025 has disposed of the Writ Petition. In the said judgement, the Hon'ble High Court in Para 7 has directed as follows.

"7 Mr. Mohanty submits, his clients have not conceded but on the contrary maintained that Impugned Gram Sabha resolutions were fraudulently got made. He submits, subsequent to impugned resolutions, the Gram Sabhas convened between 30th August, 2024 and 4th September, 2024. They resolved that no consent for diversion was duly obtained. Mr. Mohanty points out, there has not been process duly undertaken to grant recognition to his clients, who are forest dwellers in the area. Mr. Swain disputes on submission that the Gram Sabha

*proceedings were video recorded and petitioners were present in those Gram Sabhas, which resulted in impugned resolutions. We would not want to be drawn into this dispute on facts. **The submission is recorded for being noted by Union of India in dealing with the proposal made by the user agency (opposite party no 8), upon taking into confidence inhabitants of concerned villages, through the Gram Sabhas and otherwise. Petitioners have pointed out their rights under the Act of 2006 as provided under section 3. We reiterate, Union of India must take note"***

- xxxv. The aforesaid order dated 05.03.2025 of the Hon'ble High Court passed in WP No 3729 of 2025 (Shri Gobinda Majhi & others Vrs Union of India & others) has been received in this Department on 26.03.2025 from the Superintendent of the High Court of Orissa vide his Issue No 8805 (3) dated 13.03.2025. *The copy of the aforesaid letter of the Superintendent of the High Court of Orissa along with a copy of the Order dated. 05.03.2025 of the Hon'ble High Court of Orissa is enclosed for favour of kind information and necessary action of the Ministry.*
- xxxvi. The Collector, Rayagada has issued certificate in Form-II under Schedule Tribe and other Traditional Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 for forest land of 565.70 Ha involved in the Sijimali Bauxite Block leased out in favour of M/s Vedanta Ltd On 24.01.2024
- xxxvii. The Collector, Kalahandi has issued certificate in Form No -II under Schedule Tribe and other Traditional Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 for forest land of 133.95 Ha involved in the Sijimali Bauxite Block leased out in favour of M/s Vedanta Ltd. on 18.01 2024.
- xxxviii. The user agency has furnished an undertaking duly countersigned by the DFO, Kalahandi (South) to submit the FRA certificate for the balance forest land over 03 villages coming in Kalahandi district after obtaining from the Revenue authority.
- xxxix. The State has informed that the user agency does not have any other existing bauxite mines in Odisha. This will be their first bauxite mine in Odisha. The user agency, Vedanta Ltd., has been declared the Preferred Bidder for this block in the auction held on 09.02.2023 under the MMDR Act, 1957. However, they do operate the Jamkhani opencast coal mine in Sundargarh district with a lease area of 847 ha, a reserve of 222.13 million tonnes, and a capacity of 2.6 MTPA.
- xl. The State has informed that the valley area is non-mineralized, has no bauxite presence, and will be left untouched. It is proposed to be developed as a greenbelt.

- xli. The State has given justification for the temporary roads, transmission lines, and cultivation which are seen in the forest area. The State has clarified that these features are linked to the villages of Tijimali and Malipadar, which fall within the mining lease area. These villages will be rehabilitated and resettled as per the LARR Act, 2013. A notification under Section 11(1) has already been issued. Seasonal agricultural use is non-permanent and can be vacated anytime.
- xlii. The State Govt. has clarified that 116.5 ha of forest area marked as 'untouched' because as per Para 2.11 of the mining plan, this area, part of a non-mineralized valley, was included in the lease block but will remain undisturbed. The total untouched area is 311.02 ha, including 116.5 ha of forest.
- xliii. The State has clarified that cultivation and settlements are seen within the lease boundary because the seasonal cultivation is done by local villagers on a temporary basis and does not indicate permanent land use. The settlements are located in Tijimali and Malipadar, which are private lands. These villages are to be relocated under the R&R plan per the LARR Act.
- xliv. The State has clarified the requirement of water, electricity, and evacuation from the mine
 - a. **Water:** Will be drawn from groundwater (approval from CGWA obtained).
 - b. **Power:** To be supplied through Diesel Generators.
 - c. **Evacuation:** Bauxite will be transported via PWD road from Malipadar to SH-44, then via rail from Singarama siding to Lanjigarh refinery. A separate proposal has been submitted for diversion of 4.911 ha forest land for constructing an access road to SH-44.
- xlv. The State has informed that cultivation is visible on CA land because of seasonal signs of cultivation, but the land is still classified as degraded forest. These signs do not indicate permanent land use and the land is suitable for afforestation, as per the approved CA Plan.
- xlvi. A Site-Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan for the 10 km impact zone has been approved by the PCCF (Wildlife) & CWLW, Odisha, with a budget of ₹34.44 Cr. Funds will be deposited in State CAMPA and used in Kalahandi South and Rayagada Forest Divisions. Activities will be implemented under DFO guidance, with a 5-year plan period and monitoring provisions.
- xlvii. The Regional Office has inspected the area proposed for diversion and proposed CA land. The DDGF (Central), RO Bhubaneswar has recommended the proposal subject to the following conditions:
 - i. A total of 310.786 hectares of land located within the mining lease boundary (beyond the safety zone), shall remain undisturbed, as submitted by the User Agency. This area shall

- be maintained as a green belt owing to the absence of bauxite reserves. The User Agency shall ensure that no tree felling or mining activity is undertaken in the said forest area.
- ii. The State Government shall ensure that 8.082 hectares of forest land, which forms part of the Compensatory Afforestation (CA) area for the Dubna-Sakradihi Mines project (Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/30349/2017) and have also been included in the present proposal, are compensated by identifying and providing an alternative CA site for the said project. Approval for the partial change in CA site shall be obtained from the competent authority for Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/30349/2017.
 - iii. As mining is proposed at the hilltop and may affect the natural catchment area, the User Agency shall implement comprehensive soil conservation measures on the hillock and adjoining forest areas. These measures shall aim to prevent surface runoff from leaving the mining zone and to safeguard downstream ecosystems.
 - iv. The User Agency shall submit a progressive reclamation plan, along with the restoration schedule and forest land surrender schedule, to the Ministry prior to the grant of final approval.
 - v. A separate proposal (Proposal No. FP/OR/OTHERS/523366/2025) involving the diversion of 4.911 hectares of forest land in favour of the Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) for the construction of an access road from the Sijimali Bauxite Mines (hilltop) to State Highway-44 (SH-44) is presently under consideration by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for "in-principle" approval. As this road is an ancillary component of the Sijimali Bauxite Mines project, the competent authority may consider appraising both proposals concurrently to ensure an integrated evaluation and to avoid any fait accompli situation.
 - vi. The User Agency shall ensure that all Compensatory Afforestation (CA) sites are free from encroachments before being handed over to the State Forest Department (SFD). The SFD shall ensure that the CA sites are properly fenced, cleared of encroachments, and planted, at the cost of the User Agency.
 - vii. The State Forest Department (SFD) shall implement the Site-Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan (SSWLCP) for the project, as approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW), Odisha, at the cost of the User Agency.
- xlvi. The Hon'ble High Court vide Judgement dated 05.03.2025 have disposed of the Wnt Petition In the said judgement, the Hon'ble High Court in Para 7 have directed as follows:
- "7 Mr. Mohanty submits, his clients have not conceded but on the contrary maintained that Impugned Gram Sabha resolutions were fraudulently got made. He submits, subsequent to impugned resolutions, the Gram Sabhas convened between 30th August, 2024 and 4th September, 2024. They resolved that no consent for diversion*

was duly obtained. Mr. Mohanty points out, there has not been process duly undertaken to grant recognition to his clients, who are forest dwellers in the area. Mr. Swain disputes on submission that the Gram Sabha proceedings were video recorded and petitioners were present in those Gram Sabhas, which resulted in impugned resolutions. We would not want to be drawn into this dispute on facts. The submission is recorded for being noted by Union of India in dealing with the proposal made by the user agency (opposite party no 8), upon taking into confidence inhabitants of concerned villages, through the Gram Sabhas and otherwise. Petitioners have pointed out their rights under the Act of 2006 as provided under section 3. We reiterate, Union of India must take note" order.

- xlix. Further, the committee has also noted that a separate proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Govt. Diversion of 4.911 ha of forest land for construction of access road from Sijimali Bauxite Mines (Hill Top) to SH-44 to facilitate bauxite transportation in Kashipur Tahasil of Rayagada District under Rayagada Forest Division applied by IDCO has been submitted by the State Govt. letter No.FE-DIV-FLD-0025-2025-10894/FE&CC dated 09.05.2025 to the RO Bhubaneswar (Online proposal No. FP/OR/OTHERS/523366/2025). The RO has submitted this proposal to the Ministry for holistic decision.
- I. Further, the DDGF (Central) has mentioned that:
- a. The instant proposal pertains to the construction of a road submitted by the Government of Odisha, with the primary objective of facilitating the transportation of bauxite ore via bulkers/trucks from the mines of M/s Vedanta Limited to State Highway 44 (SH-44).
 - b. In response to the EDS raised by the Regional Office on 19.05.2025, the State Government has clarified that, apart from serving the aforesaid purpose, the proposed road is also intended to connect the villages of Dumerpadar, Porlang, Sagabari, Bichapinda, and Malipadar, which presently lack road connectivity.
 - c. However, as per the KML file submitted, the specifications of the proposed road (width) indicate that it is primarily designed to support the movement of heavy vehicles.
 - d. In this context, it is pertinent to mention that the associated mining proposal—vide proposal no. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/470250/2024—is currently under consideration by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), New Delhi. The in-principle approval for the same is yet to be granted. In the event that the mining proposal is not favourably considered by the competent authority, positive consideration of the road proposal at this

stage by the Regional Office may lead to a fait accompli situation.

- ii. The committee further observed that the road proposal has been submitted by the other agency i.e. by IDCO, however the road is primarily proposed keeping in view the requirement of mineral evacuation in the instant mine. The separate proposal for the road construction may be allowed, However, the proposal for road can only be considered for approval once the proposal for the diversion of forest land for the mining lease is approved.

4. Decision of the Advisory the Advisory Committee: The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the Dy. DGF (Central), RO, Bhubaneswar and Nodal Officer, Government of Odisha. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Odisha, the Committee **deferred** the proposal and sought clarification/information on the following for further consideration in the matter:

- i. Keeping in view the Judgement dated 05.03.2025 of the Hon'ble High Court of Odisha w.r.t. the WP (C) No 3729 of 2025 (Sri Gobinda Majhi & others-Vrs-Union of India & others), the state shall ensure strict compliance of the order of the Hon'ble Court and submit a detailed report.
- ii. The State has informed that the area proposed for diversion is vulnerable to soil erosion due to steep slopes. The vegetation loss and mining disturbances lead to rapid runoff, soil degradation and stream sedimentation. The factors like top soil displacement, compaction and blasting will further accelerate erosion. In this regard, the justification and plan to mitigate the soil erosion shall be submitted.
- iii. An area of 8.082 hectares, which forms part of the Compensatory Afforestation (CA) area for the Dubna-Sakradihi Mines project (Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/30349/2017) has been included in the present proposal. The state shall give justification for keeping this area in the diversion proposal. The State shall provide the status of compensatory afforestation carried out in this area and intimate as to how this area will be compensated.
- iv. The State has informed that the temporary roads, transmission lines, and cultivation seen in the forest area are linked to the villages of Tijimali and Malipadar. In this regard, the state shall examine the matter and submit a report regarding the violation of the Adhinyam, if any.
- v. The State shall ensure that all Compensatory Afforestation (CA) sites are suitable for plantation and free from encroachments. In this regard, a detailed report for each Compensatory Afforestation area shall be provided.

Agenda No. 25

Online Proposal No. FP/OR/OTHERS/523366/2025

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Govt. Diversion of 4.911 ha of forest land for construction of access road from Sijimali Bauxite Mines (Hill Top) to SH-44 to facilitate bauxite transportation in Kashipur Tahasil of Rayagada District under Rayagada Forest Division applied by IDCO.

1. The agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DIGF (Central), Regional Office, Bhubaneswar and Nodal Officer, Government of Odisha attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC. The Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
 - i. Being a linear category proposal, the State Govt. letter No. FE-DIV-FLD-0025-2025-10894/FE&CC dated 09.05.2025 has submitted the above mentioned proposal to the RO Bhubaneswar. However, the proposal is linked with main proposal no. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/470250/2024 which is currently under consideration with the Ministry. The 'in-principle' approval for the same is yet to be granted. In the event that the mining proposal is not favourably considered by the competent authority, positive consideration of the road proposal at this stage by the Regional Office may lead to a fait accompli situation and forwarded the proposal to the Ministry.
 - ii. The Govt. of Odisha has informed that M/s Vedanta Limited has now got the lease for excavation of Sijimali Bauxite ore mines under Kashipur Tehsil of Rayagada district. M/s Vedanta intends to transport the bauxite ore of 9 MTPA from mines to Alumina Refinery plant situated at Lanjigarh through road and rail transport. Since, the road connectivity from Sijimali Mines top to SH-44 is not available at site; it was decided to construct suitable road connectivity from Mines top to SH-44 for transportation of Bauxite ore through Bulklers/trucks. It has been decided to take up the construction of new road from Sijimali Mines top to SH-44 up to a distance 3.4 Km in the State of Odisha. In this connection, a meeting was held on 25.01.2024 at 10.30 AM in the conference room of Chief Secretary under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary, Odisha on issue of transportation of bauxite from Sijimali Bauxite Mines. In the meeting following points were discussed and decisions taken:
 - a. Vedanta to submit the land schedule from Mine top to SH-44 road.
 - b. IDCO to facilitate acquisition and transfer of land to PWD and giving NoC to Vedanta for construction of road.
 - c. PWD will remain as the owner of the road.

- d. As per the above decision IDCO applied online for construction of road of Sijimali Bauxite Mines to SH-44.
- iii. The Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) has submitted a proposal seeking the diversion of **4.911 hectares of forest land** for the **construction of an access road from Sijimali Bauxite Mines (Hill Top) to SH-44**. This project is intended to facilitate bauxite transportation and is located in **Kashipur Tahasil of Rayagada District**, within the jurisdiction of the **Rayagada Forest Division, Odisha**.
 - iv. The proposed site lies in **Rayagada district**, Odisha. The forest land involved falls under the **Rayagada Forest Division** and is categorized as **DLC Forest**, with a **vegetation density of less than 0.4**, which falls under **Eco Value Class-III**. An enumeration conducted over the 4.911 ha forest area recorded a total of **91 trees**, while an additional 6.403 ha of non-forest land in the vicinity shows no forest growth.
 - v. According to the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), the proposed site has steep slopes and sparse vegetation, making it highly prone to erosion. Any further disturbance such as deep cutting and soil compaction may accelerate erosion and lead to serious soil degradation due to increased runoff.
 - vi. The proposed site is approximately 2.642 km from the nearest forest boundary. It does not fall within any National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve, or Elephant Corridor. Additionally, no rare, endangered, or unique species of flora and fauna have been reported in the area. However, commonly found tree species include *Shorea robusta* (Sal), *Terminalia belerica* (Bahada), *Syzygium cumini* (Jamun), *Mangifera indica* (Amba), and *Emblica officinalis* (Anla). The fauna reported in the area include barking deer, wild boar, peacock, and Indian hare.
 - vii. The DFO confirms that no archaeological, heritage, or defense structures are located within the proposed site.
 - viii. Moreover, no violation of the under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 or any related guidelines has been reported.
 - ix. The user agency has adhered to all necessary legal frameworks, including the FRA certificate issued by the Collector of Rayagada (Order No. 150/XI-117/25, dated 31.01.2025).
 - x. To compensate for the diversion of forest land, the State Government has identified 6.07 ha of non-forest land (classified as Kism: Pahad) in Tingarjhol village, Kolnara Tahasil for compensatory afforestation. This land has been certified as encroachment- and encumbrance-free by the Tahasildar and Collector of Rayagada. The CA Scheme has been prepared in Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) plantation mode, proposing to plant 1,214 seedlings at the rate of 200 seedlings per hectare. The scheme has been technically approved by the Additional PCCF (Nodal), Odisha with a financial outlay of ₹59,06,200 and includes 20 years of maintenance.
 - xi. Additionally, 5.00 ha of degraded forest land in Pedakona Extension RF under the Rayagada Forest Division has been earmarked for planting 3,697 additional seedlings under the Additional Compensatory

Afforestation (Addl. CA) Scheme. This has been planned in Artificial Regeneration (AR) mode at 1000 seedlings per hectare, with a financial outlay of ₹54,15,400 and 10 years of maintenance. Both CA and Addl. CA schemes include native species such as Jamun, Sissoo, Neem, Gambar, Karanja, Amla, Panasa, Bahada, Harida, and Khair.

- xii. The State Government has clarified that the project does not require Environmental Clearance, and it does not involve any displacement of human habitation; thus, no Resettlement and Rehabilitation (R&R) Plan is needed. Furthermore, as per MoEF&CC guidelines dated 29.12.2023, a Cost-Benefit Analysis is not required for this diversion proposal.
- xiii. Further, the State Govt. has informed that Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, New Delhi has been requested to consider the proposal for diversion of 708.204 ha (564.581 ha in Rayagada Forest Division + 143.623 ha in Kalahandi (South) Forest Division) of Forest land (including 11.195 ha earmarked for Safety Zone) within total Mining Lease land over 1548.786 ha in Rayagada Forest Division & Kalahandi (South) Forest Division under Rayagada and Kalahandi District respectively and convey their approval under Section-2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of M/s Vedanta Limited, subject to certain conditions (FP/OR/MIN/QR/470250/2024) vide this Department Letter No.8268/FE&CC dtd.08.04.2025.
- xiv. Giving justification, State Govt. reported that as per Minutes of the meeting held on 24.01.2024 under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary, Odisha on the issue of transportation of Bauxite from Sijimali Mines in Rayagada district, a road from Sijimali Bauxite Mines to SH-44 over a length of around 3.4 Km is required, for which the land will be acquired by IDCO and in turn would be transferred to PWD. Vedanta Limited has been allocated with Sijimali Bauxite mine spread over Kalahandi and Rayagada districts of Odisha in March, 2023, having estimated reserve of around 311 Million Tonnes. For meeting the increased requirement of raw material, Vedanta intends to operate Sijimali block for dispatching Bauxite from mines to its Refinery. In this regard, the total involvement of area is 11.314 Ha in Kashipur Tahasil of Rayagada District, out of which, 4.911 Ha comes under Forest Category and requires forest clearance under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
- xv. Three alternative routes have been selected for the proposed access road from the point adjacent to lease area and have been examined. The details are furnished below and also depicted on Sol Toposheet No.E44F2 and E44F3. Comparative Assessment of Surveyed three proposed alignments:

Alter native s	Route Lengt h	Approx . Cost of the project in crore	Total land requiremen t in ha	Forest area require d in ha	Non-forest require d in ha	Nature of Ground	Remark s
ALT-1	3.4	54.412	11.314	4.911	6.403	Plain,	Less

	Km					undulating and hilly area	Forest land
ALT-2	3.45 Km	55	11.74	5.95	5.79	Plain, Hilly & Undulating and passes through private land	More forest land
ALT-3	5.63 Km	90	18.594	7.66	10.934	Plain, Hilly & Undulating and passes through private land	

xvi. Keeping in view the above stated parameters among the three surveyed sites the alignment selected (ALT-1) is most suitable and hence considered over the other two sites.

xvii. The total length of the access road from Sijimali Mines top to SH-44 is 2980 mtr. The details are furnished below.

Item	Forest area			Non-forest area			Total area in ha	Total length
	Length in m	Width in m	Area in ha	Length in m	Width in m	Area in ha		
Proposed access road	1370.2	35.84	4.911	1609.8	39.776	6.403	11.314	2980 mtr

xviii. Total land involved in this project is 11.314 ha comprising of 4.911 ha of DLC forest land, 6.243 ha of non-forest Govt. land and 0.160 ha of Private land. The authenticated land schedule of forest land and non-forest land involved in the project has been furnished with the proposal. The Tahasildar, Kashipur has submitted the Hal/Sabik status as per Govt. record as on 25.10.1980 with the proposal. The purpose wise break up of total land involved in this project is given below:

Sl. No.	Item	DLC forest (in ha)	Total forest (in ha)	Pvt. land (in ha)	Non-forest Govt. land (in ha)	Total non-forest land (in ha)	Total (in ha)
1.	Road carriage way	0.982	0.982	0.033	1.151	1.184	2.166

2.	Paved Area	0.421	0.421	0.014	0.450	0.464	0.885
3.	Earthen Shoulder	0.534	0.534	0.017	0.605	0.622	1.156
4.	Earthwork slope	0.764	0.764	0.005	0.938	0.943	1.707
5.	Drain, Breast wall, Retaining Wall & LUVP's etc	2.210	2.210	0.091	3.099	3.190	5.400
	Total	4.911	4.911	0.160	6.243	6.403	11.314

- xix. As per Para (ii) of Ministry's letter No.FC-11/158/2024-FC dated 17.01.2025 "Approach road are an integral and ancillary feature related to mining. In such cases, single approval is invariably granted by the Ministry as per proposals submitted by the State Government. However, there may be cases wherein such approach roads may not be included in the mining leases and Mining Plan. Such cases of linear projects linked to mining and conceived subsequently by the User Agency as outlined above shall be treated as stand alone linear projects and shall be dealt and disposed off by the concerned Regional Office of the MoEFE&CC in accordance with the provisions of Guideline given at Para 7.8 (i)(e) of the Consolidated Guidelines.
- xx. Upon examination of the forest diversion proposal for the construction of an access road from the Sijimali Bauxite Mines to State Highway-44, the RO observed that the mining lease proposal for the Sijimali project has already been submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) under proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/470250/2024, and Stage-I approval is currently awaited. A separate forest diversion proposal for the road component has also been submitted to the Regional Office under proposal No. FP/OR/OTHERS/523366/2025, treating it as a standalone project.
- xxi. However, in reference to Para 7.8(i)(f)(1) of the Consolidated Guidelines issued under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980, it is specified that "approach roads, conveyor belts, and other ancillary activities related to mining shall be considered as part of the mining project and should therefore be processed accordingly." At the same time, the guidelines state that "supplementary linear projects linked to mining, conceived after the start of the original mining, shall be considered as standalone linear projects" and are to be dealt with by the REC/IRO as per the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023. In light of this provision, the State Government was requested to re-examine the proposal and take appropriate action.
- xxii. In compliance with this request, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Rayagada has clarified that the User Agency (IDCO) has informed that the proposed road is a government road owned by the Public Works Department (PWD), Government of Odisha, and IDCO is acting as the project proponent solely for land acquisition and forest diversion purposes. This road is not being developed exclusively for the

- operationalization of Vedanta Limited's mining lease, but as a public infrastructure project that will serve a broader purpose.
- xxiii. The DFO further reported that the proposed PWD road will significantly improve connectivity for five remote villages—Dumerpadar, Porlang, Sagabari, Bichapinda, and Malipadar—which currently have no road access to the valley and the mainland. These villages, with a combined population of approximately 1,500 residents, face serious hardships due to the lack of road connectivity, especially in accessing healthcare, markets, and essential services. The road will also enhance the ability of the tribal community residing in the inaccessible hilltop areas to transport horticultural produce and engage more fully with the market economy.
- xxiv. Therefore, the road project is not solely intended to serve the mining lease area but is a general-purpose linear infrastructure project being implemented by the PWD, and should not be treated as an ancillary activity of the mining project. In light of the above facts and circumstances, the State Government has concluded that the proposed road does not fall under the scope of sub-para (f) of Para 7.8 of Chapter 7 of the Consolidated Guidelines. Consequently, it should be considered a normal linear project, and processed accordingly under the relevant provisions for linear projects in the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023.
- xxv. After the examination of the above reply, the DIGF (Central) has mentioned that:
- xxvi. "Since, this proposal pertains to a mining road which is a standalone project. As evident from the title of the project, where it is explicitly mentioned that this road will expedite bauxite transportation, we may place the proposal for further discussion and advise."
- xxvii. Further, the DDGF (Central) has mentioned that:
- xxviii. "The instant proposal pertains to the construction of a road submitted by the Government of Odisha, with the primary objective of facilitating the transportation of bauxite ore via bulkers/trucks from the mines of M/s Vedanta Limited to State Highway 44 (SH-44).
- xxix. In response to the EDS raised by the Regional Office on 19.05.2025, the State Government has clarified that, apart from serving the aforesaid purpose, the proposed road is also intended to connect the villages of Dumerpadar, Porlang, Sagabari, Bichapinda, and Malipadar, which presently lack road connectivity.
- xxx. However, as per the KML file submitted, the specifications of the proposed road (width) indicate that it is primarily designed to support the movement of heavy vehicles.
- xxxi. In this context, it is pertinent to mention that the associated mining proposal—vide proposal no. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/470250/2024—is currently under consideration by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), New Delhi. The 'in-principle' approval for the same is yet to be granted. In the event that the mining proposal is not favourably considered by the competent authority, positive consideration of the road proposal at this stage by the Regional Office may lead to a fait accompli situation.

- xxxii. In view of the above, the instant proposal is forwarded in terms of the provisions of Para 1.10(ii) of Chapter 1 regarding the site specificity of the road-based on its proposed width, and as per sub-para (f) of Para 7.8.i of Chapter 7 of the Consolidated Guidelines and Clarifications issued under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, and the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023, for consideration by the competent authority.
- xxxiii. Site inspection report has been carried out by the RO Bhubaneswar in the instant proposal and the DDGF (Central) RO Bhubaneswar has recommended the proposal subject to the following:
- i. Although the proposed access road is an ancillary activity integral to the Sijimali Bauxite Mine, it does not fall within the approved Mining Lease area or the sanctioned Mining Plan. The proposal for diversion of forest land pertaining to the Sijimali Bauxite Mine is presently under consideration by the MoEF&CC, New Delhi, and the 'in-principle' (Stage-I) approval is yet to be granted. Accordingly, the competent authority may consider the present proposal for the access road in conjunction with the Sijimali Bauxite Mine project, to enable integrated appraisal to avoid any fait accompli situation.
 - ii. The Forest Department shall undertake plantation of tall indigenous tree species along both sides of the proposed road, at the cost of the User Agency, to mitigate dust pollution resulting from the movement of heavy vehicles associated with mining activities.
 - iii. Considering that the proposed area features a medium slope and the road will be used by heavy vehicles, the User Agency shall implement appropriate engineering and safety measures to prevent soil erosion.
 - iv. The User Agency shall ensure that the Compensatory Afforestation (CA) sites are cleared of all encroachments prior to handing them over to the State Forest Department (SFD). The SFD shall, ensure that the CA sites are free from encroachments, properly fenced, and duly planted at the cost of the User Agency.
- xxxiv. The committee observed that the road proposal has been submitted by the other agency i.e. by IDCO, however, the available details and the specifications of the proposed road indicate that it is primarily designed to support the movement of heavy vehicles for the mineral evacuation from the concerned mine. Therefore, the proposal for road should be considered once the proposal for the diversion of forest land for the mining lease is approved.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the Dy. DGF (Central), RO, Bhubaneswar and Nodal Officer, Government of Odisha. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Odisha, the Committee deferred the proposal with the following observation:
- i. The proposed road is primarily designed to support the movement of heavy vehicles for the mineral evacuation from the Sijimali Bauxite

Mine. Therefore, the proposal for road construction can only be considered once the proposal for the diversion of forest land for the said mining lease is approved. The State government shall therefore submit the proposal after obtaining the in-principle approval for the diversion of forest land in the Sijimali Bauxite Mine.

Agenda No. 26

Online Proposal No. FP/OR/IND/422562/202

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Envam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of M/s B.R. Sponge & Power Ltd for non-forestry use of 4.775 ha of forest land for Capacity enhancement of Sponge Iron Plant to Integrated Steel Plant in village Bad-Tumakala under Lahunipara Tahasil of Sundargarh District of Rourkela Forest Division.

1. The above stated agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The DDGF (Central), Regional Office, MoEFCC, Bhubaneswar and Nodal Officer, Government of Odisha attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the Advisory Committee. The Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee after through deliberation and discussion observed that:
 - i. The projects envisage for capacity enhancement of Sponge Iron Plant to Integrated Steel Plant by M/s B.R. Sponge & Power Ltd. The proposed project is situated in the state of Odisha, specifically in the Sundargarh District. The State Govt. has submitted the instant proposal on 06.05.2024 to the Regional Office Bhubaneswar under Scenario 4.
 - ii. After the examination of the proposal the RO has returned the proposal to the State Govt. by stating that the proposal is involves violation of the Adhiniyam, 1980 therefore, the proposal as per the Rule 10 (2) (v) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 for “ex-post” facto approval of the Central Government for regularization of the violation shall be examined and disposed of by the Central Government at the Ministry level.
 - iii. After that, the State Government has submitted the instant proposal under Scenario 7 directly to the Ministry through online PARIVESH 2.0 portal on 08.08.2024.
 - iv. The State Govt. has informed that M/s B.R. Sponge Iron and Power Ltd. has an existing DFI Kiln of 2 x 100 TPD configuration and Iron Ore of 1 x 50 TPH. The State Level Single Window Clearance in its meeting held on 09.10.2020 accorded in-principal approval to the proposal of M/s B.R. Sponge Iron and Power Ltd. The IPICOL has also

recommended for allotment of additional 48.00 Ac. land for the expansion project of M/s B.R. Sponge & Power Ltd. which is approved in 193rd SLFC meeting held on 04.12.2020 vide letter No.CGM/SLNA/BR Sponge/245/20 dated 07.12.2020. The proposal is a proposed expansion project which involves the acquisition of additional land and installation of new units. The project is mainly for the final manufacturing of steel products through Iron-ore Beneficiation, Pellet, DRI, Induction Furnace-CCM, Rolling Mil route. The unit also proposes the installation of a Coal washery, Producer gas plant and Power Plant for captive use.

- v. The existing plant having only DRI unit, for the viability of the plant needs to expand to produce a steel product like TT & Structural Steel. For expansion additional land 47.78 Acres (19.338 ha) required out of which 11.8 Acre (4.775 ha) is presently in Forest Kisam. Revenue forest land is located in between acquired/leased area and no other option is left for realignment of the plant layout. It is very much essential to go for diversion of the said patch of forest land. Otherwise, there is no possibility to set up the project.
- vi. The plant has already been established in the revenue forest land. As it is proposed to expand the existing unit to final capacity of beneficiation plant 18,00,000 TPA throughout (Beneficiation of Iron Ore 13,92,000 TPA), Pellet plant 12,00,000 TPA, Sponge Iron 2,97,000 TPA (Including existing), Billets (Induction furnace & CCM) 1,48,500TPA, Rolled products (Rolling mills) 1,43,460 TPA, CPP of 44 MW (WARB-20 MW & AFBC-24 MW), Coal Washery 7,92,000TPA throughout (Washed Coal-5,70, 240TPA and Producer Gas Plant-48,500 Nm³, it is not possible to change alignment. As the Revenue Forest land is located in between acquired/lease area, so a proposal has been submitted for diversion of forestland for non-forest use U/S 2 (1) (ii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980
- vii. Total land involved in this project is 34.955 ha, out of which forest land is 4.775 ha and non-forest land is 30.180 ha. The authenticated land schedule of forest land & non-forest land involved in the project duly authenticated by the DFO, Rourkela and Tahasildar, Lahunipara is furnished with the proposal. The purpose wise break up of total forest and non-forest land involved in this project is furnished below:

Sl. No.	Component	Forest land (in ha)	Non-forest land (in ha)	Total land (in ha)
1	Existing Unit	1.087	2.732	3.819
2	Proposed Unit	1.166	7.882	9.048
3	Coal Washery	0.168	0.318	0.486
4	Boiler Unit	0.001	0.490	0.491
5	ETP/STP	0	0.617	0.617
6	Reservoir	0	0.734	0.734
7	Auxiliary Units	0.073	0.493	0.566
8	Dump yard	0	0.928	0.928
9	I/O Crusher (Stand by)	0	0.579	0.579
10	Internal & External connecting roads	0.457	3.488	3.945
11	Telling Pond	0.262	0.629	0.891

12	Classifier	0.089	0.355	0.444
13	Parking	0	0.669	0.669
14	Green Belt	1.472	10.266	11.738
Total		4.775	30.180	34.955

- viii. The project falls under the Rourkela Forest Division and involves 4.775 hectares of forest land. The legal classification of this land is identified as Revenue Forest. The density of vegetation is recorded at 0.01, placing it under Eco Value Class-III, indicating very sparse vegetation.
- ix. A tree enumeration survey was conducted, and it recorded a total of 52 trees over the proposed forest land. In addition, 1076 trees were enumerated in the non-forest area of the project. The user agency has committed in writing that although a total of 1128 trees exist across the project site, no tree will be felled during the project execution.
- x. According to the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Rourkela, the land proposed for diversion is plain in nature, and hence, the risk of soil erosion is negligible.
- xi. The area does not fall within or near any National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve, or Elephant Corridor, nor is it within any Eco-Sensitive Zone of a protected area. However, the DFO reported occasional wildlife movements, including that of wild elephants, jackals, Hanuman langurs, mongooses, barking deer, and Indian hares in the proposed project site.
- xii. There are no rare, endangered, or unique species of flora or fauna found within the proposed area. Though no specific wildlife habitat exists in the applied area, scheduled animals such as elephants and others mentioned earlier are occasionally seen, and are more frequently observed in nearby forested areas. There are no protected archaeological, heritage, defence establishments, or other significant monuments located within the applied area.
- xiii. The forest land requested by the user agency is considered to be unavoidable and the bare minimum required for the execution of the project, as per the DFO's assessment.
- xiv. The State Government has confirmed a violation of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. A complete Sponge Iron Plant has already been established since 2003 over 3.237 hectares of Revenue Forest land in Badatumkela Mouza, Lahunipara Tahasil, Sundargarh District.
- xv. There is violation on revenue forest land i.e. complete set of Sponge Iron Plant has been established since 2003 over an area of 3.237 ha of Khata No.108, Plot No.16/P of Badatumkela Mouza of Lahunipara Tahasil of Sundargarh District. The State Govt. has noticed it only in 2024. The Divisional Forest Officer, Rourkela Forest Division has reported that "the User Agency has established the plant/industry in the Revenue Forest land since 2003. As there was no forest growth it has not been noticed by the Revenue authorities to stop the violation. Moreover, there was no scope of forest department officials to detect such violation as the land in question and all connected documents are under the control of Revenue Department. During site inspection of the aforesaid forest land, it was noticed that the User Agency had already

encroached and established its industry and taken possession of the land by way of dumping fly ash over the Revenue Jungle kism land measuring an area of 3.237 Ha. before taking prior approval of the competent authority as provisioned in consolidated guideline of Van (Sanrakshan evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and Van (Sanrakshan evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 and other jungle kism land measuring an area of 1.538 Ha. was encroachment free.

- xvi. The Tahasildar, Lahunipara has submitted in his reply vide Office Memo No. 438 dated 03.02.2024 addressed to the Collector and District Magistrate, Sundargarh, concerning the encroachment cases bearing Case Nos. 137/2018 and 1/2024. Considering the nature of violation of forest land for use of non-forestry purpose one forest offence case OR Case No.130 dated 01.02.2024 of Banki Range has been booked as per the provision of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023
- xvii. And whereas, the statement of Sri Yogesh Sharma, in the capacity of Independent Director of M/s B R Sponge & Power Ltd., and Sri Shashank Garg, in the capacity of Director, M/s BR Sponge & Power Ltd., were recorded by the Divisional Forest Officer, Rourkela in connection to the above case where Sri Yogesh Sharma stated that:

"I am working in M/s B R Sponge & Power Ltd. since 01.09.2020. As per the direction of Sri Shashank Garg, Director of M/s B R Sponge & Power Ltd. filed a diversion proposal over an area of 4.775 Ha. of forest land on dtd.27.03.2023. Moreover, another and lone supervisor of the founder member Smt. Savitri Devi Agarwal is bed ridden due to her old age and currently she is 85 years old. So, she couldn't come for deposition of the statement."

Sri Shashank Garg working in capacity of Director, M/s BR Sponge & Power Ltd, stated that, "the company was formed on 10.01.2003 in the name of M/s Boudh Alloys Pvt. Ltd. and the founders were Late Pankaj Kumar Agarwal, Late Santosh Agarwal and Smt. Sabitri devi Agarwal. Later, the company was rechristened as M/s B. R. Sponge & Power Pvt. Ltd. on dtd. 12.04.2004. The company has been working since 2005 after getting CTE on dtd.20.09.2004 from OSPCB. Meanwhile, in the year 2009, Sri Pankaj Kumar Agarwal expired and subsequently in the year 2012, Sri Santosh Agarwal expired. Since, then the company was run by Smt. Sabitri devi Agarwal till 2017. During that period, I was a minor and appointed as director on dtd.01.09.2017 and running the company since then. When I got to know that the company is established on Revenue Forest land, I Suo moto asked my independent director Sri Yogesh Sharma to file Forest Diversion case for non-forestry use of forest land since 12.04.2004. Accordingly, in December 2023 my independent director applied diversion proposal in Parivesh-2.0 Portal."

- xviii. Based on the above facts and circumstances, M/s Boudh Alloys Pvt. Ltd. (Now M/s B R Sponge & Power Ltd.), was established on 10th January 2003 in the Revenue Kism Forest Land, and has encroached upon forest land since 2003, disregarding the provisions of

Section 3A of the Van (Sanrakshan evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. As per the statement recorded, it has been found that the founders of the company, namely Late Pankaj Kumar Agarwal, Late Santosh Agarwal and Smt. Sabitri Devi Agarwal, have violated the legal provisions under the said Act. The company founders, Pankaj Kumar Agarwal and Santosh Agarwal, have passed away, as confirmed by the death certificates submitted by the User Agency. Smt. Sabitri Devi Agarwal is currently bedridden due to her old age and is 85 years old. At present, Sri Shashank Garg, son of Late Santosh Kumar Agarwal, is the Director of M/s BR Sponge & Power Ltd. He may be penalized for encroaching upon 3.237 Ha. of Revenue Forest Land according to Section 3A of the Van (Sanrakshan evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 along with relevant revenue laws for the time being in force.

- xix.* The Divisional Forest Officer, Rourkela Forest Division has reported that "after Site Inspection by the DFO, Rourkela Forest Division on 19.10.2023, he has pointed out and mentioned in the Point No. 8.2 of the online application form that the violation is still in progress. Accordingly, the DFO Rourkela has instructed the Director, M/s B.R. Sponge & Power Ltd, to stop the operation on the said forest land vide letter no. 9727 dated 19.10.2023. Further, the DFO, Rourkela informed the matter to the Collector & District Magistrate, Sundergarh and requested him to take necessary action against erring officials responsible for violation of FC Act 1980 vide letter no. 10310 dated 07.11.2023.
- xx.* Furthermore, the DFO, Rourkela requested Tahasildar, Lahunipara to furnish detailed information regarding action taken against M/s BR Sponge & Power Limited for violation of FC Act 1980 for establishment of Plant/Industry in the Revenue Forest Land vide letter no. 1101 dated 01.02.2024.
- xxi.* Though the DFO, Rourkela Forest Division instructed to M/s BR Sponge & Power Limited to stop the operation on the said forest land, but M/s BR Sponge & Power Limited did not stop the operation because, if plant will be stopped then production of Sponge Iron will be stopped. If production of Sponge Iron will be stopped Govt. of Odisha will loss the Revenue. If the plant will be stopped then around 230 to 250 permanent & temporary employees are to be affected. As the local people are depending upon the Plant and if they will be discontinued then around 2000 to 2500 no of peoples are directly or indirectly affected as this is only their livelihood.
- xxii.* Moreover, considering the nature of violation of forest land for use of non-forestry purpose one forest offence case OR Case No.130 dated 01.02.2024 of Banki Range has been booked as per the provision of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023
- xxiii.* The Divisional Forest Officer, Rourkela Forest Division has reported that the current status of the case is given as follows:-
- a. The Divisional Forest Officer, Rourkela Forest Division has reported that the scenario of the proposal from IRO to Ministry (Scenario 4 to Scenario 7) is to be changed by the Nodal Officer

- (FCA), Office of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Odisha, Bhubaneswar.
- b. In addition to compliance, the Divisional Forest Officer, Rourkela Forest Division has submitted a report of violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rule, 2023 with self-contained note in respect of M/s B R Sponge and Power Limited.
- xxiv. To compensate for the 4.775 ha of forest land diverted, an equivalent area of 4.779 ha of non-forest land in Bhaliadihi village, Lahunipara Tahasil, has been earmarked for compensatory afforestation. The land is deemed suitable and free from encumbrances, as verified by local revenue and forest officials. The CA will follow Block Plantation mode, with 1000 seedlings per hectare. Maintenance, soil and moisture conservation, and fencing (Angle Iron Chain Link) will be ensured for 20 years. Estimated cost of the CA Scheme is ₹74,41,800 and has also approved by the PCCF (Nodal), Odisha.
- xxv. The State Govt. has reported in pursuance of MoEF&CC, Govt. of India, EIA Notification S.O.1533 dated 14.09.2006 and amendments thereof, this project falls under Category "A" of Activity of 3(a) Metallurgical Industries (Ferrous & Non-ferrous). Accordingly, proposal for Terms of Reference (ToR) for undertaking EIA/EMP study for the project was submitted online vide proposal NO.IA/OR/IND/210462/2021. EAC granted standard ToR vide letter No.IA-J-11011/192/2021-IA-II(1) dated 15.06.2021. The user agency has submitted an undertaking to submit the EC after receiving the same from the competent authority with the proposal.
- xxvi. The user agency has furnished an undertaking duly authenticated by DFO, Rourkela that there is no displacement, Rehabilitation required for this project. Hence, Resettlement & Rehabilitation Plan is not necessary for the project.
- xxvii. The State Govt. informed that as the proposed forest land for diversion is less than 20 ha, the cost benefit analysis is not applicable for this project as per guidelines issued by MoEF&CC vide F.No.5-2/2017-FC dated 28.03.2019.
- xxviii. The Conservator of Forest O/o CWLW vide letter dated 04.09.2023 has conveyed the approval of PCCF (WL) & CWLW, Odisha for the Site Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan at financial outlay of 275.211 lakh (Rupees Two crore seventy-five lakh twenty-one thousand one hundred) only as per the details of activities mentioned in Chapter-IV and VI of the Plan in compliance to Standard ToR No.3(a)A5(v) of Letter No.IA-J11011/192/2021-IA-II(I) dated 15.06.2021 of MoEF&CC.
- a. In project impact area in Rourkela Division - ₹121.851 lakh
 - b. In project impact area in Bonai Division- ₹153.360 lakh
 - c. Total: 275.211 lakh**
- xxix. The State has further informed that a sum of 275.211 lakh (Rupees Two crore seventy-five lakh twenty-one thousand one hundred) only shall be deposited in State CAMPA fund only through e-portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in>) for implementation of various activities within the project impact area by the Forest Department through concerned

DFOs. Activities in the project area as per Chapter-IV of the Plan will be executed by the project proponent under the guidance of DFO, Rourkela Division. The Plan period is five years and will be revisited by concerned DFOs at least one year before expiry of its implementation. The User Agency will bear the cost of such Plan on its approval. Further, the User Agency will bear additional cost, if any, towards enhancement of wage rate and escalation of price of materials at the time of implementation of this Plan. In case of any deviation, it will be dealt as per law for violations of Forest (Conservation) Act 1980, Environment (Protection) Act 1986 and Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972

xxx. The SIR was done by the Regional Office Bhubaneswar on 11.09.2024. The DDGF (Central) has recommended the proposal and mentioned that the present proposal involves diversion of 4.775 hectares of revenue forest land in village Bad Tumakala under Rourkela Forest Division for capacity enhancement of a Sponge Iron Plant to an Integrated Steel Plant by M/s B.R. Sponge & Power Ltd., which includes regularization of 3.237 hectares already encroached and developed without Central Government approval and fresh diversion of 1.538 hectares—of which only 0.2 hectare proposed for internal and external roads is site-specific, while the remaining 1.338 hectares is to be maintained as a green belt—with the user agency having committed to deposit the Net Present Value (NPV), identified compensatory afforestation land, and with recommendations for imposition of five times penal NPV with 12% interest, Penal CA, and action against responsible officials, in addition to standard conditions.

5. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the Dy. DGF (Central), RO, Bhubaneswar and Nodal Officer, Government of Odisha. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Odisha, the Committee **deferred** the proposal with the following observations:
- i. The state shall submit a report on the efforts made by the state to prevent further encroachment over the remaining 1.538 ha area.
 - ii. Since the project proponent already has non-forest land available for the plant, therefore the state shall give justification for allowing the use of forest land.
 - iii. As per the photographs of the site submitted with the proposal, the forestland, which is in possession of the user agency, appears to have good amount of open area and the entire area is not under construction. The state shall give the exact details of the already built up area and open areas within the area proposed for diversion..
 - iv. The State Government shall intimate the details of action taken against the officials concerned for not being able to prevent use of forest land for non-forestry purposes.
 - v. The State Government shall give a detailed report on the action taken, under relevant local Act of the State and/or Central Act against the User Agency responsible for violation.

Agenda No. 27

Online Proposal No. FP/TG/ROAD/492664/2024

Subject: Proposal for ex-post facto approval of the Central Government under section of 2 (1) (ii) of van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 in favour of Ministry of Road Transport & Highways for diversion of 7.4494 ha of forest land for four laning of road from km 4/8 to km 24/6 of Nizamabad to Armoor of Nizamabad of Jagadapur section of nh - 63 in Nizamabad district in the state of Telangana (online proposal no.FP/TG/ROAD/492664/2024)-regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The IGF (Central), Sub office Hyderabad (representing RO Chennai) and Nodal Officer, Government of Telangana attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC. The Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
 - i. The Government of Telangana vide their letter no.467/for(1)/2023 dated 03.02.2025 has submitted the proposal on the above-mentioned subject seeking ex-post facto approval of Central Government under section-2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980.
 - ii. The proposals involving violation of the Adhinyam needs to be processed at ministry level, as per the Rule 10 (2) (v), of van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023.
 - iii. The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH), Government of India, has submitted a proposal seeking diversion of 7.4494 hectares of Reserved Forest land in Nizamabad district, Telangana, for the purpose of four-laning the road from km 4/8 to km 24/6 of the Nizamabad to Armoor stretch, which is part of the Jagadapur section of National Highway-63 (Old NH-16). This proposal is submitted under the National Highways (Original) program on EPC (Engineering, Procurement, and Construction) mode and the project aims to improve regional connectivity, ease transportation, and facilitate economic development in the region.
 - iv. The proposed diversion involves 7.4494 hectares of Reserved Forest land, falling under the jurisdiction of the Nizamabad Forest Division. The legal status of the land is Reserved Forest, classified under Eco-Class III, with a vegetation density of 0.3. The project duration for which the forest land is sought is 99 years.
 - v. A total of 1,295 trees are proposed to be felled for the project, representing 46 species. These trees are located within the forest land required for the road expansion. The working plan prescription for the area is uploaded with the proposal.

- vi. The forest area proposed for diversion is not prone to erosion, and it lies contiguous to the forest boundary (0.0 km distance). The wildlife species found in and around the proposed area include *Panthera pardus* (leopard), *Boselaphus tragocamelus* (nilgai), *Tetracerus quadricornis* (four-horned antelope), *Pavo cristatus* (Indian peafowl), *Sus scrofa* (wild pig), *Erethizon dorsatum* (porcupine), and *Anser indicus* (bar-headed geese), among others. However, the area does not fall under any National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve, or Elephant Corridor, and no rare or endangered flora or fauna species have been identified in the proposed forest area.
- vii. There are also no protected archaeological, heritage, or defence sites within the project area.
- viii. The proposal has been recommended by the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Conservator of Forests (CF), Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF), and the State Government, who have certified that the requirement of forest land is unavoidable and represents the bare minimum needed for the project.
- ix. The proposal involves violation of the under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 as 5.546 hectares of forest land was used for non-forestry activity (road work) in the year 2018 without prior approval under the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 (now Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980). The responsible officials include Kola Mohan (Executive Engineer), KLV Ramana (Executive Engineer), Rajendra Prasad (Deputy Executive Engineer), and Sudhakar (Assistant Executive Engineer) of the R&B NH Division, Perkit. A charge sheet was filed in the Hon'ble Judicial Magistrate Court, Nizamabad, on 09.08.2024, but the court returned it on the grounds that the officials are public servants and require prior sanction under Section 197 of the CrPC. The PCCF has since requested the Principal Secretary to grant prosecution permission, and the State Government's response is awaited.
- x. To compensate for this violation, the DFO has proposed Penal Compensatory Afforestation (CA) on 11.8 hectares of degraded forest land in Compartment No. 97 of Ramannapet Reserve Forest, Bheemgal Beat, Kammarpally Range. The financial outlay for penal CA is ₹121.457 lakhs, and relevant maps and plans have been submitted.
- xi. As part of the normal CA requirements, the State Government has identified 7.4812 hectares of non-forest land in Survey No. 386 of Kammarpalli Village, Nizamabad district, which is free from encroachment and located 500 meters away from Hasakothur RF. The site has a canopy density of 0.1 to 0.3, making it suitable for gap plantation, along with other activities like soil moisture conservation and fire protection. The cost of afforestation on this land is ₹274.932 lakhs.
- xii. In total, the combined cost of normal and penal compensatory afforestation stands at ₹457.263 lakhs, and the site suitability certificates and KML files have been provided.
- xiii. The total cost of the road project is estimated at ₹11,75,60,000/- (Rupees eleven crore seventy-five lakh sixty thousand only). During

- construction, the project is expected to generate 8,649 jobs (8,640 permanent and 9 temporary) and 4,324 jobs during the operational phase (4,320 permanent and 4 temporary).
- xiv. Environmental clearance, wildlife clearance, and resettlement and rehabilitation are not required
 - xv. There is no displacement of families. While the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, is not yet complied with, the State Government is required to ensure compliance under Rule 11(7) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 before final approval.
 - xvi. The proposal was discussed in the 14th REC meeting of the IRO, Hyderabad held on 27.02.2023 and after detailed deliberations, the committee decided to return the proposal with a request to submit the proposal directly to the MoEF&CC, Gol, New Delhi as work in violation is noticed.
 - xvii. Accordingly, the Sub Office, RO, MoEF&CC, Gol, Hyderabad has requested to submit the proposal to the Gol, New Delhi along with details. regarding the extent and nature of violation involved, Officers responsible for such violation and the action taken on the violators (of User Agency and Forest Department officials)
 - xviii. The Assistant Inspector General of Forests (Central), Sub-Office, Hyderabad, MoEF&CC, Gol vide F.No.4-TSC323/2023-HYD/169, Dtd: 10.06.2024 has issued instructions to file a complaint in the Jurisdictional Court against persons/authority/organisation, prima-facia found guilty of the offence committed under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and/or the violation of the rules made thereunder by carrying out non-forestry activity in forest area without obtaining prior approval of the Central Government.
 - xix. Further in compliance with the instructions, the District Forest Officer, Nizamabad has filed a Charge Sheet against Executive Engineer and (03) others, R&B NH Division, Perkit. Armoor in the Hon'ble Judicial First Class Magistrate, Nizamabad on 09.08.2024.
 - xx. The Hon'ble First Class Judicial Magistrate at Nizamabad has returned the Charge sheet on 10.09.2024 stating that, the officials of R & B NH-Division are Public servants and as per the Sec 197 of CRPC to take cognizance of offence against said officials and sanction of State Government is required.
 - xxi. The PCCF (HoFF), TG, Hyderabad has addressed the Prl. Secretary to the Govt. (EFS & T) Dept., Hyderabad to accord permission to prosecute the Govt. officials/public servants who are involved in the violation of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 / Forest Conservation Act, 1980 in order to comply with the orders issued by the Gol, MoEF & CC & State Govt. Further, orders from the State Govt. are awaited.
 - xxii. The District Forest Officer, Nizamabad has submitted the Penal CA in double the extent of forest area 11.8 Ha (5.546x2). CA Proposal along with location map of the degraded forest land (11.8 Ha) in compt.No.97 of Ramannapet RF of Bheemgal Beat and section of Kammarpally Range. Penal CA is prepared with a financial outlay of ₹121.457 Lakhs.

- xxiii. The Regional office has carried out SIR in the instant proposal. Following main points which have been noted by the RO are as below:
- a. The diversion proposed is falling in following 3 Nos. of RF blocks:
 - a) Mamidipally-III RF Block. In RF notification, it is mentioned that road is passing through RF. However, width of the Row is not mentioned. The SFD has considered this width of Row as 8 meters.
 - b) Manikbandar RF Block. It is reported that Manikbandar RF has RoW for public road as per RF notification. However, the width of Row is not mentioned. The SFD has considered this width of Row as 8 meters.
 - c) Mamidipally-I RF Block: There is no mention of RoW in the instant RF.
 - b. The entire diversion is divided into 4 parts stretches by the SFD & UA. Hence, the observations are also according to part as below :
 - a) **Part-I Stretch:** Part-1 Stretch of the proposal falls in Manikbandar RF with a length of 179 m and an average width of 44.47 meters. The area of Part I Stretch comes to 0.796 ha. After deducting RoW, the area comes to 0.6528 ha. The cross-section details submitted by the UA indicated that the area proposed for diversion is 30 meters only. However, the average width in the instant part stretch is 44.47 meters, as per the topo map & kml submitted on Parivesh. Further, in the instant part stretch, DFO reported there was no violation. However, on perusal of the Google Earth satellite imagery, it is noticed that in the instant part stretch & remaining 3 stretch, widening of the road has taken place once between 2012-2013 from 7 meter approx. to 10 meter approx. BT. The UA reported that the work was carried out as per the technical, financial sanction and administrative approval received from MoRTH vide the letter dated 31.08.2009 (Annexure-III). Further, UA submitted that the agreement was signed by the SE, R&B, NH Circle on 20.01.2010, allocating work to M/S Shiva Balaji Constructions . During the inspection, it was noticed that BT was having a width of 10 meters approx... and shoulder on either side of the road 1.5 meters approx. Further, it is noticed that 30 meter length approx. of the instant proposed road diversion does not follow the existing road. The UA informed that the alignment proposed is as per IRC norms. The UA needs to rejuvenate this existing road to be left out by dismantling

and removing the existing road and planting this area with forestry spp. by bringing topsoil from outside. The ROW for this 30 meters length should not be considered as the proposed diversion does not follow existing alignment.

- b) **Part-II Stretch:** Part-II Stretch of the proposal falls in Manikbhandar RF with a length of 366.2 m and an average width of 34.19 meters. The area of Part-II Stretch comes to 1.252 ha. After deducting RoW, the area comes to 1.2134 ha. The cross-section details submitted by the UA indicated that the area proposed for diversion is 30 meters only. However, the average width in the instant part stretch is 34.19 meters, as per the topo map & kml submitted on Parivesh. Almost the entire Part-II stretch is not having any field activity by the UA during inspection as forest was intact barring 48.2 meter length just touching the existing road widened during 2012-13 as mentioned in Part-I of the Instant report. The Canopy density was about 0.3. Further, 8 meter Row claimed in the instant part stretch should not be accepted as the new proposed diversion is just touching (varying from 0-3 meter width) the existing road, which was also widened during 2012-13 without any prior approval under the forest act and rule. Further, the entire existing road needs to be dismantled, and debris generated after dismantling should be removed and planted with forestry spp. by bringing the topsoil from the outside. After rejuvenation, this area should be handed over to the forest department by the UA.
- c) **Part-III Stretch:** The Part-III Stretch of the proposed diversion is falling in Manikbhandar RF & Mamidipally-III having length of 2199.7 m (1164m + 1035.7m) and average width of 31.97 mete The area of Part III stretch comes to 7.032 ha. After deducting RoW, the area comes to 5.2722 ha. It is to be noted that cross section details submitted by the UA indicated that the area proposed for diversion is 30 meter only. However, the average width in the instant part stretch proposed is 31.97 meters as per the topo map uploaded on the Parivesh. In the instant part stretch widening has also taken placed during 2012-13 as detailed in Part-Further, DFO has reported in his SIR submitted that the UA has already taken up the four-laning work in Part-III & Part-IV stretch of the proposed diversion. It is submitted that RO, Chennai (Su Office, Hyderabad) has issued instruction to the SG to file complaint in the Jurisdictional Court against the person/authority/organization, prima-facia guilty of the offence committed under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan Adhinyam, 1980 vide letter dated 10.06.2024 based on the SC report on the violation

(Annexure-V). Further, it is submitted b DFO that Hon'ble Court has returned the charge sheet stating that the officials of R&B NH Division are Public Servants and as per the Sec 197 of CrPC to take cognizance of offence against said officials, the sanction of State Government is required Accordingly, SFD has written to Govt. (EFS & T) Dept to accord permission to comply with the orders issued by the Gol. During the inspection, it was noticed that 1729.7 meter approx. length of the road out of 2199.7 meters length in the instant stretch is widened by the UA during recent violation (between 01/2017 to 03/2018 as per Satellite Imagery) from 1 meters approx. width BT to 20 meter approx. width BT with meter approx. shoulder & slope on either side of the road. The UA reported that the work was carried out as per the sanction an approval received from MoRTH vide the letter dated 31.03.2016 Further, UA submitted that forwarding slip signed by the SE, R&8, NH Circle, Hyderabad on 20.01.2010, allocating work to M/S Qingdo Construction Engineering Group Co.

Further, it is noticed that kml uploaded on the Parivesh is indicating width of 20 proposed diversion as against diversion of 30 meters on the field and 31.97 meters in the topo map. The proposed alignment does not follow the existing alignment where the UA has already executed the work. The same may be rectified by the SG. Further, it is reported by the UA that SFD has issued tree felling permission for the widening of the road within RF taken place recently (2017-2018) without approval of the Central Govt. (Annexure-VIII). On perusal of the google earth satellite imagery, it is noticed that activity of the widening of the road was already started before the felling permission issued by the SFD. The SFD may submit the detailed report on the felling permission without prior approval of the Central Government.

- d) **Part-IV Stretch:** The Part-IV Stretch of the proposed diversion is falling in Mamidipally-I having length of 377.7 m and average width of 30.08 meter. The area of Part IV stretch comes to 1.136 ha. There is no ROW reported for the instant proposed diversion. In the instant part stretch also widening has also taken placed during 2012-13 as detailed in Part-I. Further, it is noticed that before 2012-13, the existing road was passing outside RF. However, during the widening period 2012-13, it has been done through RF. The SFD has not reported this blatant violation till date. Also, as mentioned in the Part-III stretch, the UA has further widened existing road to 20 meter approx. width BT with 5 meters approx. shoulder &

slope on either side of road without prior approval of the Central Government. Further, it is noticed that KML uploaded on the PARIVESH is indicating width of 13 meters proposed diversion as against diversion of 30 meters on the field and 30.08 meters in the topo map. The proposed alignment does not follow the existing alignment where the UA has already executed the work. Same may be rectified by the SG.

- c. The SG has submitted WLM amounting to ₹84.80 lakh duly including measure for Habitat improvement & Water resource management, Forest fire management etc. However, payment of compensation to victims of human wildlife conflict is also included in the measure which may be avoided as it is not site specific activity. Further, other measures proposed cannot be commented upon as sites for this measure were not shown during the inspection.
 - d. Some transmission lines were noticed in the area proposed for diversion. The SFD did not provide any document indicating the prior approval as per under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, 1980.
- xxiv. In view of the above, submission of the inspecting officer, the DDGF (Central) has recommended the proposal subject to the following conditions:
- a. The KML files uploaded on Parivesh must be verified, as they do not align with the proposed diversion and the actual work executed on the field without prior approval.
 - b. The exact width of diversion must be specified by the State Government for each stretch, rather than providing an average width.
 - c. The Legal status of the transmission lines identified in the proposal must be submitted.
 - d. The State Government may be requested to initiate disciplinary action against the concerned officers of the User Agency (UA) and the State Forest Department (SFD) involved in violations during 2012-13 and 2017-18.
 - e. A detailed report must be submitted regarding the felling permissions issued by the State Forest Department (SFD) for road widening within Reserved Forest (RF) areas without prior approval from the Central Government.
 - f. The State Government may be requested to take appropriate action under Sections 3A/3B of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for violations committed during 2012-13 and 2017-18.

- g. The Non-Forest Land (NFL) has been found suitable for Compensatory Afforestation (CA) in lieu of the proposed diversion, subject to the following:
- a) The User Agency (UA) must ensure fencing of the identified land.
 - b) Any errors in the KML file must be rectified
- xxv. Action has been initiated against officials involved in the violation of the *Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980* by carrying out non-forestry activities in forest land without prior approval of the Central Government. In line with instructions issued by the Assistant Inspector General of Forests (Central), Sub-Office, Hyderabad, MoEF&CC, Gol vide F.No.4-SC323/2023-HYD/169 dated 10.06.2024, the District Forest Officer, Nizamabad filed a charge sheet on 09.08.2024 before the Hon'ble Judicial First Class Magistrate, Nizamabad against the Executive Engineer and three others of the R&B NH Division, Perkit, Armour. However, the court returned the charge sheet on 10.09.2024, stating that as the accused are public servants, prior sanction under Section 197 of CrPC from the State Government is required for prosecution. Accordingly, a detailed report is being submitted to the State Government seeking permission to prosecute the officials involved, in compliance with the directions of the MoEF&CC, Gol and the State Government.
- xxvi. On the matter of action taken against the erring official responsible for the violation of the *Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980*, the State Government has informed that, as per the instructions of the Assistant Inspector General of Forests (Central), Sub-Office, Hyderabad, MoEF&CC, Gol (vide F.No. 4-SC323/2023-HYD/169, dated 10.06.2024),
- a. A complaint was to be filed in the jurisdictional court against persons/authorities/organizations prima facie found guilty of carrying out non-forestry activities in forest areas without prior approval of the Central Government;
 - b. Accordingly, in compliance with these instructions, the District Forest Officer, Nizamabad filed a charge sheet against the Executive Engineer and three others of the R&B NH Division, Perkit, Armour in the Hon'ble Judicial First Class Magistrate Court, Nizamabad on 09.08.2024;
 - c. However, the Hon'ble Magistrate returned the charge sheet on 10.09.2024 citing that, under Section 197 of the CrPC, sanction of the State Government is required to take cognizance of offences against public servants,
 - d. A detailed report is now being submitted to the State Government for prosecution sanction against the government officials/public servants involved, in order to comply with the

directives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the State Government.

- xxvii. The existing road finds mention in the Mamidipally-III Forest Block Notification of 1986 but does not find mention in the Mamidipally-I Forest block notification of 1969 and Manikbandar Forest Block Notification of 1965. No RoW is mentioned in the previous notifications. The State Government has considered the RoW of 8m in the instant proposal.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the IGF (Central), Sub-Office, Hyderabad and Nodal Officer, Government of Telangana. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Telangana, the Committee recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval subject to the General, Standard and following specific conditions:
- i. The penalty for violation shall be equal to NPV of forest land per hectare for each year of violation from the date of actual diversion as reported by the inspecting officer with maximum up to five (5) times the NPV plus 12 percent simple interest from the date of raising of such demand till the deposit is made.
 - ii. The matter regarding imposition of penal CA is under consideration for the formulation of a uniform policy guideline in the matter. Keeping this in view, the imposition of penal CA (if any) shall be as per the said guideline, if applicable;
 - iii. Action under section 3A/3B of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 be initiated by Regional Office Chennai against violations committed during 2012-13 and 2017-18, as applicable.
 - iv. The State Government will initiate disciplinary action against the officials concerned for violations committed during 2012-13 and 2017-18, as applicable.
 - v. Revised KML shall be uploaded on the Parivesh portal since KML files uploaded do not align with the proposed diversion and the actual work executed on the field without prior approval.
 - vi. The State Government shall specify the exact width of diversion for each stretch of the proposed road, rather than providing an average width.
 - vii. The Legal status of the transmission lines identified in the SIR of the RO shall be submitted along with approvals granted under the Adhiniyam, if any.

Agenda No. 28

Online Proposal No. FP/WB/MIN/QRY/452568/2023

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 109.459 ha of forest land for Gourangdih ABC Coal Mine in favour of WB Mineral Development and Trading Corporation under Durgapur Forest Division, West Bengal (Online Proposal No. FP/WB/MIN/QRY/452568/2023)-reg.

1. The agenda for the above subject proposal was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The CCF(FCA), Govt. of West Bengal and DDGF (Central), Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Bhubaneswar attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC. The Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee after through deliberation and discussion observed that:
 - i. The Government of West Bengal has uploaded the above mentioned subject proposal on PARIVESH portal on 16.12.2024 for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
 - ii. The Gourangdih ABC Coal Mines has an area of 356.575 ha of land out of which 109.459 ha is forest land, which has been proposed for diversion. The forest area falls under Durgapur Forest Division (Beat-Gourangdih, Range- Asansol (T).
 - iii. The legal status of the land proposed for diversion is Protected Forest.
 - iv. A density of 0.4 has been reported with Eco Class III. There are around 5200 Nos. of trees in different girth classes. The majority of trees are in girth class of 31 cm to 90 cm and the majority of tree species consists of Akashmoni trees. The Divisional Forest Officer/Durgapur Division has submitted the Site Inspection Report and has recommended the tree felling and the Proposal.
 - v. Indian Jackal, Bengal Fox, Porcupine, Rock Python, Spectacled Cobra, Russels Viper etc were seen in the area proposed for diversion.
 - vi. The proposed forest land is not part of any National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve, Elephant Corridor etc.
 - vii. The forest land proposed for diversion is not located within the eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) of the protected Area notified under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
 - viii. No protected archaeological/ heritage site/ defence establishment or any other important monument is located in the area proposed for diversion.
 - ix. No violation has been reported by the State Govt. in the instant proposal.
 - x. The project was scrutinized by the Project Screening Committee on 06.05.2024 and 22.08.2024.
 - xi. The PSC opined the need to minimize the tree felling to bare minimum as per actual operational requirement. Recommendation: Considering above, the proposal for diversion of 109.459 ha of Forest land under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for open cast coal

mining at Gourangdih ABC Coal Mines under Durgapur Forest Division, West Bengal, by West Bengal Mineral Development and Trading Corporation Limited (WBMDTCL) is recommended subject to providing CA land of minimum 10 ha size in single patch, as per the Adhinyam (as observed by the Project Screening Committee), free from encumbrances.

- xii. As per the approved mining plan following land use has been proposed for forest and non-forest land:

Sl. No	Particulars	Forest Land Proposed for Diversion (in Ha.)	Non Forest Land (in Ha.)	Total
1.	Quarry Area	92.342	150.478	242.82
2.	Top Soil Dump	0.000	4.070	4.07
3.	Overburden Dump	8.844	38.225	47.069
4.	Safety Zone	1.950	8.08	10.03
5.	Other Use	4.887	38.489	43.376
6.	Road & Infrastructure	1.436	7.774	9.21
Total		109.459	247.116	356.575

- xiii. Govt. of West Bengal informed that the user agency has explored the possibilities of identifying the dumping areas outside the forest area but no such alternative non-forest land is available in the adjoining area of the Gourangdih ABC Coal Mine.
- xiv. 113.505 ha of non-forest land has been identified in Birbhum and Paschim Bardhaman Districts of West Bengal for raising Compensatory afforestation (CA) in lieu of 109.459 ha of forest land. DFO, Durgapur Division has given Suitability certificate and reported i.e. considering the soil profile and edaphic factors the site can be considered for compensatory afforestation after the removal of sand dumps and temporary encroachments.
- xv. In site suitability report, DFO, Birbhum has mentioned that part of land of some of the patches are under agricultural cultivation, which needs to be cleared before handing it over to the Forest Department.
- xvi. A comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan duly approved by the PCCF/Wildlife & CWLW that has been previously prepared is also submitted by the User Agency.
- xvii. The Nodal Officer, FCA has undertaken a field visit on 30.05.2024 and has submitted the Site Inspection Report recommending the proposal with few observations on the PARIVESH portal:
- The Proposal is a brownfield project and the surrounding area has operational as well as abandoned coal mines.
 - Adjoining (northern side) to the proposed area under Panuria mouza, ECL has done mining in the past and a huge water body has been established. At present it has become a natural ecosystem and a very good source of water. Efforts should be made to conserve/preserve it.
 - There is no Wildlife Sanctuary/National Park nearby the proposed area.

- d. As the area is prone to rill erosion and gully formation, a comprehensive Soil and Moisture Conservation Plan in the area is needed.

xviii. **Background of the Proposal:**

- a. The Government of West Bengal vide their letter dated 14.01.2019 had submitted the coal mining proposal to this Ministry for seeking prior approval of Central Government under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
- b. The said proposal was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 17.07.2023. The Advisory Committee (AC) after through deliberation and discussion observed that:
- a) The proposal has been considered by AC in its meeting held on 31.03.2022, 27.01.2023, 23.02.2023 and 24.03.2023.
 - b) The legal status of forest land proposed for diversion is Protected Forest. Vegetation density has been reported 0.4 with 5159 project affected trees.
 - c) Compensatory afforestation has been proposed over equivalent non- forest land of 110.36 ha. Attributes of CA proposal viz. CA scheme suitability certificate and digital maps have been submitted along with the proposal.
 - d) The State Govt. has not yet provided the approved Wild Conservation Plan.
 - e) It has been mentioned that after the allotment of the Block to WBMDTCL, reconciliation of the land schedule was undertaken. The change in forest area from 92.53 Ha, as mentioned in the Mining Plan, to 109.459 Ha is one of the results of reconciliation. Thus, WBMDTCL has proceeded with the updated land use details and accordingly a forest clearance application has been submitted for 109.459 Ha. Further it has been mentioned that as per Rule 22E (3) (i) of the Mineral Concession (Amendment) Rules, 2020, this change in land type within lease area comes under 'minor changes' in the approved mining plan and does not require fresh approval of the mining plan. The Rule 22E (3)(i) however refers to the "change in land type within the leased area" as a minor change, whereas in the instant case the area has been reduced from 370 ha to 356 ha and moreover 65.09 ha additional area has been taken outside the block.
 - f) Railway siding is reported to be located at distance of 20 km from the proposed mine, which is reported to be used by other mines also, therefore, the state was asked to explore the possibility of evacuation of coal using a common closed/piped conveyor corridor to reduce pollution loads on the existing road infrastructure. In this regard it has been mentioned that a detailed study for the Coal Evacuation System was conducted through their Transaction Advisor M/s KPMG International. In this study, a long distance conveyor system has been considered but ruled out.
 - g) The State has mentioned that detailed report of the traffic density survey both in up and down direction at three

locations namely Baradang (0.9 km from the proposed mine in S direction), Majandih (1.6 km from the proposed mine in NE direction) and Dharaspur (3.5 km from the proposed mine in WSW direction) conducted on 03-04/01/2018, 07-08/01/2018 and 10-11/01/2018, respectively and that the current road width appears to be sufficient to sustain the present and additional traffic.

- h) The Advisory Committee on 24.03.2023, after detailed discussion and deliberation with Nodal officer (FCA), West Bengal, Regional Officer, IRO, Kolkata and Chief Managing Director, WB Mineral Development and Trading Corporation deferred the proposal with the following observations:
- (a) The total area involved in the project is 356.575 ha, comprising 247.116 ha of non-forest land and 109.459 ha of forest land. Corresponding details of area mentioned in the approved Mining Plan are different wherein total area has been mentioned as 370 ha comprising 92.53 ha of forest land and 277.47 ha of non-forest land. The State Govt. has mentioned that as per Rule 22E (3) (i) of the Mineral Concession (Amendment) Rules, 2020, this change in land type within lease area comes under 'minor changes' in the approved mining plan and does not require fresh approval of the mining plan. The Rule 22E (3)(i) however refers to the "change in land type within the leased area" as a minor change, whereas in the instant case the area has been reduced from 370 ha to 356.575 ha. Moreover 65.09 ha additional area has been taken outside the block. The purpose/component wise breakup of the required area has to be in conformity with the mining plan. The same needs to be examined by the State government. The State Govt. shall ensure to submit the mining plan as required under extant guidelines.
 - (b) A copy of the approved Wild Conservation Plan shall be submitted.
 - (c) The State Govt. shall explore the possibility to exclude the area proposed for dumping on forestland and explore alternatives on adjoining non-forest land. The KML file of the area proposed for dumping shall also be submitted.
 - (d) Since the composition of the Advisory Committee has now been changed and the sub-committee as constituted earlier could not visit the area, therefore, a committee consisting of Advisory Committee member Shri Manoj Pant and representatives of Ministry/IRO shall visit the area and submit a report.
 - (e) Based on the recommendation of AC on 24.03.2023, Govt. of West Bengal vide Ministry's letter dated 24.04.2023 requested to furnish their response on the

observation of AC. The reply has not yet been received from the State Govt. in this regard.

- (f) The Sub-Committee of the AC as constituted on 08.04.2022 could not visit the area. AC has recommended to re-constitute the Sub-Committee of the AC. In pursuant to the decision of AC on 24.03.2023, a committee was constituted vide Ministry's OM dated 24.04.2023.
- (g) Integrated Regional Office, Kolkata vide their letter No.5.WBA/04/2019- BHU-08 dated 31.05.2023 has forwarded the Field Inspection Report of the Sub-Committee constituted vide Ministry's OM dated 24.04.2023 for the instant proposal. The observations of the sub- committee are as under:
 - 1) The AC in its meeting held on 31.03.2022 had sought the comments of the Chief Wildlife Warden, West Bengal on the likely impact of the project on the wildlife and the mitigation measures required to be taken if any. As informed by Nodal Officer West Bengal, the Wildlife Conservation Plan has been prepared and approved by PCCF (Wildlife) and submitted to State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), Department of Environment, Government of West Bengal vide Memo no.3362/WL/2M-33 (Pt-II)/ 2021 dated 23.11.2022 and also to IRO Kolkata on 27.03.2023.
 - 2) There appears to be a contradiction between the area as approved by the Ministry of Mining, Government of India and the area mentioned in the instant proposal. As informed by the user agency, a total of 370 ha area of the Coal Block comprising 92.53 ha of forest land was allocated by the Ministry of Coal, Government of India for Gourangdih ABC Coal Mine. However, as informed by the user agency, this revised proposal of the coal block from 370 ha to 356.575 ha and increasing the forest area from 92.53 ha of forest land to 109.459 ha is yet to be approved by the Coal Ministry.
 - 3) Regarding adequacy of existing road infrastructure to accommodate the increased transportation of coal, the response of the State Government may be examined.
 - 4) Regarding the suggestion of the AC, to explore the possibility of evacuation of coal using a common, closed/pipe conveyer, the financial implications of the proposal as per the study conducted through transaction advisor M/s. KPMG International as

provided by the State Government is high and is not financially viable.

- 5) Since, the revised mining plan is yet to be approved by the Ministry of Coal, the tabular statement indicating various types of land use including dumping area also needs to be revised and the revised map to be uploaded on PARIVESH portal accordingly.
- i) The sub-committee of AC also observed that:
 - a) The extent of the boundary of the forest area as marked in the uploaded map has to be in consonance with the records of the Forest Department, West Bengal. The user agency may revise the land use map as per the revised approved mining plan after verification and certification by the Forest Department and upload the same on the PARIVESH portal.
 - b) The user agency may submit the schedule of Forest land of the said area as per the revised plan.
 - c) The safety zone along the periphery of the proposed mining area has not been marked by the user agency.
 - d) The user agency may be advised to explore the possibilities of identifying the dumping areas outside the forest area and may also revise tabular statements regarding redistribution of area accordingly.
 - j) Ministry vide its letter dated 20.06.2023 shared the sub-committee report with Government of West Bengal and requested them to provide the para-wise reply on the observation made by the sub-committee in their report along-with the pending reply on Ministry's letter dated 24.04.2023 for further consideration of the proposal in the Ministry. However, no response is received yet from the State Government.
- c. The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with Nodal officer (FCA), West Bengal and concerned Dy. Director General of Forest(C), Regional Office. After going through the facts of the proposal and the report of the sub-committee constituted on the recommendation of AC by Ministry on 24.04.2023, the Committee observed that:
 - a) The revised mining plan for the instant proposal is yet to be approved by the Ministry of Coal. In view of this, the land use needs to be revised and their details with maps are to be uploaded on the PARIVESH portal.
 - 1) The safety zone along the periphery of the proposed mining area has not been marked by the user agency.
 - 2) The user agency has not explored the possibilities of identifying the dumping areas outside the forest area.

- 3) The reply on the Ministry's letter dated 24.04.2023, as sought on the recommendation of AC on 24.03.2023, has not yet been received from Govt. of West Bengal.
- 4) The Ministry vide its letter dated 20.06.2023 shared the sub-committee report with Government of West Bengal with a request for providing para-wise comments. The same was also not provided by the State Government.
- b) Therefore, the proposal cannot be acceded to in the present proposition and the same is recommended for rejection. The User agency will however be at liberty to submit the complete proposal *de-novo*.
- xix. In view of the above, the State Govt. has submitted the revised proposal fresh/ de-novo through the PARIVESH 2.0 portal.
- xx. After the examination of the fresh proposal, the Ministry vide letter dated 07.01.2025 through online requested the State Government to furnish the certain information. The State Govt. online on 05.03.2025 the PARIVESH portal has submitted their reply. The details are as below:

S. No.	Observations of MoEF&CC	Reply from the State Government
i	As per the DSS report patch no. 7 of the CA land is falling on the Forest Boundary. In this regard the comments of the State Govt. shall be provided that the said patch of CA land is non forest area	<p>The State Govt. has forwarded the reply of the user agency. The UA has relied that:</p> <p>Patch No. -7 comprises 15.70 acres in Plot No. 3 (Part) of Mouza-Aligarh, JL No.14, District-Birbhum.</p> <p>The plot has a total area of 81.61 acre, out of which 14.60 acre is forest land, 51.63 acre is Government Land and the rest is tenanted (Raiyati) land.</p> <p>The 15.70 acre CA area proposed in patch -7 (i.e plot No.-3) of the instant FC proposal is part of the 51.63 acre Government Land. It does not overlap with the forest boundary.</p> <p><i>The issue was also raised earlier by MoEFCC in an EDS dated 12.04.2021 (Enclo-1) in connection with</i> the earlier FC Proposal No. FP/WB/MIN/26869/2017 dated 12.07.2017 and was resolved as follows;</p> <p>Vide Memo No. 3386/SEC/2M-10 dated 28.10.2021 [Enclo-2] of the CCF, South East Circle, West Bengal and Memo No. 5031/L&LT/2M-1334/17 dated 29.10.2021 [Enclo-3], the DFO, Birbhum was advised to make a joint field inspection in connection with the issue of overlapping of CA patches with forest boundaries.</p> <p>In view of the above, the UA has requested to consider</p>

		processing the proposal for grant of FC for Gourangdih ABC Coal Mine.				
ii	KML file of project area and the land use (component wise breakup including safety zone) of Gourangdih ABC Coal Mine is not available. The same shall be submitted	<p>The State Govt. has forwarded the reply of the user agency. The UA has replied that:</p> <p>The KML file of the project area was uploaded in Form-A (Part-1). However, it has been re-uploaded between Sl. No. 3 and 4 of Form-A, Part-1.</p> <p>Component wise break up is given at Sl. No. 9, Form-A, Part-1. However, it may be mentioned here that different formats are prescribed for giving proposed land use at Parivesh 2.0 and SWCS Portal of Ministry of Coal for Mining Plan approval. At Sl. No. 9, Form-A, Part-1 of Parivesh-2.0 the component wise land use break-up of forest and non-forest areas are sought, whereas at Table -6.1.2 of Mining Plan-2023 of SWCS Portal, the total areas are sought.</p> <p>Hence, although the exact figures of the two tables would not tally, the total areas under each compartment would, however, match.</p> <p>Relevant contents of the said two tables are given below for reference:</p>				
		As given at Sl. No. 9, Form-A, Part-I in Parivesh-2.0		As given at Table - 6.1.2 of Approved Mining Plan-2023 in SWCS		
		Component	Forest Land Proposed for Diversi on (in Ha.)	Non Fore st Land (in Ha.)		
		Quarry Area	92.342	150.478	242.82	
		Top Soil Dump	0.000	4.070	4.07	
		Overburden Dump	8.844	38.225	External Dump	47.069
		Safety Zone	1.950	8.08	10.03	
		Other Use	4.887	38.489	Settling Pond	0.19
					Garland	0.7

				Drain	6	
				Undisturbed	42. 42 6	
				Sub-Total	43. 37 6	
	Road & Infrastructure	1.436	7.774			9.2 1
	Total	109.459	247.116			356.57

xxi. The RO visited the area proposed for diversion on 19.03.2025 and CA sites on 24.03.2025. Following have been observed in the SIR by the RO:

- a. During site visit when, the User Agency was asked about 8.844 ha of forest land proposed for overburden dump. The User Agency as well as the DFO present said that they have explored all the possibilities of identifying the non forest land in this area. But non-forest land is not available in the adjoining area for overburden dump. So, they have no option, but to identify the forest area which is non-mineralized.
- b. During site visit, the User Agency said that in place for Other Use, Garland drain, Settling pond etc. will be constructed. Certain undistributed areas will be left which will be later developed to green belt.
- c. Total 113.505 ha of non-forest land has been proposed for CA, identified in two districts (Paschim Bardhaman & Birbhum) of West Bengal against the proposed diversion of 109.459 ha forest land. CA lands are distributed in 14 patches.
- d. Details of the proposed CA land is as follows:

Forest Division	Mouza	Plot No.	Area (ha)	Remarks
Durgapur Division	Jitpur	279 (Part)	5.698	The area is undulating in nature. One old sand dump site was observed during site visit but it was informed that nowadays the area is not used for sand dumping. One temporary foot pathway was observed towards the river. One distribution line is passing through the proposed area, however, it was informed by the UA that some excess area (approx. 4 ha) is already proposed for CA against the diversion of 109.459 ha. Some

				boundary pillars are observed for demarcation of the proposed area. The proposed area is mostly vacant with some scattered tall trees. The proposed area is found suitable for plantation.
	Jitpur	447 (Part)	7.977	The area is undulating in nature. Some temporary paths are observed during site visits. The shape of the patch is unpredictable and attached with local habitation. Some old seasonal agricultural activity marks were observed but the User Agency informed that any encroachment, if exist, will be evicted before hand over the land to the Forest Department. Boundary pillars are observed. Suitable for Plantation
Birbhum Division	Aligarh	306, 525, 752	9.559	Boundary pillars observed. Soil is suitable for planting. In some small portions, some old seasonal agricultural activity marks were observed in the continuity of private agriculture land and it should be removed before land handed over to the Forest Department.
	Aligarh	1219/1840	8.134	Found suitable for Plantation.
	Aligarh	1085 (p)	6.475	Found suitable for Plantation.
	Aligarh	1152 (p)	5.747	Found suitable for Plantation.
	Aligarh	358, 365, 805	5.953	Found suitable for Plantation.
	Aligarh	03 (p)	6.354	Found suitable for Plantation. During site visit, it was informed by the Forest Official that the proposed 6.354 ha non-forest land for CA, is adjacent to the Forest land of the same plot and not overlapped with the forest land. Boundary demarcation is also observed in the field.
	Aligarh	764/1773,	5.807	Found suitable for Plantation.

		764 (p), 925/1841, 764/1771 (p)		
	Dhaka	1580	16.499	Found suitable for Plantation.
	Dhaka	1300 (p)	11.825	Some old seasonal agricultural activity marks were observed in small portion. The UA informed that all agricultural activity will be removed before land is handed over to the Forest Department. Some foot pathway is also observed which are used to approach the nearby agriculture land. Found suitable for Plantation.
	Dhaka	1033	6.944	Found suitable for Plantation.
	Dhaka	73	9.915	A pond (90 m x 90 m) existed at the edge of the proposed area which was excavated under Mati Sristi Prakalpa. The concerned DFO gave the condition to fill up the pond before handing over the land. But it feels that the CA land should be accepted as it is and the pond should not be disturbed. Some old seasonal agricultural activity marks were observed in small portions. The encroachment should be removed before hand over the land.
	Dhaka	281	6.617	Found suitable for Plantation.
Total			113.505 ha	

- e. The land identified for CA is in 14 patches. Besides, 2 patches rest less than 10 Ha. But all the patches are more than 5 Ha.
- f. As per Para 2.3 (iv) of Chapter-2 of Consolidated Guidelines issued under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and Rules, 2023, in cases the applicable land required for raising CA is more than 10 Ha, the Non-Forest Land should be made available in a single consolidated patch or contiguous to the forest land. In such cases, patches of non-forest land of small area, not contiguous to forest land, shall also be accepted, however for every patch of less than 5 Ha, the maintenance of 20 years shall be charged from the user agency.
- g. During inspection, the DFO as well as the User Agency said that in West Bengal it is very difficult to get big patches of non-forest land.

These patches are though not continuous but are located in close proximity to each other.

- h. During inspection, the land identified for CA is found to be suitable for Compensatory Afforestation.
- i. The proposal involved rehabilitation of 629 families from the non-forest land under the lease area. During Site Inspection, it was informed by the User Agency that they are preparing a rehabilitation plan for these families in nearby non-forest land, the Rehabilitation will be done as per the State Govt. guidelines.
- j. The representatives of the User Agency have informed that reclamation of the mined-out area will be undertaken as per the revised approved Mine Plan. A copy of the same approved plan is also submitted with the online proposal.
- k. During site visit & from Google Earth, no river/ stream/ canal was found within the proposed forest land. In the northern side of the 'A' Block, two abandoned coal pits were observed in the non-forest land due to earlier coal mining of the ECL. It is submitted by the User Agency that as per approved Mining Plan the same area will be utilized for OB dumping.
- l. The forest area proposed for diversion does not form part of National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Elephant Corridors, Tiger Reserve etc and no Protected Areas area located within a distance of 10 Km from the boundary of the area proposed for diversion.
- m. Recommendations of Dy. Director General of Forests (Central) along with detailed reasons:**
 - a) It is reported that Indian Jackal, Bengal Fox, Procupine, Rock Python, Spectacle Cobra, Russel Viper etc. are found in the area. To mitigate the adverse impact of the project on available wildlife in the area, a Wildlife Conservation Plan duly approved by CWLW, West Bengal shall be implemented at project cost.
 - b) As the proposed area is prone to erosion, Soil and Moisture Conservation Plan shall be prepared and implemented at the project cost.
 - c) The total number of trees enumerated in the forest area is 5200. The number of trees to be felled is large. To minimize the adverse ecological impact, trees should be felled in a phased manner and when absolutely necessary. Further, to mitigate the impact of the felling of trees outside forest, ten times numbers of trees are recommended to be planted for felling of trees outside the forest area.
 - d) Efforts may be done to evacuate coal through conveyors. If a conveyor is not proposed for evacuation of coal, a dedicated corridor with plantations on both sides of the coal evacuation corridor may be carried out to reduce the pollution of coal evacuation.
 - e) CA land has been identified as non-forest land in 14 patches. CA land less than 10 Ha, should be properly fenced, tall seedlings of 18 months old shall be planted and

maintenance of 20 years shall be provisioned in the CA Scheme.

- f) Before handing over the non-forest land identified for CA to the State Forest Department, any encroachment, if exist, should be removed by the User Agency and barbed wire fencing should be completed by the User Agency before hand over. The existing pond in Plot No.73 under Dhaka Mouza should not be disturbed and should be conserved as a water body.
- g) The lease area has an approved Mining Plan vide letter No. Gourangdih ABC Coal Mine/WBCPA/APP00239/2023 dated 09.10. 2023 by the Ministry of Coal, Govt. of India. The user agency has identified equivalent non-forest land for C.A. The proposed forest land is neither part of Protected Area nor Eco-Sensitive Zone of Protected Area.
- h) Mining of coal is a site-specific activity and the instant area is prone to illegal rat hole mining. Based on the above facts, the proposal is recommended with standard general conditions and observation made during site inspection.
- n. The above facts were considered in the last Advisory Committee meeting held on 16.04.2025. The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), RO Bhubaneswar and Nodal Officer, Government of West Bengal. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of West Bengal, the Committee decided to defer proposal and sought the following:-
- a) The State Government to revisit the CA land being offered for the purpose of ascertaining its feasibility and suitability, being located in 14 patches and resubmit a plan for safeguarding it in future.
- o. The same was communicated to the Govt. of West Bengal online on 29.04.2025. The Govt. of West Bengal has submitted the reply of the Advisory Committee observation on 19.06.2025 and following have been submitted:

S. No.	Information sought by the Ministry	Reply submitted by the State Govt.														
1.	The State Government to revisit the CA land being offered for the purpose of ascertaining its feasibility and	<p>In connection with the above EDS, this is to submit as follows:</p> <p>1. The CA patches are in close proximity to one another forming 3 (three) clusters which would facilitate its management and protection. The following table may kindly be referred to in this context;</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Cluster No.</th> <th>District</th> <th>Mouza</th> <th>No. of CA Patch</th> <th>Cluster area (Ha)</th> <th>Radius (KM)</th> <th>Reference</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Cluster No.	District	Mouza	No. of CA Patch	Cluster area (Ha)	Radius (KM)	Reference							
Cluster No.	District	Mouza	No. of CA Patch	Cluster area (Ha)	Radius (KM)	Reference										

suitability, being located in 14 patches and resubmit a plan for safeguarding it in future.	1	Paschim Bardhaman	Jitpur	2	13.675	0.44	Enclosure-1
	2	Birbhum	Dhaka	5	51.801	1.48	Enclosure-2
	3	Birbhum	Aligarh	7	48.029	1.64	Enclosure-3
	Total			14	113.505		

2. WBMDTCL undertakes to deposit the cost for safeguarding the Compensatory Afforestation through all the measures as may be required under the Van (Sanrakshan Ebam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980; the Van (Sanrakshan Ebam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023: and the Guidelines/ Notifications issued thereunder.

3. Additionally, WBMDTCL shall also deposit the cost for safeguarding the plantations for a period of 20 (twenty) years, if necessary. In view of the above, the proposal for diversion of 109.459 Ha Forest Land for Gourangdih ABC Coal Mine may kindly be processed for granting of Forest Clearance.

- xxii. The CCF(FCA) West Bengal stated that it is very difficult to find bigger patches for Compensatory Afforestation in the State of West Bengal and therefore submitted that the patches of less than 10 ha should be accepted for raising compensatory afforestation.
- xxiii. The Committee observed that as per Para 2.3 (iv) of Chapter-2 of Consolidated Guidelines issued under Van (Sanrakshan Ebam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 and Rules, 2023, in case the applicable land required for raising CA is more than 10 Ha, the Non-Forest Land should be made available in a single consolidated patch or contiguous to the forest land. In such cases, patches of non-forest land of small area, not contiguous to forest land, shall also be accepted, however for every patch of less than 5 Ha, the maintenance of 20 years shall be charged from the user agency.
- xxiv. The Committee observed that although the areas/patches proposed for Compensatory Afforestation (CA) are more than 5 hectares, considering their vulnerability to encroachment and the fact that area of patches is less than 10 hectares, it would be prudent to provide chain-link fencing and ensure maintenance for a period of 20 years.
4. **Decision of Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), RO Bhubaneswar and CCF(FCA), Government of West Bengal. After going through the facts of the proposal and

submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of West Bengal the Committee recommended to accord **'in-principle'** approval u/s 2(1)(ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 109.459 ha of forest land for Gourangdih ABC Coal Mine in favour of WB Mineral Development and Trading Corporation under Durgapur Forest Division, West Bengal subject to the General, Standard and following specific conditions:

- i. The State Govt. shall ensure the maintenance for a period of 20 years in case of CA patches having an area of less than 10 ha. These patches should be properly fenced, tall seedlings of at least 18 months old shall be planted and maintenance of 20 years shall be provisioned in the CA Scheme;
- ii. The chain-link fencing shall be done for all proposed CA sites at the cost of the User Agency;
- iii. Before handing over/mutating the non-forest land identified for CA to the State Forest Department, the encroachments, if any, existing shall be removed and the state shall ensure that the proposed land is free from all encumbrances. A certificate in this regard shall be submitted by the Nodal Officer. The existing pond in Plot No.73 under Dhaka Mouza should not be disturbed and should be conserved as a water body;
- iv. As the proposed area is prone to erosion, Soil and Moisture Conservation Plan shall be prepared and implemented at the project cost.
- v. The Wildlife Conservation Plan duly approved by Chief Wildlife Warden, West Bengal shall be implemented at the project cost and the funds for the same shall be deposited in CAMPA account.

Agenda No. 29

Online Proposal No. FP/OR/REDIV/499340/2024

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of M/s NALCO Ltd. for re-diversion of 66.00 ha of forest land to carry out mining operations including ancillary activities as per approved modified mining plan in respect of Panchpatmali Central & North Block Bauxite Mines under Koraput Forest Division of Koraput District, Odisha (Proposal No.FP/OR/REDIV/499340/2024), (SW/188221/2024 dt.28.10.2024).

1. The above stated agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The DDGF (Central), Regional Office, MoEFCC, Bhubaneswar and Nodal Officer, Government of Odisha attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the

Member Secretary before the Advisory Committee. The Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.

3. The Advisory Committee after through deliberation and discussion observed that:
- i. The Govt. of Odisha has submitted the proposal on 23.06.2025 to the Ministry under Scenario 5 through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.
 - ii. Panchpatmali (Central and North Block) Bauxite Mine of NALCO (National Aluminium Company Private Limited), a Govt. of India enterprises is located at Panchpatmali hill of Koraput district, Odisha. It has the largest Bauxite deposit in India having a reserve of around 310 million tonnes of Bauxite with a production capacity of 6825 million tonnes per year from central and north (C&N Block) and 315 million tonnes per year from south block Mine. The mine is considered as the largest Bauxite mine of Asia.
 - iii. The Order was issued by Govt. of Odisha in Steel & Mines Department for extension of the lease, vide lease extension Letter No 10370/SM Bhubaneswar dated 16.10.2015 and accordingly, the Supplementary lease deed over 1315.264 ha has been executed on 30.03.2016 extending the lease upto 31.03.2020. On the basis of NALCO's application for extension of mining lease period for 50 years from the date of grant of lease i.e. 17.11.1982 under Rule-3 of Minerals (Mining by Government Companies Rules, 2015), Department of Steel & Mines, Govt. of Odisha vide letter No 8903 dated 27.10.2016 has extended the lease till 16.11.2032. The supplementary lease deed with validity of lease period up to 16.11.2032 has been executed on 26.09.2017 and registered on 23 11 2017.
 - iv. The Panchpatmalii Bauxite deposit is located 40 km from Koraput town and 25 km from Damanjodi in Koraput District of Odisha State in the Eastern Ghat Hills. The Panchpatmali Hills span a length of 21 km, in NE-SW directions. The Project site is at a distance of 25 km from Damanjodi and 40 km from Koraput town by road. Alternately the project site can be approached from Damanjodi Railway station, which is about 20km from the project site Nearest Airport is at Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) which is at a distance of 200 km, to reach the NH-26 one needs to travel up to 30 km.
 - v. As reported by the Addl. PCCF (FD&NO, FC Act), O/o the PCCF & HoFF, Odisha that Mining Plan along with Progressive Mine Closure Plan (detailed planning from Financial Year 2012-13 to 2016-17) of Panchpatmali (Central and North Block) Bauxite Mine has been prepared under Rule 24A of MCR, 1960 over 1315.362 hectares. It was approved by the Indian Bureau of mines vide letter No 314(3)/2011-MCCM (CZ)MP-40 dated 10.07.2012 for a period of 5 years form 2012-13 to 2016-17. Due to some reason the modification of the approved mining plan of Panchpatmali (Central & North Block) ML has been prepared under Rule 10 of MCDR, 1988 for the balance three years (2014-15 to 2016-17) out of plan period of five years.
 - vi. The said modification has been approved by Indian Bureau of Mines Bhubaneswar vide letter no-MPM/FM/07-ORI/BHU/2014-15, dated 01.05.2015. The modification of the approved mining plan was valid up

to 31.03.2017. After the expiry of modified approved mining plan review of mining plan was prepared under Rule 17(2) of the minerals (other than atomic and hydro carbons energy minerals) concession rules, 2016 for the year 2017-18 to 2021-22. Further, the Addl. PCCF (FD&NO, FC Act) has reported that the review of mining plan was approved by IBM Bhubaneswar vide letter No MS/FM/10-ORI/BHU/2016-17 dated 11.11.2016 and is valid up to 31.03.2022. In the meantime the said approved review of mining plan was modified for the year 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 and approved by IBM Bhubaneswar vide letter no-MRMP/A/13-ORI-BHU/2019-20/1395 dated 25.10.2019. The validity of said modified mining plan was upto 31.03.2022. Then the review of mining plan was prepared for the year 2022-23 to 2026-27 and approved by IBM Bhubaneswar vide letter No RMP/A/22-ORI-BHU/2021-22 dated 11.10.2021. The validity of said review of mining plan is upto 31.03.2027. The said review of mining plan is being modified now for the year 2023-24 to 2026-2027.

- vii. The User Agency has applied for change in land use in Form-E on Parivesh-2.0 Portal. The Project has been approved by the Project Screening Committee as item No 09 in its 69th meeting held on dated 16.05.2025.
- viii. The State has informed that due to stoppage of departmental blasting operation, the explosive magazine located in Central Block Sec-2 of Panchpatmali Central & North Block Bauxite Mine was delicensed on 10th August-2022 by the PESO authorities and likely to be dismantled. After dismantling of the existing explosive magazine the magazine and its safety zone area will be utilized for mining operation. The aforesaid explosive magazine and its safety zone is located over diverted forest land category under the land use pattern Infrastructure in the mining plan approved for the period from 2022-23 to 2026-27. As per guidelines, mining operation over the aforesaid area can be taken up only after modification of present land use pattern of explosive magazine and its safety zone under infrastructure to mining operation with the approval of MoEF&CC, Govt. Further, to comply with the CTE condition for installation of new crusher for mid-point ding station system, the existing helipad will be re-located to another location under non-forest land within the Central Block sector-2.
- ix. Hence, for the purpose of obtaining the approval of Land use Change from MoEF & CC, Govt. of India, it is necessary to modify the present approved Mining Plan with change in land use pattern of explosive magazine and its safety zone from infrastructure to mining operation.
- x. The Addl. PCCF (FD&NO, FC Act), O/o the PCCF & HOFF, Odisha has reported that the total lease area of 1315.264 ha contains non-forest land of 20.981 ha and forest land of 1294.283 ha. The forest land over 1294.283 ha was granted approval on 15.09.2014 in the approved land use pattern for diversion of 1294.283 ha Bauxite bearing patch of 66 ha was under infrastructure for explosive magazine with its safety zone, nursery, CISF Barrack and pump house. Out of the above area, 58.00 ha was approved to be used for mining with haul road, illumination and water sprinkling system and the balance 8.00 ha under

infrastructure for CISF Barrack, nursery and pump house etc. in the approved mining plan. Aforesaid land use change will enable NALCO to achieve its annual IBM approved production target of 625 Million tonnes of bauxite with effect from the FY-2025-26 to meet the requirement of its captive Alumina Refinery Plant.

- xi. The total land use change area of 66.00 ha out of which 58.00 ha for mining purpose and remaining 8.00 ha for infrastructure, comes under forest area of Koraput Tahasil. The land schedule of the land use change area authenticated by the Tahasildar of Koraput Tahasil of Koraput District is enclosed. The user agency has furnished the approval of modification of Review of mining plan along with progress mine closer plan (PNCP) in respect of Panchpatmali (Central & North Block) Bauxite mine over an area of 1315.264 ha.
- xii. The Comparative statement of Existing land use Pattern and Proposed Land Use Pattern is furnished below:

TOTAL AREA STATISTICS OF PROPOSED LAND USE CHANGE								
S. No	Particular	Exiting land use			Proposed land use			Change in land use
		Forest Area	Non-Forest Area	Total	Forest Area	Non-Forest Area	Total	
1	Area under Mining	283.870	5.750	289.620	341.870	5.750	347.620	58.00
2	Safety zone	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
3	Toposil Stacking	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
4	Overburden/Waste Dumping	5.290	0.000	5.290	5.290	0.000	5.290	0.000
5	Mineral Storage	2.970	0.000	2.970	2.970	0.000	2.970	0.000
6	Infrastructure (Workshop, Administrative Building etc).	44.560	0.000	44.560	36.560	0.000	36.560	0.000
7	CISF Barrack, Nursery & pump house etc (The area of these facilities brought from above Infrastructure such as	0.000	0.000	0.000	8.000	0.000	8.000	8.000

	Administrative Building & Workshop etc.)							
8	Magazine	58.000	0.000	58.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
9	Roads	1.290	0.000	1.290	1.290	0.000	1.290	0.000
10	Railway	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
11	Tailing Pond	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
12	Effluent Treatment Plan	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
13	Mineral Separation Plant	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
14	Township Area	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.000	0.000
15	Others to specify	0.090	0.000	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.090	0.00
	Total	396.070	5.750	401.820	396.070	5.750	401.820	66.000

- xiii. The user agency has proposed the change in land use deviating from the land use approved in the reviewed Mining Plan 17.01.2024. This proposed change in land use has also been mentioned in the Part-II of Form-E uploaded by the DFO, Koraput Forest Division. As per the site inspection report of the DFO, Koraput Forest Division, the patch of 66.0 ha was under "Infrastructure" for explosive magazine with its safety zone, nursery, CISF Barrack & pump house. Out of the above area 58.00 ha has been proposed to be used for mining with haul road, illumination and water sprinkling system and balance 8.00 ha for infrastructure for CISF Barrack nursery & pump house etc.
- xiv. The item wise justification given by the DFO, Koraput Forest Division is as under:
- i. **Mining:** Panchpatmali bauxite mines has an Explosive magazine spreading over nearly 66.0 ha meant for storing and use of explosive for mining of Bauxite As a part of endeavor towards blast free mines, NALCO stopped Departmental blasting operation and accordingly the explosive magazine located in central block section-2 of Panchpatmali Central & North Block Bauxite Mine was de-licensed with effect from 10th August 2022 by the PESO Authorities. Explosive magazine is going to be dismantled shortly Out of 66.0 ha area 58 ha shall be used for mining and allied activities.

- ii. **Infrastructure such as construction of Administrative Building etc.** As reported by the DFO, Koraput Forest Division in its Site Inspection Report, the balance 8.0 ha area out of 66.0 ha which was meant for explosive magazine will be used for infrastructural uses like CISF Barrack, nursery & pump house etc. Aforesaid land use change will enable NALCO to achieve its annual IBM approved production target of 6 25 million tonnes of bauxite excavation from Panchpatmali Central & North Block Bauxite Mine with effect from the Financial Year 2025-26 to meet the requirement of its captive Alumina Refinery Plant.
- iii. **Magazine area proposed for re-diversion:** Due to stoppage of departmental blasting operation, the explosive magazine located in Central Block Sec-2 of Panchpatmali Central & North Block Bauxite Mine was de-licensed of 10th August-2022 by the PESO authorities and to be dismantled shortly After dismantling the existing explosive magazine, the area will be utilized for mining operation to extract available bauxite The aforesaid explosive magazine complex is located over diverted forest land category under the land use pattern as Infrastructure in the mining plan approved for the period from 2022-23 to 2026-27 As per the FC Act Guide lines, mining operation over the aforesaid area can be taken up only after modification of present land use pattern of explosive magazine and its(magazine) safety zone under infrastructure to mining operation with the approval of MoEF & CC, Gol.
- iv. **Safety zone area for Mining Operation:** In Final/ Stage-II approval, the safety zone area over 25.28 ha of the entire lease area has been granted by MoEF&CC, Gol, New Delhi vide Letter No 8-40/1993-FC(Pt I) dt. 15.09.2014 and extent of its area shall remain intact for green belt development throughout the mining lease period.
- v. **Mining Plan:** As reported by the DFO, Koraput Forest Division, the proposed land use plan has been prepared in line with the approved Review of Mining Plan by IBM vide letter no RMPA/A/22-ORI/BHU/2021-22 dated 11.10.2021 and is valid up to 31.03.2027. The revised Mining plan has been uploaded as an additional document in the Part-I of Form-E in Parivesh 2.0 portal by the user agency.
- xv. The average Canopy density taken into consideration is 0.1 under Eco-Value Class-III & existence of the artificial plantation with species like Eucalyptus, Acasia, Karanja, Silver Oac, Jamun etc. are found. The applied area does not form a part of any National Park Wildlife Sanctuary, Bio-sphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve, Elephant corridor etc However, wild cat, Jackal, wild boar etc are found in general. No rare & endangered species are available.
- xvi. As per the Site inspection report of the DFO Koraput Forest Division, 4516 numbers of artificially planted trees have been enumerated in the diverted forest land proposed for land use change.All the enumerated trees are above 30 cm girth with sound 4361 Nos and unsound 155 Nos.

- xvii. The User Agency has furnished the Forest Rights Act 2006 Certificate issued by the Collector, Koraput on dated 22.02.2025 vide Memo No 222 dt 05.02.2013 over 1294.283 ha (UDPF) out of the ML area of 1315.363 ha.
- xviii. A monitoring report has also been submitted by the RO Bhubaneswar on 18.07.2024. As per the Monitoring report following have been recommended by the inspecting officer in respect of the conditions of final approval dated 15.09.2014:
- i. It is recommended to implement the post mining restoration with a landscape approach including the 2087.918 ha of land already surrendered (comprises of 1476 ha of forest land and 611.033 ha of non forest land) in addition to the 716.112 ha and 138.892 ha of land, involving collaboration as per the G-20's Gandhinagar Implementation Road map, using the total fund of ₹46,22,65,318 for restoration.
 - ii. A local level committee comprising the Divisional Forest Officer, district administration officials, and other stakeholders to establish to monitor the restoration and reclamation work in the 2977.922 hectares of land.
 - iii. This land should be restored and notified as PF/RF, with sustainable livelihood generation initiatives to uplift local communities by leveraging innovative solutions, thereby enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the mine closure plan and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development goals along with compliance of the condition in Point No. viii of the Stage II approval dated 15.09.2014 and Part IV of the Monitoring Report.
- xix. The committee observed that it has been mentioned in the monitoring report that the CA plantations of 8 years or more are not completely established and the plantation though not a failed plantation cannot be said as established and not impressive. It needs restocking and further maintenance. Moreover, only 198.0425 ha out of 379.568 ha has been taken up for CA. Hence, the balance area also needs to be taken up for plantation.
- xx. As per the conditions, the user agency was to set up an independent Social Welfare Department/Division and follow the subsequent condition of the project affected and project displaced persons in such a way as to understand their socio-economic conditions before and after the project and take such corrective measures as are necessary to restore them to their original or better than original condition. The condition is yet to be complied. Further, the user agency and state has to ensure the compliance of other conditions of approval which have not been fully complied so far.
- xxi. The DDGF, Regional Office Bhubneswar also informed that the user agency needs to improve upon and ensure the compliance of conditions in a time bound manner,
- xxii. The site inspection was carried out by Regional Office (Bhubaneswar), MoEF&CC, on 18-07-2025 and the DDGF (C) has recommended the proposal subject to the following conditions:

- i. The proposal pertains to the change in land use of 58.00 hectares of forest land (against the re-diversion proposal of 66.00 hectares submitted by the State Forest Department) for undertaking mining operations and associated ancillary activities, as per the approved modified plan for the Panchpatmali Central & North Block Bauxite Mines of M/s NALCO Ltd. in Koraput district, Odisha.
- ii. The proposal may be considered for change in land use pertaining only to 58.00 hectares, as against 66.00 hectares recommended by the State Government, since it has been submitted that the status quo of the existing land use shall be maintained over the remaining 8.00 hectares.
- iii. The User Agency shall implement comprehensive fencing, protection measures, and afforestation activities within the designated safety zone area (i.e., the 7.5-metre strip along the outer boundary of the mining lease), in accordance with the stipulated conditions of the forest clearance in a time bound manner. The State Government shall ensure compliance with these conditions and submit the compliance status to the Regional Office.
- iv. The User Agency shall demarcate the boundary of the mining lease by erecting four-feet-high reinforced cement concrete (RCC) pillars at appropriate intervals, as per the approved recommendations. Each pillar shall bear a unique serial number, forward and back bearings, and the distance to adjacent pillars, in accordance with the prescribed norms. The State Government shall ensure compliance with this condition in a time-bound manner and report the status to the Regional Office.
- v. The User Agency shall apply to the Ministry requesting an extension of time for handing over the 749.112 hectares of reclaimed mined-out area to the State Forest Department, along with a detailed and justified explanation given in SIR.

4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the Dy. DGF (Central), RO, Bhubaneswar and Nodal Officer, Government of Odisha. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Odisha, the Committee recommended the proposal for change in land use over 58.00 ha (instead of 66.00 ha) subject to the General, Standard and following specific conditions:

- i. The User Agency shall implement comprehensive fencing, protection measures, and afforestation activities within the designated safety zone area (i.e., the 7.5-metre strip along the outer boundary of the mining lease), in accordance with the stipulated conditions of the forest clearance in a time bound manner.
- ii. The User Agency shall demarcate the boundary of the mining lease by erecting four-feet-high reinforced cement concrete (RCC) pillars at appropriate intervals, as per the approved recommendations. Each pillar shall bear a unique serial number, forward and back bearings,

and the distance to adjacent pillars, in accordance with the prescribed norms.

- iii. The State Govt. shall ensure that immediate steps are taken for compliance of the conditions stipulated in the final approval dated 15.09.2014 in a time bound manner and submit a report to the Regional office within a period of three months.
- iv. An area of 749.112 ha and 138.892 ha forest land is stipulated to be surrendered after restoration by 2025-26 and 2031-32 respectively. The State shall take immediate steps for the restoration and surrender of the mined out areas in a time bound manner, as per surrender schedule.

Agenda No.30

Online No. FP/MP/HYD/IRRIG/471582/2024

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 for non-forestry use of 740.1592 ha Reserve Forest land for the construction of Dam and Micro Irrigation System Under Munjari Major Irrigation Project in favour of Water Resource Department under Sheopur District of Madhya Pradesh State – regarding.

1. The above stated agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The Dy. DGF (Central), RO, Bhopal and Nodal Officer, Government of Madhya Pradesh were present in the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC. The Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
 - i. The Govt. of Madhya Pradesh vide their letter No. PCCF/6/0005/2024-LM-PCCF dated 15.10.2024 (uploaded on PARIVESH on 28.10.2024) forwarded a fresh proposal to obtain prior approval of the Central Government, in terms of the Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 for non-forestry use of 740.1592 ha Reserve Forest land in favour of Water Resource Department for the construction of Dam and Micro Irrigation System Under Munjari Major Irrigation Project under Sheopur District of Madhya Pradesh State.
 - ii. Legal Status of the forest involved is Reserve Forest having Eco-Class 3 & Canopy Density ranges from 0 to 0.3.
 - iii. The proposed area for diversion is almost a flat ground with very thin layer of soil on the surface. At most of the places, rocky outcrops can be noticed. The vegetation in the area is found to be very sparse with about 0 to 0.2 canopy density with Eco-class III vegetation cover. The

area is very dry due to very low rainfall (750 mm). Due to this flora and fauna including human population and local cattle are facing water scarcity. Thus, approx. 19000 population of 34 villages will be benefited due to instant project. The number of trees affected by the project is 20,761, as per the total enumeration conducted during Jan.-Feb., 2024. But only 20,105 trees are proposed to be felled.

iv. The proposed diversion area is more than 10 km from Kuno National Park and more than 20 km from Chambal Gharial Sanctuary. It also does not fall in any notified wildlife corridor and for the execution total requirement of land is 1013.476 ha. Out of which 740.1592 ha is Reserved Forest land and remaining 273.3168 ha is Revenue/ Govt/ Private land etc.

v. The component wise requirement of land in the project is as under;

S.No.	Component	Forest Land Proposed for Diversion (ha)	Non-forest Land (ha)
1	Construction of Dam Area	22.255	0
2	Construction of Maintenance Area	0.454	0
3	Construction of Approach Road	4.3335	1.2525
4	Construction of Transmission Line	8.6715	2.649
5	Construction of Switch Yard	0.18	0
6	Construction of Pump House	0.2	0
7	Construction of Control Room	0.1	0
8	Construction of Distribution Chamber	0.0697	0
9	Construction of Booster Pump	0	0.3
10	Laying of Pipe Lines	8.811	155.7216
11	Construction of Submergence Area	695.0845	143.0067
	Total	740.1591	143.0067

vi. The State Govt. has informed that no family is being affected by the construction of this project. Since rehabilitation of people is not involved in this project.

vii. The Nodal officer, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh informed the committee that the Munjari Major Irrigation Project is proposed to be constructed on the river Aheli (near village munjari Tehsil- Baroda, District Sheopur of Madhya Pradesh) which is a seasonal river, flowing mainly during rainy season and remains dry for rest of the year. Therefore, the project would help in impounding water for larger period of time which would be useful for local flora, fauna, cattle and about 40,000 families. The Aheli river drains into Parvati river which ultimately drains into river Chambal. The catchment area at site location is 300.70 Sq.Km. Since this area is dependent on rain, scarcity, conditions exist all the time. Crop yield is very low. The project area needs water for domestic and agriculture purpose.

viii. The committee raised their concern regarding a large quantity of muck is expected to be generated as a result of construction of dam. Muck generated from excavation of any project component is required to be disposed in a planned manner so that it takes a least possible space and is not hazardous to the environment. It is of prime importance that

muck disposal sites will have to be rehabilitated as soon as the disposal sites are full. In this regard, the Nodal officer, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh apprised the committee that in Munjari Irrigation Project the Excavated material will be fully utilised during construction of dam and small remaining will be utilised in levelling of land during construction of switch yard, Pumping Station, Power Station so there will be no muck remaining for disposal at other site.

- ix. The committee also noticed that the CA is proposed in both forest land (330.392 ha) and non-forest Revenue land (743.343 ha.). CA area are of non-forest land are nearby or adjacent to forest areas and CA in forest area are in degraded RDF working circle under Sheopur District of Madhya Pradesh State. However, as depicted through DSS analysis some of the proposed CA patches in Revenue land are found overlapping with the forest compartment boundaries on the DSS. In this reference, the Nodal officer, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh apprised that the District Collector, Sheopur vide their different orders has allotted the 743.343 ha Revenue land in favour of State Forest Department against diversion of 740.1592 ha forest land in the instant proposal. The details of land allotted are as under;

S. No	District Collector, Sheopur order No and date.	Village	Land Transferred to Forest Department (in Ha)
1	प्र.क्र./0031/अ-20(3)/23-24/7015 दिनांक 0 3.08.2023 एवं 20(3)/23-24/7561, दिनांक 21.06.2024	RanipuraMafi	401.01
2	प्र.क्र./0031/अ-20(3)/23-24/7013, दिनांक 0 3.08.2023	Gadala	57.296
3	प्र.क्र./0031/अ-20(3)/23-24/7007, दिनांक 0 3.08.2023	Karrai	179.307
4	प्र.क्र./0031/अ-20(3)/23-24/7005, दिनांक 0 3.08.2023	Kadawal	80.848
5	प्र.क्र./0031/अ-20(3)/23-24/7009, दिनांक 0 3.08.2023	Baragawa	24.882
		Total Area	743.343

- x. The overlapping area falls within the forest compartment of Gothra, encompassing the villages of Karrai and Kadwal. However, the specific Khasra numbers of non-forest land received in these villages are not included within the Gothra forest compartment. Only two Khasra numbers in Kadwal and one in Karrai partially overlap with the Gothra forest compartment. These non-forest land parcels are additional to the forest land notified under the Madhya Pradesh Government's notification No. 5/117/84/x/3 dated 04.08.1984, published on 12.07.1986. The topographic map used for the ongoing project indicates partial overlap in this area. However, based on official

records, the received non-forest land is not included within the forest compartment. Further informed that in the areas of Ranipur (Parts A, B, C, D, E, F), Kadwal, and certain sections of Karrai, the Non-forest revenue land proposed for CA, the forest density exceeds 0.4. Consequently, the remaining saplings will be planted in degraded forest areas. The State has proposed the following forest improvement programs:

- a. Fencing with Boulder Wall: To protect the area from encroachment and grazing.
 - b. Soil Moisture Conservation (SMC) Work: To improve the forest crop by conserving soil moisture.
 - c. Seed Dibbling in Small Gaps: To ensure proper germination and growth of new plants in the gaps.
- xi. It was informed to the Committee that the proposal was considered in Advisory Committee meeting held on 26.5.2025 wherein the Committee 'deferred' the proposal for want of following information:
- a. The State shall submit the duly filled Part-IV of the application form on PARIVESH 2.0.
 - b. The copy of approved CAT plan by the Principal CCF & HoFF or any other officer authorized by him for the purpose as per para 9.2 (vii), Chapter-9 of the Handbook of guidelines and clarification issued under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 shall be submitted.
 - c. The approval from the State Dam Safety Organization under the Dam Safety Act, 2021 has been obtained, however the recommendation of the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) has not yet been submitted. The state shall provide the same.
 - d. The State Government shall clarify whether it is a single standalone project on the Aheli river or other projects in near future have been planned.
 - e. The details about the command area, irrigation potential, present cropping pattern, total population of the villages to be benefitted and the likely impact of the project on cropping pattern in future is essential for evaluating the socio-economic benefits of the project. The State shall submit a detailed report on these aspects.
- xii. The State Government has uploaded the point-wise information on PARIVESH portal on 21.7.2025. The State Govt. forwarded the recommendation of State Government in PART-IV, however, the same can not be uploaded on PARIVESH due to some technical reasons. The State Government has also forwarded a copy of technically approved Catchment Area Treatment Plan.
- xiii. The State Government informed that as per letter dated 18.7.2025 of National Dam Safety Authority (NSDA)-Western Region, Pune, it is clarified that no specific concurrence or approval is required either prior to or during the construction stage of the dam under the Dam Safety Act, 2021. However, dam owners are mandated to undertake various statutory obligations as stipulated under the Act during and after the construction of specific dams.

- xiv. The State Government has also submitted a certificate by Executive Engineer, Water Resources Division, Sheopur certifying that Munjari Major Irrigation Project is a single standalone project on the Aheli river and currently there is no other ongoing/upcoming project proposed on upstream or downstream of proposed munjhari dam.
 - xv. The State Government submitted the detailed report about the command area, irrigation potential, present cropping pattern, total population of the villages to be benefitted and the likely impact of the project on cropping pattern in future is essential for evaluating the socio-economic benefits of the project.
 - xvi. The Advisory Committee was informed that Compensatory afforestation (CA) has been proposed over Non-forest/ Revenue land as well as over the Forest land located under Sheopur District of Madhya Pradesh State. Total area of proposed CA land is found 1169.839 ha. (as per GIS Software). Out of which 749.987 ha has been proposed over the Non-Forest land and balance 419.852 ha CA land has been proposed over the Forest land. Total CA patches are 18 (13- Non-Forest land and 5- Forest land)
 - xvii. The Advisory Committee observed that the patches of non-forest land proposed for CA are far away from each other, therefore their suitability from management point of view needs examination. Moreover, the number of patches is 13 therefore the state may also explore and provide bigger NFL patches for the CA.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the Dy. DGF (Central), RO Bhopal and Nodal Officer, Government of Madhya Pradesh. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Madhya Pradesh, the Committee '**deferred**' the proposal for prior approval under section 2 (1) (ii) of Van (SanrakshanEvamSamvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 for non-forestry use of 740.1592 ha Reserve Forest land for the construction of Dam and Micro Irrigation System Under Munjari Major Irrigation Project in favour of Water Resource Department under Sheopur District of Madhya Pradesh State for want of following information:
- i. The State shall explore the possibility of providing bigger NFL patches for CA and accordingly submit the revised CA schemes and related kml files/documents.
 - ii. The State shall ensure that the non-forest land proposed for compensatory afforestation is free from all encumbrances and suitable for management.

Agenda No.31

File No. FP/RJ/TRANS/451503/2023

Subject:- Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (SanrakshanEvamSamvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 for Diversion of 16.5972 ha of roadside protected forest for construction of proposed 400 kv S/C on D/C Transmission line from Adani Renewable Energy

Holding Four Limited SS at Badi Sid to Power Grid Corporation India Limited Bhadla-II SS near Village Kaansingki Sid, Taluka Bap, District Jodhpur, Rajasthan (Online Proposal No FP/RJ/TRANS/451503/2023) – regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The IGF(C), Sub-Office (SO), Hyderabad in-charge of RO, Gandhinagar were present in the meeting. The Nodal Officer, Govt. of Rajasthan was not present in the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC for their examination and analysis. Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:
 - i. The State Govt. of Rajasthan vide letter No.1(126)Forest/2024 dated 30.12.2024 submitted a proposal to obtain prior approval of the Central Government, in terms of Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (SanrakshanEvamSamvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 16.5972 ha of roadside protected forest for construction of proposed 400 kV S/C on D/C Transmission line from Adani Renewable Energy Holding Four Limited SS at Badi Sid to Power Grid Corporation India Limited Bhadla-II SS near Village Kaansingki Sid, Taluka Bap, District Jodhpur, Rajasthan. The instant proposal electronically received in the Ministry on 01.01.2025.
 - ii. The total forest area under the proposal is 16.5972 Ha (16.3663 Ha- Deemed Forest and 0.2309Ha- Protected Forests) of forest land which is located in Jodhpur Territorial Division, District:- Jodhpur, Rajasthan.
 - iii. The proposed forest area is Deemed Forest and Protected Forests with canopy density of 0.1 (Eco Class-4) and 76 nos of trees (5 species) have been proposed to be felled.
 - iv. The Government of Rajasthan constituted a State Level Empowered Committee (SLEC) with a view to encourage competition in private sector participation for development of transmission projects in State. To achieve the target, Various Solar, Wind, Wind-Solar Hybrid policies have been enunciated by Central and State Governments. Rajasthan is the leading front runner state, implementing large capacity renewable projects under these policies. Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd. has awarded project of “6000 MW Solar PV Power Plant linked with 1500MW (Per Annum) Solar PV Manufacturing Plant” to AdaniRenewable Energy Holding Four Limited (AREH4L) formerly known as Adani GreenEnergy Four Limited vide LOA dated 10.12.2019.

- v. Under this project AREH4L has planned to develop 500 MW Solar Park in Jodhpur district of Rajasthan. To evacuate the power and connect the Solar PV plant to ISTS, AREH4L has proposed to develop 400 kV S/C on D/C Transmission line from Adani Renewable Energy Holding Four Limited SS at Badi Sid to Power Grid Corporation India Limited Bhadla-II SS near Village Kaansinghki Sid, Taluka Bap, District Jodhpur, Rajasthan.
- vi. The Component wise break-up of the proposed forest land is as under:

S.No.	Component	Forest Land Proposed for Diversion (ha)	Non-forest Land (ha)
1	Construction of Transmission Line	16.5972	33.1568

- vii. As per Part-II details of the proposal, there is no violation, However, as per Part-I details submitted by the user agency there is a violation in the proposal. The draft notification for declaration of Oran land in Phalodi dist. as deemed forest was released on 01.02.24 by PCCF (Working Plan & Forest Management), Rajasthan, whereas the proposal for diversion of forest land was submitted by company in Nov 2023. The user agency is not aware that the said Oran land of Village Gurha comes under the preview of FCA & hence undertook construction of 14 tower finds in the said area admeasuring 0.3126 ha. Violation happened over Oran land that is now considered as deemed forest. The land is not under jurisdiction of forest department. The period of work started in 2024 and completed in 2024. The User Agency is responsible for violation.
- viii. The State Govt. has informed that the Violation of FCA Act has taken place on Oran Land and was self reported by User Agency. As per Hon'ble Supreme Court Orders, current legal status of Oran lands is that FCA Act is implemented on these lands even though they do not come under the purview of Rajasthan Forest Act. Hence, Forest Department- Division Jodhpur has not done any unlawful activity. No forest staff stands guilty because Oran lands are not part of forest jurisdiction till now. The notification related to Orans was released on 01-02-2024 and the diversion proposal was submitted before that. Hence, there is no action due against unlawful activity w.r.t forest department Rajasthan. However, Violation of Van (Sarakshan Evam Savardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 has taken place over an area of 0.3126 Ha. This has been reported by User Agency and suitable penalty can be applied by Central Government as per rules. No Violation of Indian Forest Act, 1927 has taken place.

- ix. The Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed on 47.5 ha Degraded Protected Forest Land BiraiVillage under Jodhpur Forest Division.
 - x. As per DSS analysis, Calculated area of Shape file/ KML file of Forest land proposed for diversion is found 16.582 ha. Calculated area of the KML file of proposed CA land on degraded forest is found 47.383 ha.
 - xi. The RO, Gandhinagar of the Ministry carried out the Site Inspection report. As per SIR, the Proposal for diversion of entire 16.5972 ha. (0.2309 ha which is not correct) of roadside protected forest for construction of proposed 400 kV S/C on D/C Transmission line from Adani Renewable Energy Holding Four Limited SS at Badi Sid to Power Grid Corporation India Limited Bhadla-II SS near Village Kaansinghki Sid, Taluka Bap, District Jodhpur, Rajasthan for 16.5972 ha forest land where work of transmission line is completed and line charged on 07.09.2024 has been with general, standard and specific conditions mentioned in SIR. Clear recommendation on the instant proposal has not been submitted the DDGF(C), RO, Gandhinagar due to some typing error .
 - xii. The Regional office, Gandhinagar in their Site inspection report mentioned that the DFO submitted the Inspection Report on 28.08.2024 where he had stated that the work of the project has been paused by the Agency whereas on Site Inspection it was seen that User Agency charged the line after completing the construction work without prior approval from the Ministry in violation of provisions of the Van (SanrakshanEvamSamvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980.
 - xiii. The State Govt. in the Part-II form reported that the Violation of Van Adhinyam, 1980 took place over 0.3126 ha deemed forest (oran land) whereas as per the SIR carried out by the RO, Gandhinagar work over the entire proposed forest land has been completed.
 - xiv. The State Govt. in their reply dated 17.07.2025 reported that the CA site which was earlier proposed over the forest land in Village: Birai Tehsil: Baoriunder Jodhpur District has now been changed and new CA site over the forest land in village Village: LohavatVishnavas, Tehsil Lohawat& Range- Phalodi under District – Phalodi in the State of Rajasthan has been proposed. However, the newly proposed CA site has not been inspected by the RO, Gandhinagar and the SIR of the RO, Gandhinagar is based upon the previously proposed CA land.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the IGF(C), Sub-Office (SO), Hyderabad in-charge of RO, Gandhinagar. The Committee noted the absence of nodal officer, Government of Rajasthan for presentation of the proposal before the Committee. After going through the facts of the proposal, the Committee '**deferred**' the proposal with the following recommendation:-

- i. The State government should clarify whether the extant land is identified as “forest” as per the dictionary meaning by the expert committee constituted by the state government as per the orders of Hon’ble Supreme Court dated 12.12.1996 in WP(C) 202/1995. Further, the state shall also clarify whether the said land is included in the consolidated list of forest land under Rule 16(1) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 for determination of the applicability of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
- ii. The State Government shall submit the notification of the extant Oran lands vide notification dated 01.02.2024 as deemed forest.
- iii. The State Govt. shall submit the chronology of events in respect of the proposal.
- iv. RO, Gandhinagar shall carry out the inspection of newly proposed CA site and submit the complete Site Inspection Report along-with recommendations.

Additional Agenda No. 2

Online Proposal No. FP/TG/REHAB/504796/2024

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Govt. under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam 1980 for de-notification/ de-reservation of 1501.88 ha of forest land in Compt. No.465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472 and 473 of Bacharam RF of Lingal Range in Achampet Division for R elocation of Kollam Penta, Sarlapally, Kudichinthala Bailu, Thatigundal Penta and Vatvarlapally villages from Core area of Amrabad Tiger Reserve, Nagarkurnool District, Telangana-reg.

1. The agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 30.07.2025. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The IGF (Central), Sub-Office, Hyderabad and Nodal Officer, Government of Telangana attended the meeting.
2. During the meeting, all the facts and background of the proposal, along with examination of the proposal in the DSS were presented and explained by the Member Secretary before the AC. The Committee was also apprised of the relevant provisions under other Acts, Rules and Guidelines relevant to the proposal and their significance.
3. The Advisory Committee (AC) after thorough deliberation and discussion observed the following:

- i. The Government of Telangana vide their letter No. Letter No.269/For.I(1)/2025 dated 14.02.2025 (Uploaded on the PARIVESH portal on 14.02.2025) has submitted the proposal on the above-mentioned subject seeking prior approval of Central Government under Section-2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sarankshan Evam Sambardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
- ii. As per the Rule 10 (2) (i), of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023, the subject proposal needs to be processed as per Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 / Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023. As the forest area involved in diversion is greater than 5.00 Ha, accordingly the proposal was discussed in the PSC meeting dated 11.11.2024 and 30.11.2024.
- iii. The State Government vide its letter dated 14.02.2025 has informed that the instant proposal is for de-notification of 1501.88 ha of forest land in Compt. No.465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472 and 473 of Bacharam RF of Lingal Range in Achampet Division for Relocation of Kollam penta, Sarlapally, Kudichinthala bailu, Thatigundal penta and Vatvarlapally villages from Core area of Amrabad Tiger Reserve, Nagarkurnool District, Telangana State.
- iv. The project involves relocation of Sarlapally, Kudichinthala bailu, Kollampenta, Thatigundal, Kommanpenta and Vatvarlapally villages from the core area of Tiger Reserve. At total 1501.88 Ha forest land has been requested for denotification for relocation of villages. In phase I, 417 families belonging to Sarlapally, Kudichinthala bailu, Kollampenta & that igundala penta have agreed and necessary approvals from Gramasabha, District Level Committee, State Level Committee and NTCA have been received
- v. Amrabad Tiger Reserve (ATR) spanning in Nagarkurnool and Nalgonda districts is spread over 2611 sq km. Out of the total area of the TR, 2166 sq km is the core area. The following habitations are existing inside core area of tiger reserve namely (As informed by the DFO) 1. Sangadigundala, 2. Medi-malkala, 3. Agarlamenta, 4. Rampur,5. Bhairapur, 6. Pullaiah pally, 7. Appapur, 8. Mallapur, 9. Farhabad, 10. Erlamenta, 11. Kommanpenta, 12. KollamPenta, 13. Thatigundal, 14. Sarlapally, 15. Kudichinthabailu, 16. Vatavarlapally
- vi. It was reported that, initially villagers from Kollampenta, Thatigundala, Sarlapally, Kudichintlabailu and Vatvarlapally have agreed to relocate voluntarily from the core area of tiger reserve (ATR). In view of the same, forest land ad-measuring 1501.88 Ha has been proposed in compartment numbers 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471. 472 & 472 of Bacharam RF of Lingal range of Achampet division to be denotified for relocation of people from the core area of ATR.
- vii. The legal Status of the forest land proposed for diversion is Reserve Forest.
- viii. The total no. of 1,54,977 trees of 27 species are proposed to be felled under the instant proposal.
- ix. The Government of India, MoEF&CC, NTCA, New Delhi vide F.No.1-1/2021-NTCA, dt.13.09.2024 and dt.14.07.2025 has approved the proposal for re-location of the proposed villages in the Amrabad Tiger Reserve.

- x. The working plan has been expired and new working plan is being prepared for 2022-23 to 2032-33.
- xi. The forest type is Eco-Class-III and Tropical Dry deciduous Forests Canopy density ranges from 0 to 0.3 (adjoining area). The Approximate distance of proposed site for diversion from boundary of forest is 0.1 km.
- xii. It has been informed by the UA and DFO that No Wildlife present in and around the forest land proposed for diversion and does not form a forms part of National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve, Elephant Corridor etc. Also there are no rare /endangered /unique species of flora and fauna found in the area proposed for Denotification.
- xiii. The Village relocation plan has been approved State government vide SLC reference PCCF (HoFF), TS, Hyderabad Rc.No.PCCF-CA1/CA03/01/2024-CAMPA, dt.17.10.2024. (Gol, MoEF&CC, NTCA, New Delhi, F.No.1-1/2021-NTCA, dt.13th Sep, 2024.
- xiv. The Compliance of Scheduled Tribe and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 is not required as per the provisions of the Rules 11 (7) of the Van (Sarankashan Evam Sambardhan) Rules, 2023.
- xv. The DFO Nagarkurnool has informed that the Villages of Sarlapally, Kudichinthala Bailu, Thatigundal Penta, Kollampenta and Vatvarlapally villages are situated in the Core area of Amrabad Tiger Reserve, which is notified under Section 38(v) of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. Therefore, these villagers need to be relocated from the core area of Amrabad Tiger Reserve to make the core area inviolate. The District Collector & Magistrate, Nagarkurnool has stated that there is no Government Revenue land available in Nagarkurnool District for relocation of villagers of above villages of Amrabad Mandal. Hence, the Forest land to the extent of 1501.88 ha falling in Compartments No.465, 466,467,468,469,470, 471, 472 and 473 at Bacharam RF of Lingal Range in Achampet Division situated near Bacharam village of Peddakothapally Revenue Mandal is available for relocation of above villagers and it is situated outside Amrabad Tiger Reserve.
- xvi. There are no RoFR pattas issued and no encroachments in above said Forest land, it is free from all encumbrances. The villagers have expressed their consent to relocate to the said location through gramsabhas. The Bacharam Forest Block of Lingal Range is notified under U/s.29 of Hyderabad Forest Act (Act.2 of 1355 Fasli), vide notification no.180, dt. 10.08.1950. Hence, this forest land is proposed to be de-notified.
- xvii. The project will be carried out in two phases as below:
 - i. **Phase- I:** 417 families belonging to Sarlapally Phase-I, Kudhchintalabailu, Kollampenta and Thatigundala penta have agreed and necessary approvals from Gramsabha, District level committee, State Level Committee and NTCA have been received. Total land required is 546 Ha for Sarlapally, Kudichintalabailu, Kollampenta, Thattigundala Penta.

- ii. **Phase- II:** 836 families belonging to Vatwarpally and Sarlapally Phase-II village and 955.88 Ha land is required for relocation of Vatwarpally and Sarlapally Phase-II village, where DLC is pending for Vatwarpally village.
- xviii. To relocate the above villages from the core area of Tiger Reserve, due to non availability of alternate Revenue land as authenticated by the District Collector, the DFO has proposed for De-notification of the forest area.
- xix. Activity wise break-up of the area sought for diversion is as under:

Sl. No	Village Name	Agricultur e Land	Community Land (in ha)	Homestead Land with Roads (in ha)	Total land in Ha.
1	Sarlapally (Phase-1)	241	5	5	251
2	Kudichintala Bailu	190	4	4	198
3	Thatigundal Penta	50.5	1	1	52.5
4	Kollampenta	42.5	1	1	44.5
	Sub-Total	524	11	11	546
5	Vatvarlapally	820	15	15	850
6	Sarlapally (Phase-II)	100	2.5	3.38	105.88
Total		1444	28.5	29.38	1501.88

- xx. The following is the break-up of the vacating land from 5 villages presently considered including effective zone (Phase-I and II):

Sl. No	Name of the village	Agriculture Area	Community Area	Homestead area with roads	Total area (Ha)
1	Sarlapally	546.39	10.78	4.88	561.1
2	Kudichintala Bailu	175.75	8.08	4	187.8
3	Thatigundal Penta	24.7	1.8	1.7	28.2
4	Kollampenta	25	2.5	1.5	29
5	Vatvarlapally	768	23	4.88	795.9
Total		1539.84	46.16	16.96	1602.00

- xxi. Out of the 16 villages present inside the core area of Amrabad Tiger Reserve, 5 villages namely Kollampenta, Thatigundal, Sarlapally, Kudichintlabailu and vatvarlapally are presently proposed for relocation. After relocation, the area under the possession of these villages will become inviolate. The relocation of the rest of the villages/pentas will be taken up subsequently to make the entire core of Amrabad Tiger Reserve inviolate.
- xxii. In the proposed area for de-notification, various plantations have been taken under different schemes. All plantations carried out have been

enumerated and attached as under along with species planted and scheme adopted:

S. NO	Year	Name of Plantation location	Type	Scheme	Extent of Plantation	Species
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2011-12	Bacharam Gate	Block	FDA	18	Eucalyptus
2	2011-12	Pilligundlu Area	Block	FDA	7	Eucalyptus
3	2011-12	Bacharam Village Gate	Block	FDA	10	Miscellaneous
4	2014-15	Jonnalabogada Gate	Block	CAMPA - NFM	16	Eucalyptus
5	2015-16	Pedda Gattu Area	Block	CAMPA - NFM	30	Miscellaneous
6	2015-16	Bacharam Village	Block	Afforestation (State Scheme)	20	Kanuga
7	2015-16	Bacharam	Block	Afforestation (State Scheme)	20	Kanuga
8	2016-17	Jonnalabogada Gate	Block	Afforestation (State Scheme)	20	Miscellaneous
9	2016-17	Bonalakunta	Block	CAMPA - NFM	12	Kanuga
10	2016-17	Gunnanagattu	Block	CAMPA - NFM	14	Miscellaneous
11	2016-17	Laxmapur	Block	Afforestation (State Scheme)	20	Miscellaneous
12	2020-21	Battikunta	Block	CA-DFL (PRLIS)	20	Miscellaneous
				Total	207	

Further, Kacha Roads are the inspection paths laid down for plantations and water streams have been incorporated into the proposed relocation plan

- xxiii. It has been ensured by the State Forest Department that all the conditions mentioned under para 12.8 and 12.9 of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 issued by MoEF&CC, GOI, New Delhi in its Gazette Notification no.686 dated 29.12.2023 have been taken into consideration while preparing the proposal and are complied with.

- xxiv. The forest land being asked for voluntary resettlement is not falling in any core/ buffer of any PA. It is falling in the default ESZ of Amrabad TR at a distance of 8.00 Km from the core area.
- xxv. The **Site Inspection Report** was carried out by the sub-office Hyderabad. The inspecting officer following have been observed during the inspection:
- i. The 1501.88 area proposed for rehabilitation of Vatvaralapally, Sarlapally, Kudichintalabailu, Thatigundal penta and Kollampenta villages was found to be relatively plain and moderately undulating at places. The entire area is not fit for agriculture as some portions of the area have sheet rock and boulders.
 - ii. A specific report from the Agriculture Department on the suitability of the proposed land for agriculture purposes may be obtained to ascertain its suitability. As per the current proposal, a total area of 1501.88 Ha shall be used to relocate the villagers.
 - iii. In the forest area proposed for de-notification, several old plantations to the tune of about 207 Ha have been carried out under various schemes with species such as Eucalyptus sp. Pongamia pinnata, Miscellaneous and fruit bearing species such as Ficus benghalensis, Ficus religiosa etc, Details of plantations along with scheme and species have been enclosed.
 - iv. The proposed area is adjoined by an irrigation tank and surrounded by canals of KLI (Kalwakurthy Lift Irrigation) and proposed land is abutting NH167k with Peddakothapally mandal HQ just 1 km away.
 - v. The area reported to be vacated from the core area of ATR is analyzed based on the KML files submitted in the project and noticed that, about 400 Ha of undisturbed and natural forest area is also included as the area under possession of people.
 - vi. Except Vatvaralapally village, all other villages mentioned in the proposal are not notified as revenue/ forest villages/ enclosures within the RF notification and the DFO has not provided any revenue village notification in respect of these villages.
 - vii. Relocation of the villages from Core area of Amrabad Tiger Reserve was actually originated while according permission to the SLBC tunnel project through the TR area by the Government of India, vide No.8-73/93-EC MOEF (EC Division) Dt: 21.04.1994. The conditions in the said approval include "Fund amounting to ₹16 crore will be provided by the user Agency/State Government to the Forest Department. Part of this fund will be utilised for rehabilitation of villages situated in the core area of project area and part of this fund will be utilised for development of project tiger as per detailed plan including animal phasing of fund duly approved by the Government of India.
 - viii. The State Government will provide non forest land for rehabilitation of the villages from the Sanctuary Area".

- ix. The District Collector & Magistrate, Nagarkurnool has stated that there is no Government Revenue land available in Nagarkurnool District for relocation of villagers of above villages of Amrabad Mandal.
 - x. Based on the certificate from the DC regarding non-availability of revenue land in the district, the Forest land to an extent of 1501.88 ha falling in Compartment Nos.465, 466,467,468,469,470, 471, 472 and 473 in Bacharam RF of Lingal Range in Achampet Division situated near Bacharam village of Peddakothapally Revenue Mandal is identified for relocation of above villagers. The forest land proposed for denotification is situated outside the boundary of Amrabad Tiger Reserve at an aerial distance of about 8 Km. There are no RoFR Pattas issued and no encroachments in above said Forest land as per the information provided by the DFO during field inspection. However, it appears that there is no effort made to identify suitable revenue land in other districts in the state of Telangana for the proposed relocation of people from the core area of ATR.
 - xi. Villages/Habitations proposed to be relocated from the core area of ATR were inspected on 02/04/2025 along with the DFO and other officials of SFD. It is noticed that except Vatvaralapally village, all other villages mentioned in the proposal are not indicated as revenue/ forest villages and the DFO has not provided any revenue village notification in respect of these villages. It is reported in the proposal that about 1600 Ha of forest land would be vacated due to the relocation. However, the area proposed to be vacated from the core area of ATR is analyzed based on the KML files submitted in the project and noticed that, about 400 Ha of undisturbed and natural forest area is also included as part of the area under possession of people. There is no clear strategy or proposal for removal of the existing buildings and other infrastructure at the villages which are proposed for relocation. If they are left undisturbed, the area may be reoccupied by the same/or by some other people. If they are demolished and suitable habitat for the wild animals are developed, the SFD should have a proper muck/debris disposal plan, which is right now, not available/not proposed in the instant proposal
- xxvi. Dy. Director General of Forests (Central) RO Chennai has recommended the proposal subject to the following conditions:
- i. The proposal is submitted for relocation of villages from the core area of Amrabad Tiger Reserve by de-notifying part of Bacharam Reserved Forest. The part I of the proposal involves

partial relocation of villages/habitation without specifying the timelines for full relocation.

- ii. Detailed note on the alternatives studied, if any, by the state government is not provided. Further, a certificate from the District Collector stating non-availability of revenue land in the district for relocation is submitted, without exploring the possible alternatives in other districts in the state of Telangana. This proposal is recommended subject to addressing specific issues/observations mentioned in the inspecting officers report.
- xxvii. It has been informed by the State that, initially the process of obtaining approvals for Voluntary Village Relocation of Sarlapally, KudichintalaBailu, Thatigundal Penta and Kollampenta villages falling in Amrabad Tiger Reserve are completed. The process of Gramsabha, Resolution for Gram Sabha for Voluntary relocation, socio-economic survey, asset valuation followed by approval of the Village Relocation Plan in SDLC and DLC for these four villages was concluded. The entire Village Relocation Plan (VRP) proposal along with the documents as per the checklist proposed by NTCA was submitted by this office to the NTCA which was approved by the NTCA vide letter dated 13.09.2024 and the Phase-II Village Relocation Plan -II (VRP) for Vatvarlapally and Sarlapally (Phase-II) village has been approved vide NTCA letter dated 14.07.2025. **The details of the families involved in relocation are as under:**

SI No.	Name of the Village / Hamlet	Option-I	Option-II	Total
1	Sariapally	86	119	205
2	KudichintalaBailu	72	94	166
3	Thatigundal Penta	0	25	25
4	Kollampenta	2	19	21
Grand Total		160	257	417

Phase-I Budget requirements:

SI No.	Details of components	Cost in Rupees
I	Option-I(160 families)	
	160 families @ ₹15.00 lakh per family	240,000,000
II	Option -II (257 families)	
	257 families @ ₹15.00 lakhs per family	385,500,000
	Total	625,500,000
	Or	62.550 Cr

Phase-II Option details:-

SI No.	Name of the Village / Hamlet	Option-I	Option-II	Total
1	Vatvarlapally	350	410	760
2	Sarlapally Phase II	26	50	76
	Total	376	460	836

Phase-II Budget requirements:

SI No.	Details of components	Cost in Rupees
I	Option-I (376 families)	
	376 families @ Rs. 15.00 lakh per family	564,000,000
II	Option -II (460 families)	
	460 families @ Rs. 15.00 lakhs per family	690,000,000
	Total	1254,000,000
	Or	125.4 Cr

- xxviii. The DFO, Nagarkurnool has submitted that out of 207 Ha of plantation area in the proposed de-notification area, only 20 ha is CA-DFL plantation pertaining to PRILS (Palamuru Rangareddy Lift irrigation Scheme) which has been taken in the year 2020-21 and the survival rate is 68%. All other plantations are from other schemes such State afforestation schemes, CAMPA-NFM and FDA schemes. Further, 20 Ha plantation which has been raised under CA-DFL PRILS is going to be felled, and the same 20.00 Ha shall be planted from savings available under CA-DFL scheme of PRILS and the land for the same shall be selected with concurrence of the Regional Office.
- xxix. As reported by the State Govt. that a detailed exercise was undertaken by the State Government to identify suitable non-forest land near the villages proposed for relocation from Amrabad Tiger Reserve. After thorough verification, it has been found that:
- i. **No suitable non-forest land is available within the vicinity of the Protected Area** that can accommodate the relocation of the villages.
 - ii. Efforts were made to explore revenue lands, wastelands, and other categories of land in adjacent mandals/districts, but they were found either unsuitable due to topography, legal issues, or lack of basic amenities and habitability.
 - iii. In view of the above, and to ensure early and effective relocation for both **conservation and welfare objectives**, relocation within the **notified forest land (preferably degraded forest areas with minimal wildlife value)** is proposed, strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, and VSESA, 1980 and District Collector Vide District Collector &Magistrate, Nagarkurnool Letter No.E1/1218/2022, dt.04.01.2025 has certified unavailability of non-forest land for relocation.
 - iv. The District Collector, Nagarkurnool has issued a Certificate of Non availability Of Government/ Revenue land in Nagarkurnool District for relocation of villages from Amrabad Tiger Reserve Vide District Collector & Magistrate, Nagarkurnool No.E1/1218/2022 Letter dt.04.01.2025.
- xxx. As per the State Government, the relocation activity is being undertaken **solely for consolidation of wildlife habitat**, to reduce human-wildlife conflict and to ensure better protection and management of the ecosystem.
- xxxi. As per the State Government, the villages/lands vacated through relocation will be **brought under the Protected Area Network (PAN)** by initiating the **necessary notifications under the Wildlife**

(Protection) Act, 1972, after extinguishing all existing rights over the land as per legal provisions.

- xxxii. As per the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 issued by MoEF&CC, Gol, New Delhi in its Gazette Notification no.686 dated 29.11.2023, at chapter 3.5 and 12.8 (h), the category of Relocation of villages from the National Parks/ Sanctuary to alternate forest land has been exempted by the Ministry from payment of Net Present Value (NPV) and the Compensatory Afforestation(CA).
- xxxiii. The Committee was apprised of the status of funding of the programme by the Nodal Officer and other State Government officials.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the IGF (Central), Sub-Office, Hyderabad and Nodal Officer, Government of Telangana. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Telangana, the Committee recommended the proposal for grant of '**in-principle**' approval subject to the General, Standard and following specific conditions:
- i. An area of 20 ha was taken up for Compensatory Afforestation against Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Scheme (PRLIS) during year 2020-21 in Battikunta, within the area proposed for diversion. The State Govt. shall ensure that the 20 ha CA land which are going to be diverted for instant project shall be raised over alternative degraded forest land. The State Govt shall provide CA scheme, KML files and site suitability for the new CA site with Stage-I compliance report.
 - ii. The State Government shall provide the details of the schemes where funds have been allocated/ approved for relocation of the villages.
 - iii. The State Govt. shall provide the present legal status of the five villages inside the core area of ATR which area proposed for relocation.
 - iv. The State Govt. shall ensure that the proposal fulfils all the conditions laid down by the Ministry's guidelines in the dated.29.12.2023 mentioned under Para 12.8 and 12.9.

(Confirmed through e-mail)

Pro. KR Sree Harsha
(non-official Member)

(Confirmed through e-mail)

Shri Nityanand Srivastava
(non-official Member)

(Confirmed through e-mail)

Shri Manoj Pant
(non-official Member)

(Confirmed through e-mail)

Dr. Mehraj AS
Deputy Commissioner (NRM)
(Member)

(Confirmed through e-mail)

Shri Ramesh Kumar Pandey
Additional Director General of Forests

(Confirmed through e-mail)

Shri Ramesh Kumar Pandey
Additional Director General of Forests

(FC)
(Member)

(WL)
(Member)

(Confirmed)

Shri R. Raghu Prasad
Inspector General of Forests
(Member Secretary)

(Approved)

Shri Sushil Kumar Awasthi
(Director General of Forests and Special Secretary)
(Chairperson)