



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



MoM ID FC/MOM/AC/332331/2026
Agenda ID FC/AGENDA/AC/659524/2026
Title of Meeting 1st Meeting of AC scheduled to be held on 22.01.2026
Meeting Venue Krishna Conference Room
Meeting Mode Physical
Meeting Dates & Time Start Date : 22/01/2026
End Date : 22/01/2026

List of AC Members:

S.No.	Name	Designation	Email ID
1	Dr. Mehraj A. Shaikh	AC MEMBER	ac.n*****@gov.in
2	Kr Sree Harsha	Member (EAC)	sree*****@gmail.com
3	Manoj Pant	AC MEMBER	mpan*****@gmail.com
4	Shri Ramesh Kumar Pandey	Additional Director General of Forest, MOEFCC	rame*****@nic.in
5	Shri R Raghu Prasad	Inspector General of Forest, MEF	ragh*****@gov.in
6	Shri Sushil Kumar Awasthi	DGF&SS, MoEFCC	dgfi*****@nic.in
7	Shri Santosh Tewari	Additional Director General (FC)	bh15*@ifs.nic.in

Proposals considered during Meeting:

1. Project Name Exploration of Hydrocarbon / Natural Gas through Drilling and Approach Road of location AA-ONO-184-BOA-A
Proposal Number FP/TR/MINOIL/445521/2023
User Agency JAGDEV SINGH NEGI
Forest Land Area (Ha) 0.9642
Division Gomati District Forest Division
Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Deferred for seeking additional information.

2. Project Name Proposed Forest Land to be Diverted for Entry/Exit approach to HPCL Retail Outlet at Village:-Parsa Gaudari, Tehsil:-Colonelganj, District:- Gonda.

Proposal Number FP/UP/PetrolPump/505912/2024

User Agency Ashish Kumar Sharma

Forest Land Area(Ha) 0.1568

Division Gonda Division

Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Deferred for seeking additional information.

3. Project Name Diversion of forest land for non forest purpose in Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines of M/s JSW Steel Ltd.

Proposal Number FP/OR/MIN/QRY/484312/2024
User Agency BASWARAJ MAHADEVPPA DALGADE
Forest Land Area(Ha) 201.683
Division Keonjhar Division
Recommendation Accepted
Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

4. Project Name Diversion of Forest Land for non forest purpose for construction of 132 KV Transmission Line from 132 KV OPTCL Grid (Barbil)To Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines of M/s JSW Steel Ltd.
Proposal Number FP/OR/PWR_TRANS/463389/2024
User Agency BASWARAJ MAHADEVPPA DALGADE
Forest Land Area(Ha) 26.3443
Division Keonjhar Division
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

5. Project Name Proposed Kottameta Limestone Mine (Auctioned Block) (ML Area: 802.25 ha) with total excavation of 7.6 million TPA (Limestone Production Capacity – 3.0 Million TPA, Soil 0.5 Million TPA and Waste 4.1 Million TPA) along with 1000 TPH Crusher located at Village – Katamater, Tehsil & District – Malkangiri, Odisha by M/s. Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Ltd.

Proposal Number FP/OR/MIN/QRY/445466/2023

User Agency Karthikeyan V

Forest Land Area (Ha) 575.16

Division Malkangiri Division

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

6. Project Name Lumurujhala (SE) Quartz Block over 7.987 Ha for the production of 1686.9 Tons of Quartz per year at Village - Lumburujena & salepada under Boudh Tahasil, Dist. Boudh, Odisha.

Proposal Number FP/OR/MIN/QRY/514821/2024

User Agency SIDDHARTH SARDA

Forest Land Area(Ha) 2.459

Division Boudh Division

Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Deferred for seeking additional information.

7. Project Name Diversion of forest land over an area 216.875 ha (including Safety Zone of 4.217 ha) applied under Section-2 (ii) of FC Act, 1980 within the allotted mining lease over 241.100 ha in respect of Gandhalpada Iron Ore Block under Keobjhar Forest Division.

Proposal Number FP/OR/MIN/QRY/445444/2023

User Agency Devraj Tiwari

Forest Land Area(Ha) 216.875

Division Keonjhar Division

Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Deferred for seeking additional information.

8. Project Name

Bijahan Coal Block

Proposal Number

FP/OR/MIN/QRY/502650/2024

User Agency

Mr. Dharmendra Dubey

Forest Land Area(Ha)

608.64

Division

Sundargarh Division

Recommendation

Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

9. Project Name

SOLAR INDUSTRIES INDIA LIMITED

Proposal Number

FP/MH/REDIV/483364/2024

User Agency

Dr Sushil Kumar Sharma

Forest Land Area(Ha)

Division

Nagpur Division

Recommendation

Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

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he Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

10. Project Name Proposal For Rehabilitation of village Niwale Tal. Shirala Dist. Sangli is shifted from Chandoli National Park core zone area - 21.00 ha proposed in village Kille Machindragad Tal. Walwa Dist. Sangli

Proposal Number FP/MH/REHAB/420259/2023

User Agency Vijay Mane

Forest Land Area(Ha) 21

Division Sangli Division

Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Deferred for seeking additional information.

11. Project Name Forest Clearance for Proposed Boisar Goods siding yard near Boisar station under MUTP-III project of MRVCL

Proposal Number FP/MH/RAIL/507157/2024

User Agency Anand Vasant Kulkarni

Forest Land Area(Ha) 4.985

Division Dahanu Division

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

12. Project Name Proposed Pathora West Coal Block (Sohagpur Coalfield) has an area of 640.520 ha and the project area is 554.0843 ha with targeted production capacity of 0.80 MTPA (Peak-rated capacity of 1.2 MTPA) located in the Villages of Ghunghuti, Githauri, and PatnarKalan, Tehsil Pali, District Umariya, State Madhya Pradesh. It is an underground mechanized Coal Mine.

Proposal Number FP/MP/MIN/QRY/464461/2024

User Agency shravan kumar Goyal

Forest Land Area(Ha) 149.6878

Division Umariya(T) Division

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

13. Project Name Mahan Underground Coal mine
Proposal Number FP/MP/MIN/QR/536130/2025
User Agency
Forest Land Area(Ha) 975.497
Division Singrauli Division
Recommendation Accepted
Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

14. Project Name Chentikheda Irrigation Project
Proposal Number FP/MP/HYD/IRRIG/502063/2024
User Agency Dinesh kumar ratnakar
Forest Land Area(Ha) 69.02
Division Kuno Sheopur 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 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Deferred for seeking additional information.

15. Project Name	ESL Steel Limited (Formerly known as Electrosteel Steels Limited)
Proposal Number	FP/JH/IND/528045/2025
User Agency	Ashish Kumar Gupta
Forest Land Area(Ha)	184.43
Division	Bokaro Division
Recommendation	Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Deferred for seeking additional information.

16. Project Name	Magadh OCP (West)
Proposal Number	FP/JH/MIN/QRY/517863/2025
User Agency	Sadala Satyanarayan

Forest Land Area(Ha) 354.98
Division Latehar Division Medininagar
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

17. Project Name 4 Laning of NH-75 Section-1 from Km 59 000 (Kuru) to Km 97 600 (Udaypura) in the State of Jharkhand under Latehar Forest Division.

Proposal Number FP/JH/ROAD/418247/2023

User Agency Shri Sudhir Kumar

Forest Land Area(Ha) 72.754

Division Lohardaga Division

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

18. Project Name Construction of 165.00 metre span Double Lane Bridge over Giri River on Nahan Dadah u Haripurdhar Road at RD 35/690 under Renukaji Forest Division, District Sirmour HP

Proposal Number FP/HP/ROAD/521935/2025

User Agency YASH PAL KAUSHAL

Forest Land Area(Ha) 0.171

Division Renukaji Division

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

19. Project Name Jagiroad Stone Mahal No. F1

Proposal Number FP/AS/MIN/QRY/562393/2025

User Agency Ranbir Singh Gandhi

Forest Land Area(Ha) 5

Division Nagaon Division

Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

20. Project Name Jagiroad Stone Mining Area No. F (6)
Proposal Number FP/AS/MIN/QRY/562031/2025
User Agency Dipan Deka
Forest Land Area(Ha) 21
Division Nagaon Division
Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Deferred for seeking additional information.

21. Project Name ASSAM/PSP-01
Proposal Number FP/AS/HYD/IRRIG/556082/2025
User Agency BIJOY SANKAR BARUAH
Forest Land Area(Ha) 79.37
Division Hamren Division
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

22. Project Name ASSAM/PSP-03
Proposal Number FP/AS/HYD/IRRIG/556089/2025
User Agency BIJOY SANKAR BARUAH
Forest Land Area(Ha) 441.9
Division Karbi Anglong East Division, Diphu
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

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Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

23. Project Name Tirap Opencast Project
Proposal Number FP/AS/MIN/QRY/409653/2022
User Agency KETHOLELHOU MERE
Forest Land Area(Ha) 40.28
Division Digboi Division
Recommendation Accepted

Brief Description of Project:

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Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Recommended for grant of Stage-I approval.

24. Project Name GOPESWAR STONE QUARRY NO.4

Proposal Number FP/AS/MIN/QRY/483053/2024

User Agency Sandeep Agarwal

Forest Land Area(Ha) 5.73

Division North Kamrup Division

Recommendation Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Deferred for seeking additional information.

25. Project Name KUMNAGAR STONE QUARRY BLOCK

Proposal Number FP/AS/MIN/QRY/422446/2023

User Agency Pawan Kumar Bhartia

Forest Land Area(Ha) 10.73

Division North Kamrup Division

Recommendation

Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Deferred for seeking additional information.

26. Project Name

GOPESWAR EAST STONE QUARRY NO.1

Proposal Number

FP/AS/MIN/QRV/423446/2023

User Agency

Pawan Kumar Bhartia

Forest Land Area(Ha)

5.47

Division

North Kamrup Division

Recommendation

Raise EDS

Brief Description of Project:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Previous Deliberation Details:

N/A

Current Deliberation Details:

The MoM of the 1st Advisory Committee meeting held on 22.01.2026 has already been approved by the Chairman in the E-file. The same is attached herewith in PDF file for completing the process in the PARIVESH.

Recommendation Remark:

Deferred for seeking additional information.

(PARIVESH 2.0)**Minutes of the Meeting of the Advisory Committee (AC) meeting held
on 22.01.2026****Agenda No. 2****Proposal No. FP/AS/MIN/QRY/423446/2023**

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 Bhartia Infra Projects Limited for non-forestry use of 5.47 ha Reserved Forest for operation of Gopeswar East Stone Quarry No.1 in Gopeswar Reserve Forest under North Kamrup Division, Rangia in Kamrup District in the State of Assam (Online proposal No. FP/AS/MIN/QRY/423446/2023)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (C), 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 5.47 ha of Reserved Forest land.
 - ii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 5 ha is required for mining area, 0.61 ha for safety zone and 0.47 ha for extraction path.
 - iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.1 with Eco class - I involving no felling of trees.
 - iv. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. 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, the proposed area falls under High Conservation Value Zone and as per decision Rule- 2, the area falls under Not-in High Conservation value Zone. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, 4 ha is Open Forest and 1 ha is non-forest land (land without tree cover).
 - vi. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 5.47 ha of equivalent non-forest land in Nij Salmara Village, Kuruwa Range of North Kamrup Division, Kamrup District, Assam. 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. As regards justification of the proposal, the State Government has stated that the total demand for stone material is too high to meet from other Stone Mahal of the adjacent district. Also the required good quality stone material is not available outside the forest area. considering the demand for good quality stone, suitable sites and sufficient availability of the material in the forest area it is necessary to have a mining project to sustain the uninterrupted supply of raw material for construction works in the region & also provide employment opportunities to nearby people and to give an economic boost to the backward unskilled labour.
 - ix. State Government reported no violation in the area proposed for diversion. No violation has been reported by the Regional Office, However, in their observation, the Regional Office has reported that area was earlier mined out as revealed from the DSS.
 - x. Examination of the area using DSS tools and Google Satellite Imagery revealed that an area of 1.45 ha (approx.) has been broken up in the past (during 2013-14) for which no justification has been provided by the State.
 - xi. The Committee noted that various issues requiring addressal by the State have been deliberated in detail under Agenda No. 1. Extant mine is also located in the same area with evidences of broken up area.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (C), Regional Office, Shillong and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam and after going through the facts of the proposal, the Committee decided to '**deferred**' the proposal with the following observations:
- i. In the extant mine, an area of 1.45 ha has been broken up in the past, as per analysis of Google Satellite Imagery for which no justification has been provided by the State. The State Government shall therefore work out the exact area broken up without the prior approval of the Central Government and details of the same shall be submitted to the Ministry for further necessary action.
 - ii. The State Government shall submit the detail of approval granted under the Van (Sannrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 in the extant mining lease and details of the same along with the status of compliance of conditions stipulated therein shall be submitted to the Ministry.
 - iii. The State Government shall prepare plan for the rehabilitation and reclamation of the mined out areas in the extant lease and detail of the same shall be informed along with the details of financial provisions.

Agenda No. 3

Proposal No. FP/AS/MIN/QRY/422446/2023

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 Bhartia Infra Projects Limited for non-forestry use of 10.73 ha Unclassed Forest for operation of Kumnagar Stone Quarry (Block-1 & II) in Kumnagar USF (Unclassed Forest) under North Kamrup Division, Rangia in Kamrup District in the State of Assam (FP/AS/MIN/QRY/422446/2023)-regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (C), 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. 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 on the proposal, note the following:
 - i. Proposal involves diversion of 10.73 ha of Unclassed Forest for operation of Kumnagar Stone Quarry (Block-1 & II) in Kumnagar USF (Unclassed Forest) under North Kamrup Division, Rangia in Kamrup District in the State of Assam.
 - ii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 10 ha is required for mining area (in two block), 1.34 ha for safety zone (Block 1- 0.68 ha and Block 2- 0.66 ha) and 0.73 ha for extraction path.
 - iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.1 of Eco class I with 347 project affected trees (117 trees in Block I and 230 trees in Block II)
 - iv. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. 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 falls under Not-in High Conservation Value Zone. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, 9 ha is classified as moderately dense forest and 1 ha as non-forest (land without tree cover).
 - vi. Compensatory Afforestation was proposed over 10.73 ha equivalent forest land in Nij Salmara Village, Kuruwa Range of North Kamrup

Division, Kamrup District, Assam. 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. As regards justification, the State Government has mentioned that the total demand for stone material is too high to meet from other Stone Mahal of the adjacent district. Also the required good quality stone material is not available outside the forest area. considering the demand for good quality stone, suitable sites and sufficient availability of the material in the forest area it is necessary to have a mining project to sustain the uninterrupted supply of raw material for construction works in the region & also provide employment opportunities to nearby people and to give an economic boost to the backward unskilled labour.
- ix. The Committee was informed that the proposed site is a hillock varying altitude ranges about 70 m at the bottom and 150m on the top of the hill. The legal status of the land is Unclassed State Forest Land and the purpose is for providing uninterrupted supply of raw material for construction and other development activities, Industries, Infrastructure projects etc. for Govt., Semi Govt. and Private sectors etc. in the State.
- x. The proposal area involved two numbers of Block i.e. Block I and Block II both of 5 ha each along with approach road (0.73 ha). The proposed approach road is an old existing kutchra road used by the villagers. The proposed blocks are not contiguous and 60 meter aerial distance apart from each other.
- xi. The quantity recommended for extraction is 11,42,855 Cu m for 5 years from 10 ha mining area (Block I & II) which includes the safety zone areas of 0.68 ha in Block I and 0.66 ha in Block II.
- xii. The State Government reported no violation in the area proposed for diversion. No violation has been reported by the Regional Office, However, in their observation, the Regional Office has reported that the part of the proposed mining area was broken in the year 2010 as per the Google Earth Imagery, 2010.
- xiii. Analysis of the area using DSS tools and Google Satellite Imagery revealed that an area of 0.31 ha (approx.) has been broken up in the past (during 2010) for which no justification has been provided by the State.
- xiv. The Nodal Officer informed the Committee that no forest clearance approvals have been granted in the area. The proposed area is Unclassed State Forest (USF) and some area was cleared earlier. All such illegalities has been completely stopped and most of the area has regenerated automatically.

- xv. The Committee noted that various issues requiring addressal by the State have been deliberated in detail under Agenda No. 1. Extant mine is also located in the same area with evidences of broken up area.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DIGF, Regional Office, Shillong and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam and after going through the facts of the proposal, the Committee decided to '**deferred**' the proposal with the following observations:
- i. In the extant mine, an area of 0.31 ha has been broken up in the past, as per analysis of Google Satellite Imagery for which no justification has been provided by the State. The State Government shall therefore work out the exact area broken up without the prior approval of the Central Government and detail of the same shall be submitted to the Ministry for further necessary action.
 - ii. The State Government shall submit the detail of approval, if any, granted under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 in the extant mining lease and details of the same along with the status of compliance of conditions stipulated therein shall be submitted to the Ministry.
 - iii. The State Government shall prepare plan for the rehabilitation and reclamation of the mined out areas in the extant lease and detail of the same shall be informed along with the details of financial provisions.

Agenda No. 4

Proposal No. FP/AS/MIN/QRY/483053/2024

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 Priyashi Aashi Developers Private Limited, Assam for non-forestry use of 5.73 Ha. of Reserved Forest for operation of Gopeswar Stone Quarry No.4 located in Gopeswar Reserved Forest under North Kamrup Forest Division, Rangia in the State of Assam (Online No. FP/AS/MIN/QRY/483053/2024)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (C), 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 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 5.73 ha of Reserved Forest land.

- ii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 4.27 ha is required for Quarry area, 0.73 ha for safety zone and 0.73 ha for approach road.
 - iii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.1 of Eco class I 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 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. Proposed forest area falls under Not-in High Conservation Value (HCV) Zone as per Decision Rule 2. However, as per Decision Rule 1 the proposed road falls within 250 m buffer of Mudunkari N water stream. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, 1 ha is classified as open forest and 5 ha as non-forest (land without tree cover).
 - vi. Compensatory Afforestation was proposed over 5.73 ha non-forest land 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. No violation has been reported by the Regional Office, However, in their observation, the Regional Office has reported that area was earlier mined out as revealed from the DSS.
 - viii. As regards justification of the proposal, the State Government has stated that there is huge requirement of boulders in many ongoing and upcoming infrastructure in North Kamrup Division, Rangia. By creating this mine, lot of requirement for the govt project as well as to the public will be met from the Gopeswar Stone quarry no 4.
 - ix. State Government reported no violation in the area proposed for diversion.
 - x. DSS analysis of the area revealed that an area of 2.26 ha (approx.) has been broken up in the past (during 2013-14) for which no justification has been provided by the State.
 - xi. The Committee noted that various issues requiring addressal by the State have been deliberated in detail under Agenda No. 1. Extant mine is also located in the same area with evidences of broken up area.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DIGF, Regional Office, Shillong and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam and after going through the facts of the proposal, the Committee decided to '**deferred**' the proposal with the following observations:

- i. In the extant mine, an area of 2.26 ha has been broken up in the past, as per analysis of Google Satellite Imagery for which no justification has been provided by the State. The State Government shall therefore work out the exact area broken up without the prior approval of the Central Government and detail of the same shall be submitted to the Ministry for further necessary action.
- ii. The State Government shall submit the detail of approval, if any, granted under the Van (Sannrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 in the extant mining lease and details of the same along with the status of compliance of conditions stipulated therein shall be submitted to the Ministry.
- iii. The State Government shall prepare plan for the rehabilitation and reclamation of the mined out areas in the extant lease and detail of the same shall be informed along with the details of financial provisions.

Agenda No. 5

Proposal No. FP/AS/MIN/QRY/409653/2022

Subject: 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 North Eastern Coalfields, Coal India Limited for non-forestry use of 40.28 ha of Reserved Forest for Tirap Opencast Project (0.6 MTY) in District Tinsukia in the State of Assam (Online Proposal No. Online Proposal No. FP/AS/MIN/QRY/409653/2022)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (C), 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 Committee noted that proposal was earlier considered by the Advisory Committee in its meeting held on 26.09.2025 wherein the Committee noted the following:
 - (i) Proposal involves diversion of 40.28 ha of Reserved Forest for Tirap Opencast Project (0.6 MTY) in District Tinsukia in the State of Assam.
 - (ii) As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 2.33 ha is required for Mine Periphery including haul roads, power supply arrangement, garland drain, etc. in the south, 36.25 ha for land for Quarry (including Existing Pit) and 1.70 ha for Safety Zone for Forest Land.
 - (iii) Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.5 of Eco class I with 1232 trees felling involved during implementation of the project.

- (iv) Proposed area is part of Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve. Faunal Species like leopards, birds and small mammals are present in the area. 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, 32 ha of land is classified as open forest and 8 ha of land as Non-Forest (land without tree cover).
- (vi) Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 40.36 ha inside compensatory afforestation land bank of 830 ha. of evicted non forest land adjacent to Burachapori 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) Period of validity of mines is from 28.11.2022 to 27.11.2039. Life of the mine as per approved mining plan is 17 years. Mining Plan has been approved by the Board of Directors of the North Eastern Coalfields Limited on 09.12.2022.
- (ix) Proposal involves Resettlement & Rehabilitation of 202 project affected families. Nodal Officer apprised the Committee that R&R will be undertaken in accordance with the State R&R policy. There is no habitation in the forest land of 40.28 ha.
- (x) The Ministry, after preliminary examination of the proposal, observed shortcomings viz. comments of Chief Wild Life Warden regarding mitigation strategies for preventing Human Elephant Conflict, free movement of elephant, habitat restoration, effect of mining on adjacent area and water quality, action taken report for evacuation of encroachment from the forest land, approved soil moisture conservation plan, revised C:B analysis report, status of R&R plan, etc. Shortcomings were conveyed to the State Government on 06.10.2023.
- (xi) The State Government submitted its reply online on 10.04.2024, 25.06.2024 and 15.09.2025 submitted its reply. The Committee, after examination of the same inter-alia noted the following:
- (xii) PCCF (WL) & CWLW, Assam has requested Coal India Ltd. to submit the revised Regional Wildlife Plan, Bio-Diversity Management Plan along with Carrying capacity study vide letter dated 05.04.2025. In response, the Coal India Ltd (CIL) has submitted an undertaking stating that the revised reports will be submitted to the Forest Department, Assam and they it will not commence mining operations in Tirap opencast project and requested PCCF (WL) & CWLW, Assam to consider the proposal for Stage- I Forest Clearance.

- (xiii) Various eviction operations have been conducted by DFO and about 185 ha has been evicted in last 2 years. The encroached tea gardens in the proposed area will be cleared subsequently.
- (xiv) Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 40.36 ha NFL adjacent to Burahchapory Wildlife Sanctuary under Nagaon Wildlife Division, Nagaon.
- (xv) Out of total 1,21,567 number of trees reported to be felled tree includes 1232 only while more than one lakh bamboo culms have been enumerated which will be required to be felled in 36.25 while vegetation in 4 ha will be kept intact.
- (xvi) Forest roads are present in this area which are used by staff of forest department and forest villagers for conveyance.
- (xvii) An area of 3.5 hectare area out of proposed 40.28 hectare area has been encroached by tea gardens. After receipt of in-principle approval, a Gramsabha meeting will be held regarding Forest Rights Act and after this the area will be evicted. Also, during last 3 years, approximately 200 hectares of forest area has been evicted under this division.
- (xviii) Revised C:B analysis has been submitted and revised C:B ratio is approximately 1:136.
- (xix) The Nodal Officer informed the Committee that revised Biodiversity Management Plan along with Regional Wildlife Plan and Carrying Capacity Study Plan is being prepared by the Rain Forest Research Institute (RFRI), Jorhat, Assam.
- (xx) The Regional Office also submitted its inspection report reporting no violation of the Adhinyam. The DDGF has recommended the proposal with following condition:
 - a) Deployment of a trained and armed contingent of the Special Protection Force (SPF) for continuous vigilance and patrolling in vulnerable area to curb the persistent issue of illegal coal mining and to serve as deterrence and enhance enforcement towards the future possible unauthorized operation.
 - b) Implementation of targeted livelihood support programs viz., skill development, alternative employment opportunities, for local communities, particularly for individuals currently involved in illegal coal mining and related trade to reduce dependency on illegal activities.
 - c) Implementation of Biodiversity Management Plan and Regional Wildlife management plan approved by CWLW and necessary funds to be provided by the user agency for this project.
 - d) Regular monitoring by the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) and the Conservator of Forests (CF) and to ensure strict adherence to all clearance conditions, timely implementation of the reclamation plan.
- (xxi) The Committee observed that the Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve is a critical landscape for long-term elephant conservation. Habitat

fragmentation and degradation may aggravate conflict, disrupt elephant movement, and adversely affect long-term conservation.

- (xxii) The Committee observed that the area proposed for diversion is of high importance from a wildlife conservation perspective, particularly for elephant conservation. Accordingly, necessary mitigation measures are required to be undertaken in this regard.
4. The Committee, after thorough deliberation on the proposal held in its meeting dated 26.09.2025 deferred the proposal with the following observations:
- (i) Since the proposal falls within Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve, comments from Project Elephant Division on effect of project on wildlife movement may be obtained.
 - (ii) The State Government may submit following information for the consideration of the Committee:
 - a) Detail of non-forest area mined out so far by the user agency and mineral reserve yet to be de-coaled from the non-forest land.
 - b) State Government may submit its considered view on why the mining operations can not be restricted to non-forest land. In case the use of forest land is unavoidable, a valid justification for the same may be furnished by the State Government.
 - c) The State Government shall furnish a detailed report on the mining operations carried out in the past and reasons for closing the mining operations after 2020.
5. The Committee, after taking into consideration, the past development of the case further noted the following:
- i. The State Government has furnished its reply on the observation of the Committee informing the following:
 - a) Total area involved in the project is 571.85 ha comprising of 531.57 ha of non-forest land and 40.28 ha of forest land. Currently, the area earmarked for extraction of coal is 228.03 ha comprises of 191.78 ha non-forest land and 40.28 ha forest land. Out of 191.78 ha of non-forest land earmarked for quarry area in the project, 154.91 ha has already been worked/mined out so far and remaining area of 36.87 Ha is yet to be worked/mined out in non-forest land, which can be worked only if forest land is approved for mining as proposed.
 - b) Out of the total balance coal reserves of approximately 9.92 million tonnes, about 2 million tonnes can be extracted through the remaining non-forest land. However, the major portion- about 7.92 million tonnes (approximately 80%) coal extraction requires mine development in forest land, particularly within the 36.25 hectares of the proposed forest quarry area.
 - c) To maintain a safe overall slope angle of about 37° (please refer figure 6 above), as prescribed in the approved Mining Plan (Revised Cost Estimate RCE) and DGMS guidelines, it is

essential to form benches (step-like structures) with prescribed bench geometry i.e. height and width towards the forest side and therefore requires extension of mining activity into forest land. These benches will reduce slope height, enhance stability, and allow safe access to the lower coal seams for continued extraction.

- d) The mine had been operational for nearly four decades but is currently under temporary suspension (since 03.06.2020) due to pending statutory Environmental Clearance (EC) and Forest Clearance (FC).
 - a) In view of the above, the State Government has concluded that diversion of 40.28 hectares of forest land is technically and operationally essential to maintain safe slope geometry, safe bench formation and stability, to reach and extract coal from the lower seam floors to enable extraction of approximately 7.92 million tonnes of coal through the forest land and 2 million tonnes through the adjoining non-forest land in a safe and scientific manner.
- ii. Project Elephant Division has mentioned in their comments that The Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve is a critical landscape for long-term elephant conservation. Habitat fragmentation and degradation may aggravate conflict, disrupt elephant movement, and adversely affect long-term conservation. In view of the ecological sensitivity, it is recommended that the Advisory Committee may constitute a sub-committee including representatives from Project Elephant, Wildlife Division (MoEFCC) and WII to inspect the site and assess elephant presence, habitat use, conflict history and potential impacts of the proposed project.
 - iii. With regards to the issues related to wildlife, the Committee opined that as the Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve is a critical landscape for long-term elephant conservation, therefore, concerns like habitat fragmentation and degradation, movements of elephant, and impact on long-term conservation, should be studied in a holistic manner by the Wildlife Institute of India and accordingly, conservation, protection and management measures should be prescribed along with their long term monitoring by the institutes like WII.
6. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval for diversion of 40.28 ha of Reserved Forest for Tirap Opencast Project in District Tinsukia in the State of Assam subject to the general, standard and following additional conditions:
- i. A site-specific Wildlife Management Plan and Biodiversity Management Plan shall be prepared by the State Government in consultation with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and shall be implemented at the cost of the User Agency. Further, the Monitoring of the same shall be done by the Project Elephant Division/ WII at the project cost of the User Agency.

- ii. The State Government shall ensure that regular monitoring of the approval granted under the Adhiniyam is carried out by the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) or Conservator of Forests (CF) to ensure strict adherence to all clearance conditions, timely implementation of the reclamation plan.

Agenda No. 6

Proposal No. FP/AS/HYD/IRRIG/556089/2025

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (i) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of Assam Power Distribution Company Ltd. for non-forestry use of 441.9 ha. of Proposed Reserved Forest (Sec-4 of IFA) for development of Off-Stream Closed Loop Pumped Storage Project (1500 MW) in Village- Lipgaon, Sub-district- Diphu, District- Karbi Anglong in the State of Assam (Online proposal No. FP/AS/HYD/IRRIG/556089/2025)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.pariवेश.nic.in. The DDGF (C), 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. 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 on the proposal, note the following:
 - i. Legal status of the land proposed for diversion is Proposed Reserved Forest (Sec-4 of IFA).
 - ii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.6 for 252.82 ha of Eco class II and canopy density 0.2 for 189.08 ha of Eco class III. Total 23,726 trees have been reported in the area out of which 21,767 trees will be felled.
 - iii. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. 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.
 - iv. DFO, Karbi Anglong East has mentioned in Part- II that species like barking deer, leopard, porcupine, slow loris, hoolock gibbon, serow, rhesus macaque, flying squirrel, king cobra, python, Indian rat snake etc. are present in the area proposed for diversion.
 - v. Proposed forest area falls in High Conservation Value (HCV) Zone as per Decision Rule 2. However, as per Decision Rule 1, the proposed area falls under Not-in High Conservation Value (HCV) Zone. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, 265 ha is classified as

- moderately dense forest, 157 ha as open forest and 19 ha as non-forest (land without tree cover).
- vi. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 441.9 ha. non-forest land in village- Langkagaon, Range- Western, Teshil- Diphu, District- Karbi Anglong, Division- Karbi Anglong East. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO.
 - vii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 7.832 ha is required for proposed roads, 203.546 ha for lower reservoir, 147.275 ha for upper reservoir, 80.82 ha for WCS and 1.052 ha for pipeline. The water conductor system will house the pipelines and power house units (4 of 300 MW and 2 of 150 MW). Non-site specific components such as labour camps, muck dumping, site office, workshop, etc have been proposed in the non-forest land.
 - viii. Proposal involves displacement of 9 families in 5 villages. Total project affected families are 89. Resettlement and Rehabilitation of the project affected families is under progress. R&R Plan is not submitted along with the proposal.
 - ix. No violation of the Adhinyam have been reported. Authorities in the State Government have recommended the proposal.
 - x. As regards justification of the project, the State Government has Stated that by enabling round-the-clock power availability, stabilizing grid frequency and offering load following capability, the project aligns directly with both state and national energy policies. its development will enhance Assam's capacity to manage seasonal demand variations, increase renewable penetration and ensure cleaner and more reliable power delivery to its consumers. Also the dependent of the local people on this area is very high including shifting cultivation observed in the diversion area and hence the degradation of the forest under Langlokso PRF. The said project having a lot of employment generation potential with huge investment in the area, the pressure on forest resources is likely to reduce. Moreover, the project aligns well with the focus of Govt. of India on renewable energy sector. In this context the forest proposed diversion on 441.9 ha. is recommended for approval.
 - xi. The Committee note that area has been inspected by the Nodal Office twice first on 03.12.2025 and subsequently on 9.12.2025. In inspection report dated 03.12.2025, the Nodal Officer has recommended the proposal with the observation viz. requirement of Rapid Biodiversity Assessment, underestimation of the area proposed for diversion, area claims to be non forest land also needs to verified and to be considered provisional, analysis of streamflow, hydrological study in the water shed, consultation for Bat-chen Community Conservation Area. However, no such observation has been made by the Regional Office in its inspection report.
 - xii. The Nodal Officer apprised the Committee that requirement of the area for the project is barest minimum and there is no under estimation of

the forest land required for the project. Considering the importance of the project in enhancing Assam's capacity to manage seasonal demand variations, increase renewable penetration and ensure cleaner and more reliable power delivery to its consumers, the proposal is recommended with following justification:

- a) Periodic Jhum cultivation by local communities has resulted in secondary bamboo growth, and a few hamlets and fringe communities are present, necessitating preparation of a Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) plan.
 - b) While elephants have not been recorded in recent censuses, other wildlife species such as leopard, barking deer, jungle cat, slow loris and hoolock gibbon are reported; hence, at least 2% of the project cost is recommended for wildlife conservation. A Landscape/Regional level Wildlife Conservation Plan will be submitted before final approval.
 - c) Soil and moisture conservation measures, a Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) plan and other environmental safeguards will be addressed through the EIA and EC process.
- xiii. Kazranga-Karbi-Anglong Elephant reserve is located at a distance of 1.25 km from the boundary of area proposed for diversion. Proposed area is located at a distance of 23.8 Km from East Karbi Anglong Wildlife Sanctuary. It was also observed that the components of the project located in the non-forest land viz. muck dumping sites and pump house are located at a distance of 9.57 km from the Morat Logri Wildlife Sanctuary. As the project is located in Eco-Sensitive Zone of Morat Logri Wildlife Sanctuary, therefore, the project also needs recommendation of the Standing Committee of the NBWL. As per the provisions of the Guidelines dated 8.07.2024, the project located in the Eco-sensitive Zone can be considered for in principle approval, however, Stage-II approval will be granted only after obtaining the approval of the Standing Committee of the NBWL.
- xiv. The Nodal Officer informed that some of the components of the projects project proposed in the non-forest land are falling within the eco-sensitive zone while forest area proposed for diversion does not fall in the eco-sensitive zone. It was further informed that user agency is revisiting their project components located in the non-forest land to keep them outside the eco-sensitive zone of the Wildlife Sanctuary.
- xv. No violations have been reported by the Regional Office in its inspection report. The Regional Office has recommended the proposal in its inspection report reported no of the Ministry has recommended the proposal with usual and additional conditions which inter-alia includes preparation of Wildlife/Biodiversity Conservation Plan, stabilization measures to prevent landslides in surrounding areas, plan to mitigate downstream impact, restoration of muck dumping sites, etc.
- xvi. The Nodal Officer apprised the Committee that unlike convention hydro project, no fish migration, river ecology or livelihood of fishing dependent livelihood is getting impacted from the project. A site-

specific/biodiversity conservation Plan is under consideration, and a CAT plan will be implemented in the area. A reply to the observations of the recommendations made by the Regional Office has been submitted.

- xvii. The Committee was apprised by the Nodal Officer that local concerns noticed by the Regional Office in inspection report pertains to R&R issues which will be addressed in accordance with the R&R policies and the relevant provisions of the applicable statutes.
 - xviii. The catchment area contributing to the proposed reservoirs is small, as the project is not situated on any major river or perennial watercourse. Both reservoirs are constructed on minor seasonal streams. As such, no continuous inflow is expected into either reservoir from the catchment area. Since the natural inflows are insufficient to meet the reservoir capacity, initial filling and annual recoupment for evaporation losses have been proposed from external sources. The major source identified for this purpose is Check Dam on nearby Stream located at a distance of 2.6 Km from the proposed Lower Reservoir. The catchment area of reservoirs is 13 sq. km with 90% dependable yield is 8.58 MCM while annual average yield is 11.19 MCM. The initial filling can be done in three seasons. Preparation of a CAT Plan has been proposed by the State Government.
 - xix. To evacuate power construction of 400 kV Double Circuit Transmission Line has been proposed of 51 Km length from project site to 400/220 kV Misa Substation of Power Grid.
 - xx. The project area is about 8 Km from NH 29 road, with proposed upgrades to approach roads for construction and operational logistics.
 - xxi. The Committee noted that while Pump Storage Projects provide significant renewable energy benefits and contribute to grid stability, their location within forest areas requires careful consideration of ecological safeguards, biodiversity conservation measures, and livelihood concerns of forest-dependent communities. The implementation of a comprehensive mitigation measures such as CAT plan, Biodiversity Conservation Plan, will be critical to ensure environmental integrity.
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 441.9 ha. of Proposed Reserved Forest (Sec-4 of IFA) for development of Off-Stream Closed Loop Pumped Storage Project (1500 MW) in Village- Lipgaon, Sub-district- Diphu, District- Karbi Anglong in the State of Assam subject to the general, standard and following additional conditions:
- i. As reported, the project falls within a distance of 9.57 km from the Morat Logri Wildlife Sanctuary, the State Government shall re-visit the location of the project with respect of Eco-Sensitive Zone and accordingly, the recommendation of the SC-NBWL shall be obtained by the State Government before final approval, as the case may be.

- ii. A site-specific Wildlife Management Plan shall be prepared by the State Government, for the conservation and protection of wildlife in the area. The said Plan will be approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden of the State and a copy of the same shall be submitted along with the compliance of in-principle approval. The cost of preparation and implementation of the Wildlife Management Plan shall be borne by the user agency.
- iii. The State Government shall prepare a Catchment Area Treatment Plan of the project to be implemented at the project cost of the User Agency. An approved copy of the same shall be submitted to the Ministry along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
- iv. Approval from the State Dam Safety Authority (SDSA) and the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA), as may be required, shall be obtained by the user agency and a copy of the same shall be submitted to the Ministry, along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
- v. The user agency shall prepare an R&R Plan in accordance with the provisions of R&R policy of the State and provisions of the same shall be implemented in accordance with the relevant applicable statutes.
- vi. As the area is prone to soil erosion, a Soil and Moisture Conservation Plan, duly approved by the competent authority, shall be submitted and implemented at the project cost of the User Agency.
- vii. The proposed muck dumping locations shall be restored by implementing proper restoration plan with biological and engineering measures after completion of dumping activity.

Agenda No. 7

Proposal No. FP/AS/HYD/IRRIG/556082/2025

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (i) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of Assam Power Distribution Company Ltd. for non-forestry use of 79.37 ha. of Proposed Reserved Forest (Sec-4 of IFA) for development of Off-Stream Closed Loop Pumped Storage Project (900 MW) near Tharakhunchi Village in Donka Sub-division of West Karbi Anglong District in the State of Assam (Online proposal No. FP/AS/HYD/IRRIG/556082/2025)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (Central), RO, Shillong and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam 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 legal status of the forest land proposed for diversion is Reserved Forest (under Section 4 of the Indian Forest Act).
- ii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.2 for 47.63 ha of Eco Class III and canopy density of 0.7 for 31.74 ha of Eco Class II. Total 8147 trees have been reported in the area, out of which 6905 trees will felled besides bamboo culms.
- iii. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. 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.
- iv. DFO, Hamren has mentioned in Part- II that species like barking deer, leopard, porcupine, slow loris, hoolock gibbon, serow, rhesus macaque, flying squirrel, king cobra, python, etc. Accordingly, comments from the PCCF (Wildlife)/Chief Wildlife Warden from a conservation perspective, along with a Wildlife Conservation Plan, are required to be submitted.
- v. Proposed forest area falls in High Conservation Value (HCV) Zone as per Decision Rule 2. However, as per Decision Rule 1, the proposed area touches very Dense Forest patch. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, 47 ha is classified as moderately dense forest and 32 ha as open forest.
- vi. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 79.37 ha. non-forest land in Site Name- Samatan area, Name of PF/RF- Amsolong PRF, Village- Phiephie, Range- Southern, Teshil- Donka, District- West Karbi Anglong, Division- Hamren. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO.
- vii. Total forest land involved in the project is 308 ha comprising of 79.37 ha of forest land and 229.42 ha of non-forest land. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 1.034 ha is required for Adit, 55.507 ha for lower reservoir, 4.03 ha for road and 18.856 ha for upper reservoir. Non-site specific components such as labour camps, colony, muck dumping, quarry sites, office, workshop, etc. have been proposed in the non-forest land.
- viii. Proposal involves displacement of 7 families in 5 villages. Total project affected families are 294. Resettlement and Rehabilitation of the project affected families is under progress. R&R Plan is not submitted along with the proposal
- ix. No violation of the Adhiniyam have been reported. Authorities in the State Government have recommended the proposal.
- x. As regards to justification of the project, the State Government has stated that the project is planned with an installed capacity of 900 MW (5505 MWh) to provide flexible, round-the-clock renewable energy solutions that strengthen grid stability, support renewable integration and contribute to India's clean energy transition. The scheme involves

a one-time drawal of 0.395 TMC of water from the nearby Umiam River, after which water will be continually recycled within a closed-loop system. Further, it is mentioned that the proposed site for the Assam/PSP-01 Off-Stream Closed Loop Pumped Storage Project (900 MW) has been selected after evaluating 4 alternatives, with emphasis on technical feasibility, environmental safeguards and socio-economic considerations. PSP locations are inherently site-specific, requiring both a reliable water source and suitable topography in close proximity. Overall, the selected site provides an optimal balance between project feasibility and environmental care.

- xi. The Noda Officer (FCA) recommended the proposal with the observations of preparation of R&R Plan, Wildlife Conservation Plan, preparation of Soil and Moisture Conservation Plan, before final approval.
- xii. DFO and Addl. PCCF/CCF submitted in their site inspection reports and inter-alia mentioned in their inspection report that the area proposed for diversion is reported to be under encroachment in the form of habitation and cash crop plantations (Jhum cultivation).
- xiii. DFO further reported that Amsolong PRF area has a good drainage system through the Amsori river and Killing river. The impact may be neutralized with proper Catchment Aerea Treatment Plan. It is mentioned by the Nodal officer in his recommendation that CAT Plan will be submitted before Stage- II approval.
- xiv. Non-site specific components such as labour camps, colony, muck dumping, quarry sites, office, workshop, etc. have been proposed in the non-forest land.
- xv. The Site Inspection of the instant proposal was done by the Regional Office Shillong and submitted that since the proposal pertains to generation of hydroelectric power, which is a renewable energy, the electricity generated will assist and improve the power scenario in the region, economic health of the state and generate local employment which will benefit the local population. Therefore, the proposal is recommended with usual conditions imposed for hydroelectric projects with certain mitigation measures mentioned in the inspection report.
- xvi. The Committee further observed that the proposed CA land has a few patches of Jhum cultivation area, Bamboo patches, patches of shrubs including majority of vacant land.
- xvii. The Committee observed that the approved the proposal involves construction of concrete gravity dam of 70 m, accordingly, the approvals from the State Dam Safety Authority (SDSA) and the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) is required to be obtained.
- xviii. The Committee observed that the area is prone to soil erosion. Accordingly, a soil and moisture conservation measures needs to be ensured by the State Government.

- xix. The Committee observed that mandatory study like EIA, water flow management, etc. are to be conducted by competent authority and strictly implemented as per the recommendations.
 - xx. The Committee also observed that the small sacred forest patch adjacent to the upper reservoir with old Ficus trees conserved by local villagers exists. This area shall be considered for conservation and declaration as a Biodiversity Heritage Site under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, in consultation with the State Biodiversity Board.
 - xxi. The Committee also observed that the proposed muck dumping locations shall be restored by implementing proper restoration plan with Biological and Engineering measures after completion of dumping activity.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), RO Shillong and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Assam, the Committee recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval for the diversion of 79.37 ha. of Reserved Forest (Sec-4 of IFA) for development of Off-Stream Closed Loop Pumped Storage Project (900 MW) near Tharakhunchi Village in Donka Sub-division of West Karbi Anglong District in the State of Assam with general, standard and the following specific conditions:
- i. A site-specific Wildlife Management Plan shall be prepared by the State Government, for the conservation and protection of wildlife in the area. The said Plan will be approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden of the State and a copy of the same shall be submitted along with the compliance of in-principle approval. The cost of preparation and implementation of the Wildlife Management Plan shall be borne by the user agency.
 - ii. The State Government shall prepare a Catchment Area Treatment Plan of the project and implemented at the project cost of the User Agency. An approved copy of the same shall be submitted to the Ministry along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
 - iii. Approval from the State Dam Safety Authority (SDSA) and the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA), as may be required, shall be obtained by the user agency and a copy of the same shall be submitted to the Ministry, along with the compliance of in-principle approval.
 - iv. The user agency shall prepare an R&R Plan in accordance with the provisions of R&R policy of the State and provisions of the same shall be implemented in accordance with the relevant applicable statutes.
 - v. As the area is prone to soil erosion, a Soil and Moisture Conservation Plan, duly approved by the competent authority, shall be submitted and implemented at the project cost of the User Agency.
 - vi. The proposed muck dumping locations shall be restored by implementing proper restoration plan with biological and engineering measures after completion of dumping activity.

Agenda No. 8

Proposal No.: FP/AS/MIN/QRY/562031/2025

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 21.0 Ha of reserved forest land for opencast Jagiroad Stone Mining Area No. F (6) in the Nagaon Forest Division in District Morigaon in Assam by M/s Dipan Deka, Range Officer, Forest Division, Nagaon (Proposal No. FP/AS/MIN/QRY/562031/2025)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (C), 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. Legal status of the land is Reserved Forests.
 - ii. Canopy density of 0.7 of Eco Class-I has been reported with 284 project affected trees.
 - iii. Compensatory afforestation has been proposed over degraded forest land double in extent to the forest area proposed for diversion in Lutumai area, of village - Latumi, in Kampur Range of Nagaon Forest Division. CA scheme with an financial outlay of ₹3.009 Crore/- has been submitted. The DCF concerned has certified that CA site is suitable for raising plantation and management point of view. The State Government has furnished a certificate that due to non-availability of suitable non-forest land for compensatory afforestation, the forest land evicted from encroachment will be used for the purpose of compensatory afforestation.
 - iv. Analysis of the CA land using DSS tools and Google Satellite Imagery revealed that CA land has been proposed in a single patch. Signs of settlement, cultivation land and kachha road are visible in the proposed CA site. Regional Office in its inspection report has mentioned that the identified CA land in the encroached Lutumai RF which has been evicted and cleared by the State Govt. The CA plantation will restore the natural forest of the area.
 - v. Area does not form the part of any Protected Area. However, the State Government has mentioned that there is presence of wild elephants, birds, python, barking deer, wild boar etc. in and around the land proposed for diversion.

- vi. Letter of intent has been issued on 29.11.2025 for 30 years. The Mining plan for the instant proposal is approved by the Directorate of Geology & Mining, Government of Assam for the period of 29.11.2025 to 28.11.2030.
 - vii. The State Government has mentioned that there is a general susceptibility of soil erosion, especially along the slopes of hilly area, due to heavy rainfall in proposed forest area.
 - viii. As regards justification of the proposal, the State Government stated that currently, this division has only one running stone quarry of 1 Ha and production capacity of which is inadequate to meet demand. No stone quarry exists in non-forest land in this division. The State further mentioned that the region is currently facing an acute shortage of stone materials, while several important infrastructure and development projects are under execution and in the pipeline. In view of the urgent public requirement and subject to compliance with all stipulated environmental and wildlife protection measures, the proposal is recommended for consideration.
 - ix. No protected archaeological heritage site/defence establishment or any other important monuments exists in the area as per the site inspection report of the DFO.
 - x. However, movement of elephants has been observed in the concerned area. A wildlife conservation and management plan shall be prepared and duly implemented for the total period of project.
 - xi. The Regional Office has recommended the proposal with general and standard conditions with additional conditions like preparation of wildlife management plan, implementation of protection measures to conserve the water bodies located in and around the hill.
 - xii. Nodal Officer apprised the Committee that extant mining lease is a fresh lease proposed by the State Forest Department. An area of 20 ha is proposed for mining and ancillary activities including safety zone and one has of forest land has been proposed for approach road. Nodal Officer further informed that mining lease will be transferred subsequently to mine developers to carry out the mining operations.
 - xiii. No violation of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 have been reported by the State Government and the Regional Office.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the Dy. DGF (Central), RO Shillong and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam '**deferred**' the proposal for obtaining the following information from the State Government:
- i. The State Government shall provide its comments as to whether the extant mine is in consonance with the provisions of the District Survey Report prepared by the State Government for the Morigaon District.
 - ii. There are mining leases approved in the area in the past which were observed with unexplained broken up areas which appears to be broken without the prior approval of the Central Government. The State

Government, therefore, clearly bring out the fact that whether the mining operation were carried out within the forest area approved under the Adhiniyam or otherwise.

- iii. The canopy density of the area proposed for diversion is 0.7 while the number of project affected trees have been reported only 284 which appears to be underestimated. Accordingly, the State Government shall re-visit the number of project affected trees and canopy density reported and the same shall be informed to the Ministry.
- iv. The area proposed for mining has been reported to be susceptible soil erosion, especially along the slopes of hilly area, the State Government shall therefore submit the details of mitigation measures proposed to minimise the soil erosion and protection of nearby waterbodies from the proposed mining activities.
- v. Analysis of the CA land using DSS tools and Google Satellite Imagery revealed the signs of settlement, cultivation land and kachha road are visible in the proposed CA site. The State Government may re-visit the suitability of CA land and inform the Ministry accordingly.
- vi. The State Government may provide a justification on submission of the proposal by the State Forest Department while the lease is subsequently will be assigned to mine developers for carrying out the mining operations.

Agenda No. 9

Proposal No. FP/AS/MIN/QRY/562393/2025

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government, in terms of the Section-2 of the Van (Sanrakshan evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of additional 4.0 Ha of forest land for extension of existing stone mahal of 1 ha area namely Jagiroad Stone Mahal No. F1 from 1 ha to 5 ha under Nagaon Division in favour of Hills Trade Agencies, Morigaon District, Assam. (Proposal No. FP/AS/MIN/QRY/562393/2025)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (C), 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. Legal status of the land is Reserved Forest.

- ii. The proposed 4 Ha of Reserved Forest is having the canopy density of 0.7 of Eco Class I with 16 project affected trees.
- iii. Compensatory afforestation has been proposed over degraded forest land double in extent to the forest area proposed for diversion in Lutumai area. CA scheme with an financial outlay of ₹3.009 crore/- has been submitted. The DCF concerned has certified that CA site is suitable for raising plantation and management point of view. The State Government has furnished a certificate that due to non-availability of suitable non-forest land for compensatory afforestation, the forest land evicted from encroachment will be used for the purpose of compensatory afforestation.
- iv. Analysis of the CA land using DSS tools and Google Satellite Imagery revealed that CA land has been proposed in a single patch. Signs of settlement, cultivation land and kachha road are visible in the proposed CA site. Regional Office in its inspection report has mentioned that the identified CA land in the encroached Lutumai RF which has been evicted and cleared by the State Govt. The CA plantation will restore the natural forest of the area.
- v. Area does not form the part of any Protected Area. However, the State Government has mentioned that there is presence of wild elephants, birds, python, barking deer, wild boar etc. in and around the land proposed for diversion.
- vi. No violation of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 have been reported by the State Government and the Regional Office. However, the Regional Office has reported broken up area as per DSS analysis.
- vii. The Regional Office has recommended the proposal with conditions such as preparation of Wildlife Management Plan, preparation of comprehensive Environment Management Plan and identification of Mining Zone.
- viii. Extant mine was earlier granted approval for 1 ha of forest land on 23.01.2023 by the Regional Office. As per Government of Assam Notification ECF No. 714147/37 dated 22.10.2025, any Minor Mineral Concession having an area of less than 5 ha may be extended up to 5 ha, subject to feasibility. Accordingly, the present proposal has been submitted for extension of the existing 1 ha Jagiroad Stone Mahal (F1), which was earlier diverted vide MoEF&CC letter No. 3-ASB032/2017-SHI/3498-99 dated 23.01.2023.
- ix. The Committee noted that the Ministry in the past while considering and approving 8 proposals of stone quarry in Dubhri, Gopalpara, Nagaon, Hojai, and Marigaoni districts of Assam issued guideline on 5th February, 2018 and 2nd May, 2018, wherein the State Government was required to prepare a comprehensive environment management plan for sustainable mining.

- x. With regards to the comprehensive environment management plan for sustainable mining within the forest area, the Nodal Officer Assam has informed the following:
- (a) The District Level Committee have been constituted in the State for preparation, monitoring and oversight of District Survey Report across the State. Committee headed by the District Commissioner comprises of officers from the Water Resource Department, Revenue and Land Department, Directorate of Geology and Mining, Assam Pollution Control Board. The DSR report have been recommended by the State Level Expert Appraisal Committee and subsequently by the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority.
 - (b) The approved, DSR provides a comprehensive and scientific assessment of minor minerals resources in the State, including the stone and sand with detailed estimation of geological and mineable reserves, annual production capacity, replenishment characteristics, delineation of environment sensitive areas and No-Go Zone. The long term sustainable mining framework for each district has been intrinsically embedded within the DSR. Mining operations in the State shall be regulated strictly in accordance with the findings, reserve estimation and recommendations contained in the respective approved DSRs.
 - (c) The Nodal Officer has also adverted to the order dated 23.07.2024 passed by the Hon'ble NGT in OA No. 86/2024 in the matter of Pradeep Singh Shekhawat vs. Union of India and others where the NGT has directed that "The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has filed affidavit dated 17.05.2024 and in para 8 therefore reference has been made to the Enforcement & Monitoring Guidelines for Sand Mining" para 4.1.1 and para (a) thereof clearly stipulates that "District Survey Report of Sand Mining shall be prepared before the auction of /e-auction/grant of mining lease/Lol by the Mining Department or department dealing the mining activity in respective States. This shows that without District Survey Report, the State Respondents cannot proceed with auction/e-auction/grant of mining lease of letter of Intent.
- xi. The Mining plan for the proposed land for diversion has been approved by Directorate of Geology & Mining, Assam on 17.12.2025 for extraction of 1 lakh cubic metre for 5 years from the mineable area of 4.88 Ha which is valid upto 20.02.2028.
- xii. An IA No. 218391/2024 in W. P. (C) No. 202/1995 has been filed in the Hon'ble Supreme alleging illegal mining (stone quarrying) in the certain district of Assam. The Hon'ble Supreme Court, vide its order dated 12.08.2025 in the matter constituted a Committee. The Committee was required to commence its functioning within one week and submit its report to the Hon'ble Court within four weeks. The Court further directed that, should the Committee find any miners engaged in illegal mining activities without valid permissions,

the District Mining Officer must take immediate steps to stop such activities.

- i. The Committee conducted the inspection and submitted its report in the Supreme Court. The Committee did not provide clear observations on violations committed by lessees, particularly the continuation of mining operations during periods when no valid Forest Clearance (FC) or Environmental Clearance (EC) was available. Several leases were found to have additional areas under illegal mining, reportedly by locals or miscreants. Committee reported that in such cases action have been taken by the Forest Department. Matter is still sub-judice and final decision of Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter is awaited.
- ii. Extant mine is also part of the leases inspected by the Committee and the Committee noted that
- iii. As per analysis of the area using Google Satellite Imagery, mining in the area is observed in the past over an area of 1.69 ha (approx.) during 2014 onwards.
- iv. The Nodal Officer informed the Committee that there were 3 mines operating in the area in the past viz. Jagiroad F(1), Jagiroad F(2) and Jagiroad F(3). These mines were initially granted approval by the Central Government on 9.01.2006, 19.12.2005, and 26.07.2011, respectively. The Jagiraod F(2) quarry was granted approval second time on 15.03.2012 and then on 28.01.2018. Jagiroad F(3) was also granted second approval on 22.01.2018. Similarly, the extant quarry i.e. Jagiroad F(1) was granted approval on 23.01.2023. All mining leases have been granted approval under the Adhinyam and accordingly, the area appearing as broken up has been worked out in the area . There were no violation of the Adhinyam.
- v. The Committee further noted that Committee of the Ministry which visited the area in 2017 also delineated the Jagiroad as a mining zone. The Nodal Officer further informed that extant mines fall in the mining zone Jagiroad Mining Zone as designated by the Committee of the Ministry.
- vi. The Committee further noted that although the submissions made by the Nodal Officer appears to be justified, however, for want of KML files and details of exact area approved and its demarcation on the ground, it is difficult to upheld the submission made by the Nodal Officer that the area broken up area or degraded forest land visible in the area are not violation of the Adhinyam or part of legal mining activities. Accordingly, the Committee opined that the State Government should clearly bring out the fact that mining operation were carried out within the forest area approved under the Adhinyam or otherwise.
- xiii. The Committee noted that extant mine is a running mine for which approval over 1 ha is already approved by the Central Government for mining in the past and the extant proposal is for additional forest area of 4.0 ha. Accordingly, the Committee opined that since the mine is already working, the additional area may be considered for approval, however, other proposal in the zone should be considered

only after receipt of detail of broken up area or degraded forest area visible in and around the leases approved in the past

4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee had detailed discussion and deliberation with the Dy. DGF (Central), RO Shillong and Nodal Officer, Government of Assam. After going through the facts of the proposal and submissions made by the Nodal Officer, Government of Assam, the Committee recommended the proposal for grant of *'in-principle'* approval for diversion of additional 4.0 Ha of forest land for extension of existing stone mahal of 1 ha area namely Jagiroad Stone Mahal No. F1 from 1 ha to 5 ha under Nagaon Division in favour of Hills Trade Agencies, Morigaon District, Assam subject to general, standard and the following specific conditions:
- i. A site-specific Wildlife Management Plan shall be prepared by the State Government, for the conservation and protection of wildlife in the area. The said Plan will be approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden of the State and a copy of the same shall be submitted along with the compliance of in-principle approval. The cost of preparation and implementation of the Wildlife Management Plan shall be borne by the user agency.
 - ii. The State Government shall assess the legitimacy of the area broken up in the contiguity of the extant lease i.e. whether the broken up area forms the parts of approval granted in the past by the Ministry or otherwise. The forest area, if any, broken up without the prior approval of the Central Government, including the area for ancillary activities such as road, shall be treated as violation of the Adhinyam.
 - iii. In respect of forest area, if any, proved to be broken up without the approval under the Adhinyam, the following action shall be taken by the State Government:
 - (a) The penal compensatory afforestation, against the area used in violation of the Van (Sanrakshan evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 shall be charged by the State Government in accordance with the provisions of the Guidelines issued by the Ministry on 21.01.2026 in this regard.
 - (b) The State Government shall realize from the user agency the penal NPV for the extent of forest area, if any used in violation of the Adhinyam plus 12 percent simple interest from the date of raising of such demand till the deposit is made by the User Agency in accordance with provision of guidelines, as the case may be.
 - (c) The State Government shall initiate action penal proceedings against the erring officials in accordance with the provisions of the section 3 A and 3 B of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980.
 - iv. There are mining leases approved in the area in the past which were observed with unexplained broken up areas which appears to be broken without the prior approval of the Central Government. The State Government, therefore, clearly bring out the fact that whether the mining operation were carried out within the forest area approved under the Adhinyam or otherwise.

- v. The State Government shall ensure that additional area proposed for mining in the extant lease is in conformity with the provisions of the approved District Survey Report prepared by the State Government for sustainable mining in Morigaon District.
- vi. An I.A. No. 218391/2024 in W.P. (C) No. 202/1995 has been filed before the Hon'ble Supreme Court alleging illegal mining (stone quarrying) in certain districts of Assam, including the subject mine, which is presently pending consideration before the Hon'ble Supreme Court. The decision to be rendered by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the said I.A. shall be binding on the user agency, and the State Government shall accordingly ensure strict compliance with the directions issued by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter.

Agenda No.10

Proposal No. FP/HP/ROAD/521935/2025

Sub:- Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in favour of Executive Engineer, Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department for non-forestry use of 0.171 ha of forest land for construction of 165.00 mtr span double land bridge over Giri River on Nahan Dadahu Haripurdhar road at RD 35/690 in Sirmour District in the State of Himachal Pradesh (Proposal No. FP/HP/ROAD/521935/2025)– regarding.

1. The above proposal was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (Central), Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Chandigarh attended the meeting. The Nodal Officer (FCA), Himachal Pradesh 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. 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 State Government of Himachal Pradesh vide Proposal No. FP/HP/ROAD/521935/2025 has submitted above subject proposal seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
 - ii. The proposal envisages diversion of 0.171 ha of forest land for construction of 165.00 mtr span double land bridge over Giri River on Nahan Dadahu Haripurdhar road at RD 35/690 in Sirmour District in the State of Himachal Pradesh.
 - iii. The proposed area is 0.046 Km from Renukaji Wildlife Sanctuary. As per DSS, proposed area is located at an approx. aerial distance of 77 mtrs from Renukaji Wildlife Sanctuary.

- iv. The proposal involves violation, as the user agency Executive Engineer, HPPWD has violated the provisions of IFA, 1927 over an area of 0.171 ha in the year 2020 by raising bridge pillar.
- v. The component-wise land-use of the proposal is as under:-

Sl. No.	Component	Forest Land (ha.)	Non- Forest Land (ha.)
1.	Bridge	0.171	0.0795
2.	Dumping	0.00	0.00
	Total	0.171	0.0795

- vi. Legal status of forest land proposed for diversion is mentioned as Others. Vegetation density of 0 has been reported with Eco class V. DFO, Renukaji has mentioned that no tree felling is involved.
- vii. The Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 0.342 ha degraded forest land in Site Name/Compartment/Block RF Manal C-3, Compartment No. C-3, Survey No. H43L10 in Village- Loja Manal (188), Tehsil- Ronhat/Shillai, District- Sirmaur, Renukaji Forest Division. CA scheme along with maintenance for 10 years has been submitted. Total financial outlay for compensatory afforestation scheme is ₹0.0153 Crore(s).
- viii. DFO, Renuka Ji has certified that land identified for Compensatory Afforestation is suitable for undertaking plantation and suitable from management point of view, the land is free from all sorts of encumbrances and encroachments.
- ix. The proposal does not form the part of any Protected Area, or Eco-sensitive Zones, and Wildlife Corridors, etc.
- x. There is no presence of protected archaeological/heritage site/defence establishment or any other important monuments in the proposed area.
- xi. DFO, Renuka Ji has mentioned that 121 flora species, 14 mammal, including common Leopard and Himalyan Black Bear which are listed under schedule 1 of the WPA (Amendment) 2022 and "Vulnerable" in the IUCN red list alongwith 200 bird species. Additionally, Renukaji Lake located within the Sanctuary, close to the diversion area, is home to Indian soft-shell turtle (Endangered" as per IUNCN Red list) and "Vulnerable" Indian Roofed Turtle along with other turtle species.
- xii. Further, it is mentioned that already a very old bridge existed on the site of Giri River which connects Nahan, Dadahu with upper area of Sirmour district and particularly Renukaji. The new proposed site of bridge is just adjoining to that old bridge. Therefore, there is no impact on the Wildlife sanctuary area. There is no record of Wild animal using existing bridge as corridor. However, wild animals are seen using river bed under the bridge as corridor for movement. It is also mentioned that the project is unlikely to have any adverse impact on the endangered Indian soft-shell turtle which has its habitat in the Renukaji lake, which although close to the diversion area, is not directly connected.

- xiii. Earlier, the proposal was considered in Advisory Committee in its meeting held on 27.10.2025. The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), RO, Chandigarh and officials from the Government of Himachal Pradesh and after going through the facts of the proposal, the Committee decided to '**defer**' the proposal with the following observations:
 - a. The State Government shall clarify the legal status of the roads connecting the bridge proposed to be built over forest land.
 - xiv. The decision of the Committee was communicated to the State Government on 09.11.2025. The Government of Himachal Pradesh had uploaded the reply on the PARIVESH portal 2.0 on 02.12.2025 which was sought by this Ministry vide EDS dated 09.11.2025. As per EDS reply, concerned DFO has clarified that the existing road Nahan Dadahu Haripur Dhar was constructed during the year 1970 and the legal status of this road is Major District Road (MDR-I). The new proposed Giri bridge will be constructed at RD 35/690".
 - xv. DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Chandigarh has recommended the proposal stating that – “The proposal is for public utility 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 Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980”.
 - xvi. The Committee noted that DFO, Renukaji Forest Division vide letter No.6077 dated 21.01.2026 has further informed that the proposed bridge is to be constructed adjoining/parallel to the existing bridge which was constructed during the year 1970. The land adjoining to both side of connecting road of the bridge is MDR (Major District Road) and under the ownership of PWD Department/Non forest land.
 - xvii. The Committee further observed that the State Government submitted that the construction of new bridge needs to more vehicular movement in the area. Hence, comments from PCCF (WL)/CWLW from conservation plan of view along with WL conservation Plan needs to be submitted.
4. **Decision of Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Chandigarh recommended the proposal for grant of '**in-principle**' approval for diversion of 0.171 ha of forest land in favour of Executive Engineer, Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department for construction of 165.00 mtr span double land bridge over Giri River on Nahan Dadahu Haripurdhar road at RD 35/690 in Sirmour District in the State of Himachal Pradesh subject to general, standard and following specific conditions:-
- i. The State Government shall initiate necessary action regarding violations of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980, in accordance with the provisions of Sections 3A and 3B of the Act and Paragraph 1.16(ii) (a), (b), and (d) of the Consolidated Guidelines issued under the allied rules.

- ii. The State Govt. shall impose penal CA as per the guidelines dated 21.1.2026 issued by the Ministry.
- iii. 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.
- iv. The State Government shall implement site specific wildlife Management plan duly approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden.
- v. The User Agency shall obtain the requisite wildlife clearance and comply with all conditions stipulated therein, if applicable.

Agenda No.13

Proposal No: FP/JH/ROAD/418247/2023

Subject: Proposal for seeking Ex-post facto approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 72.754 ha of Forest land in favour of National Highway Authority of India for 4 Lanning of NH-75 Section-1 from Km 59 000 (Kuru) to Km 97 600 (Udaypura) under Lohardaga and Latehar District in the State of Jharkhand- regarding.

1. The agenda for the above subject proposal was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (Central), Regional office (RO) Ranchi and Nodal Officer, Govt. of Jharkhand State 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 after through deliberation and discussion observed that:
 - i. The Govt. of Jharkhand vide their letter No Van Bhumi-19/2025-3593 dated 16.10.2025 forwarded a diversion proposal to obtain Ex-post facto approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for Diversion of 72.754 ha Forest land in favour of National Highway Authority of India for 4 Laning of NH-75 Section-1 from Km 59 000 (Kuru) to Km 97 600 (Udaypura) under Lohardaga and Latehar District in the State of Jharkhand.
 - ii. The State Govt. has informed that the subject project is part of Ranchi-Varanasi Economic Corridor which passes through Ranchi, Kuru, Chandwa, Latehar, Manika, Palamu, Garhwa, Roberts Ganj (UP) and connects to Varanasi.
 - iii. The Kuru–Udaypura package is proposed for 4-laning with a divided carriageway and a 26 m formation width. The RoW is 60 m, except at

the Sikni Coal Mines area and Amjhariya Ghati forest section, where it is 45 m. Bypasses at Kuru and Chandwa towns are proposed to avoid built-up areas and major R&R issues. The existing alignment passes through these towns and has sharp curves, causing congestion and accidents; therefore, geometric improvement with bypass provision is essential for safe and smooth traffic flow.

iv. The component wise land use plan in the proposal is as under;

S. No.	Component	Forest Land (ha)	Non-forest Land (ha)
1	Minor Bridge	0.24	1.0974
2	Major Bridge	0	0.7596
3	Viaduct	0.4375	0
4	Wildlife Underpass/ Overpass	0.988	0.8096
5	ROB/RUB	0.3406	0.135
6	Road Surface	70.7479	143.7444
	Total	72.754	146.5460

- v. The proposed alignment is passing through 72.754 Ha of the forest land which falls under Forest Division Latehar and Lohardaga. The Districts/Villages through which the corridor is passing has forest area at many places therefore avoiding the Forest Area completely was next to impossible, but during fixing the alignment, options for the alignment has been explored, and the option involving the least Forest area has been considered. The said forest land is minimum requirement for Construction of the proposed road.
- vi. The protected forest land involved in the proposal is 68.1181 Ha and 2.63 Ha in Latehar and Lohardaga district respectively. Further, Jungle Jhadi Land involved in the proposal is 2.0053 Ha in Latehar district.
- vii. The canopy density of the proposed forest land has been reported 0.5 with Eco-class value of III. Around 21007 trees are likely to be affected due to this road proposal that belong to about 70 different species including Sal, Gamhar, Arjun, Sagwan, Karam, Jamun, Mahuwa, Sidha, Semal, Krishan Chuda, Kedu, Aasan, Shisham, Mango, Karanj, Baken, Palash, Neem, Dhauta, Eucalyptus, Ginjan, Pipal, Kari, Dumar etc. Sal is the prominent tree species, and total of 8073 Sal trees will be affected by the proposed road.
- viii. The Committee noted that compensatory afforestation have been proposed over the Degraded Forest Land (DFL):

Sl. No	District	Tehsil	Village	Area (Ha)
1	Garhwa	Dandai	DANDAI	34.92
2	Garhwa			
3	Garhwa	Meral (Pipra Kalan)	BANUA	47.28

4	Garhwa	Majhiaon	JAHARSARAI	11.16
5	Garhwa	Meral (Pipra Kalan)	SERASAM	52.74
		Total		146.1

- ix. The Nodal officer, Govt. of Jharkhand informed that the forest area proposed for diversion is situated within the elephant movement route along the contiguous landscape and forest area. The proposed construction of new bypass at Chandwa shall be causing hindrance to the free movement of elephant from one forest tract to another. Thus, there should be adequate measures to safeguard the traditional movement route of wild elephant. Hence construction of elevated road in a stretch of about one kilometer is recommended.
- x. The proposed road is passing through the hilly area consisting ghat roads prone to soil erosion therefore needs special attention to Soil Conservation Measures.
- xi. The committee observed that the RO, Ranchi in their SIR has reported that the land proposed for diversion does not form part of any legally designated protected area such as a wildlife sanctuary, national park, or eco-sensitive zone. However, the area lies within a broader ecologically significant landscape that forms part of the seasonal migratory route of wild Asian elephants, which frequently traverse through adjoining forest patches.
- xii. The committee also noted that the forest area is appraised to be of considerable wildlife presence species like Elephant, Rabbit, Porcupine, Bear, Deer, Jackal, hayena, Cobra, Python ect are reported in the area. Forest areas belonging to villages Tiko, Pirdag, Torar, Bargarha, Hutap, Amjhariya, Borshidag, Lukahiya, Chiro, Tudhamu, Rud, Latdag, Ete, Sikni, Sasang, Jagaldaga & Udaipura that are part of this proposal have elephant movement in near past. The forest department has recommended this proposal with Specific Wildlife Management Plan that must include mitigation measures for safe wildlife movement across the upcoming road.
- xiii. The DDGF(C), RO, Ranchi apprised the committee that this forest diversion proposal was submitted by user agency and accepted by State's Project Screening Committee (PSC) in February 2023 and has been processed by state authorities and forwarded to the Ministry, New Delhi on 10/10/2025 along with reported violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980.
- xiv. The proposal reportedly involves violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 as the project authorities have awarded the road construction work (including in forest area) to concessionaire PRA Maa Ugratara Highway Pvt Ltd without prior approval under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 vide Concession Agreement No. IN-DL69915906600430W dated 11.10.2024.
- xv. During the site inspection, it was found that road construction work had commenced on 4.733 hectares of forest land, comprising 4.679 ha of

notified forest land and 0.054 ha of GMJJ land under the Latehar Forest Division, and 0.00408773 hectares of land in Tiko PF under the Lohardaga Forest Division. The user agency has violated the Forest Act at 10 patches in four villages under the Latehar Division and at one location under the Lohardaga Forest Division.

- xvi. The Head of Office, Jharkhand division, NHAI, New Delhi has issue LOA letter Vide Letter No. NHAI/11012/JH/NH-75(Sec-I)/2023-24/E-6329 dated 07.03.2024 and a Concession Agreement was signed between the UA and the Concessioner on 11.10.2024. As per this agreement, the Concessionaire commenced work during the project development period.
- xvii. Regarding the action taken against the violations, the legal proceedings have been initiated under section 33 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 against the User Agency. Total of three offence reports have been registered in the Latehar Forest Division-Offence Report Numbers 121760, 121761, and 121709, all dated 22.05.2025, and one offence report has been registered in the Lohardaga Forest Division-Offence Report Number 0645, dated 17.05.2025.
- xviii. Further, DFO Latehar Forest Division has registered case against Shri Sudhir Kumar (Project Director, PIU, Daltonganj) and Shri Vinay Pandey & Aayush Agrawal (Personals of Contractor, PRA India Private Limited), and, DFO Lohardaga Forest Division has registered case against Shri Vinay Pandey (Personals of Contractor, PRA India Private Limited). All these cases are currently sub-judice/pending before the Chief Judicial Magistrate of Latehar and Lohardaga, respectively. The concerned forest officials have also seized some materials/articles.
- xix. Both the DFOs apprised that work in violation was done clandestinely and hence took time to come to knowledge of the department. Presently, the project proponent is not doing any work on the proposed diversion road.
- xx. The Committee noted that the State Government has recommended the proposal with certain conditions.
- xxi. The committee took a note that the DDGF(C), Ranchi has recommended the proposal in their SIR with following conditions: -
 - (a) The State Government shall initiate necessary action against any violations of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, in accordance with the provisions of Sections 3A and 3B of the Act, and paragraph 1.16(ii)(a) (b), and (d) of the Consolidated Guidelines issued under the allied rules.
 - (b) A site-specific wildlife impact mitigation plan ensuring safe wildlife movement across the proposed road shall be prepared by the State Government and implemented at the cost of the User Agency.
 - (c) The required soil and moisture conservation measures shall be assessed by the State Government and implemented at the cost of the User Agency.

(d) The User Agency shall ensure that the muck disposal plan is prepared and implemented outside the forest areas.

4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Ranchi and the Nodal officer, Govt. of Jharkhand recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval for diversion of 72.754 ha Forest land in favour of National Highway Authority of India for 4 Laning of NH-75 Section-1 from Km 59 000 (Kuru) to Km 97 600 (Udaypura) under Lohardaga and Latehar District in the State of Jharkhand subject to the general, standard and following specific conditions:

- i. The State Government shall initiate necessary action against any violations of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, in accordance with the provisions of Sections 3A and 3B of the Adhiniyam.
- ii. The State Government shall impose the penal CA as per Ministry's guidelines dated 21.01.2026.
- iii. 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.
- iv. A site-specific wildlife mitigation plan ensuring safe wildlife movement across the proposed road shall be prepared by the State Government, in consultation with the Wildlife Institute of India. A copy of the said plan, approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden of State shall be submitted along with the compliance of in-principal approval. Cost of preparation and implemented of the plan shall be borne by the user agency.
- v. The required soil and moisture conservation measures shall be assessed by the State Government and implemented at the cost of the User Agency. A plan in this regard is required to be submitted prior obtaining Stage-II/final approval under VSSA, 1980.
- vi. The User Agency shall ensure that the muck disposal plan is done outside the forest areas.
- vii. The User Agency shall formulate a forest fire prevention plan, since the forest area is vulnerable to fire incidences.
- viii. The necessary signage for cautioning drivers about the presence of Wildlife in the area shall be installed by the UA along the road, in consultation with the State Forest Department.

Agenda No. 14

Proposal No: FP/JH/MIN/QRY/517863/2025

Subject: Proposal for seeking Ex-post facto approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 354.98 ha Forest land for Magadh (West) open cast Coal Mining Project of M/s Central Coal Field

Limited under Latehar District of Jharkhand State (Online Proposal No: FP/JH/MIN/QRY/517863/2025)- regarding.

1. The agenda for the above subject proposal was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (Central), Regional office (RO) Ranchi and the Nodal Officer, Govt. of Jharkhand 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 after through deliberation and discussion observed that:
 - i. The Govt. of Jharkhand vide their letter No Van Bhumi-23/2025-3189 dated 02.09.2025 forwarded a diversion proposal to obtain Ex-post facto approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 354.98 ha forest land for Magadh (West) open cast Coal Mining Project of M/s Central Coal Field Limited under Latehar District of Jharkhand State. The instant proposal electronically received in the Ministry on 02.09.2025.
 - ii. The proposed diversion of forest land in Magadh OCP (West) is mainly for mining activities which is site specific as coal is deposited below earth surface which is intended to be excavated, some portion of proposed land is intended to be used for allied activities of mining interlinked with mining operation, the site of which cannot be changed.
 - iii. The proposal involves diversion of 70.49 ha Jungle-Jhari land and 284.49 ha protected forest land. Thus comprising 354.98 ha of forest land.
 - iv. The State informed that the proposed site has patches of Tropical Dry Deciduous forest with average vegetative density of 0.4 to 0.6 and Eco class III and total 2,49,906 number of trees have been reported to be felled. The area is dominated by *Shorea robusta* (Sal) and its associate species. A very good Sal regeneration was found in the area. Many of these species also contribute to forest-based livelihood activities from NTFP collection and its value addition as well as Lac cultivation for indigenous communities.
 - v. Magadh OCP is an existing mega mine (Brown field Project) of CCL that has a rated capacity of 20 MTPA, and further is scheduled for 51 MTPA capacity. In order to meet National coal production demand, to meet Energy Security, CIL has been entrusted to produce 1 Billion Te (BT) coal by 2029-30.
 - vi. The entire mining project (1604.91 Ha) area falls into two Districts, Chatra and Latehar. 495.92 Ha of project area falls in Chatra Dist. and 1108.99 Ha in Latehar Dist. of Jharkhand. Approval for all forest land

falling in Chatra District (i.e 495.92 Ha) has been obtained. The current FC proposal involves the land falling in Latehar District only.

- vii. Magadh Opencast Project (OCP) is a flagship coal mining initiative under Central Coalfields Limited (CCL), a subsidiary of Coal India Limited (CIL). Located in the North Karanpura Coalfields, Jharkhand, it serves as a cornerstone in India's energy strategy, addressing the rising demand for thermal power generation. The project harnesses the region's vast coal reserves, contributing significantly to the country's energy security while adhering to environmental norms and sustainable practices.
- viii. The project has been strategically approved by the CCL Board during its 350th (No. 6 of 2008) meeting on 23.08.2008, emphasizing its critical role in supplying coal to the North Karanpura/Tandwa Super Thermal Power Station (STPS). The requirement of power grade coal will be around 10 MT per annum for the STPS. Magadh OCP is presently operating at the project capacity of 20MT per annum. Coal India Board has already approved the capacity expansion of Magadh OCP to the tune of 51MY per annum to meet the increasing demand of coal in the Nation.
- ix. The component wise proposed land use details in the project is as under;

Sl. No.	Component	Forest Land Proposed for Diversion (ha)	Non-forest Land (ha)
1	External OB Dump	5.6	13.7
2	Top Soil Dump	0	13.55
3	Safety Zone (7.5 Meter)	5.77	3.83
4	Office and Other Infrastructures	0	62.98
5	Green Belt	56.66	45.34
6	Other Mining Allied Activities	0	50.37
7	Quarry Area	286.95	471.55
	Total	354.98	661.32

- x. The RO Ranchi in its SIR submitted that the proposed area is very rich in biodiversity and frequently visited by Asian elephants. Based on records maintained by the Latehar Divisional Forest Office, information obtained from local residents, previous field visit in this area, and data seen during such field visits, a movement pattern map of wild elephants was assessed which indicated the possibility of rise in man-animal conflict in the area due to consequent habitat shrinkage.
- xi. The wildlife present in and around the proposed forest land reported as Elephant, Hyena, Mongoose, Wild Cat, Jackal, Wild Boar, Common Langur, Barking deer, Newla etc. Therefore, the DFO, Latehar has recommended to conduct a comprehensive biodiversity and ethnobotanical study by a specialized agency such as the Botanical Survey of India or the Zoological Survey of India. This study would help create a detailed inventory of rare, endangered, and unique species of

flora and fauna. Additionally, the implementation of species-specific conservation plans as required is also recommended by the DFO, Latehar. As per the recommendations made by CWLW, a Site-Specific Wildlife Management Plan should be prepared and implemented at project cost.

- xii. DSS imagery indicates a nala along the western boundary of the mining lease, with potential hydrological impacts. The user agency has undertaken no mining within 60–150 m of the nala and to submit WRD, GoJ NOC with mitigation measures prior to Stage-II approval. As recommended by DFO, Latehar, SMC and CAT Plans shall be prepared by the user agency at its own cost under State Forest Department guidance.
- xiii. The committee observed that the dump has been proposed over an area of 5.6 ha forest land which is a Non-site specific activity in nature. In this regard, it has been informed by the Nodal officer, Govt. of Jharkhand State that the External OB dump already exists over an area of 19.3 Ha which includes 5.6 Ha GMJJ land (which comes under the administrative control of State Revenue Department). However, as per approved Mining Plan (January 2025), there is no provision of any additional external OB Dump. The entire OB hence forth generated will be backfilled.
- xiv. The DDGF(c), RO, Ranchi apprised the committee that, although no work was found to have been undertaken or initiated in the Notified Protected Forest in relation to the present proposal, mining activity has taken place on GMJJ lands included in the proposal. The Project Proponent informed the visiting team that, as forest diversion approvals for Magadh OCP had already been obtained in Chatra district, mining operations were continued in the non-forest areas of Latehar district as well.
- xv. Owing to the nature of GMJJ lands, which exist in small, scattered patches interspersed with or adjoining private and agricultural lands, these parcels do not appear distinct from the surrounding non-forest land. There is no visible demarcation between GMJJ land and other non-forest land, and most GMJJ lands are under non-forest land use. Consequently, mining operations were continued on GMJJ land parcels contiguous with non-forest land and visually indistinguishable from it. The Project Proponent further informed that most of these GMJJ lands had been settled in the names of private raiyats prior to 1980.
- xvi. The inspecting team observed that similar lapses had occurred during the processing of forest diversion proposals for the Chatra portion of the project. The repetition of the same lapse in the Latehar district for the same project could indicate intentional conduct on the part of the User Agency. In response, the User Agency submitted that small portions of GMJJ land frequently intersect with ongoing mining operations and, therefore, work is undertaken only after obtaining a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the revenue authorities, as otherwise the entire mining operation would come to a standstill.

- xvii. Furthermore, the revenue authorities issued conditional NOCs for the use of GMJJ land, stipulating that work on GMJJ land shall commence only after obtaining prior approval under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980. It was found that an area of approximately 22–23 hectares of GMJJ land had been worked upon. The DFO, Latehar, further informed that the Deputy Commissioner, Latehar, has been requested to take appropriate action regarding the violation on GMJJ land (deemed forest), as the Forest Department has no jurisdiction over these revenue forests. At present, no work in violation is in progress.
- xviii. During the site inspection carried out by the Regional office, Ranchi, the inspecting team requested the DFO to examine whether the work undertaken on GMJJ land without prior approval was carried out under the instructions of any authority. If the matter involves a violation of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980, action should be initiated in accordance with Sections 3A and 3B of the Act. Mining work in apparent violation has been done in two villages- Chamatuand (22.63 ha) Phulbasia (0.15 ha). Total work in violation of Van Adhinyam, 1980 has been carried out over an area of 22.78 ha of GMJJ land (deemed forest) land.
- xix. Further, DFO Latehar apprised that during the visit to the Latehar forest area, he identified an illegal brick kiln in Chamatu village. The brick kiln has been demolished and legal proceedings have been initiated against encroachers of forest land under relevant sections of Indian Forest Act, 1927. This brick kiln was located (23°49'17.53"N, 84°56'2.19"E and 23°49'11.76"N, 84°56'1.87"E) within the notified forest area, which falls within this proposed Magadh open cast coal mining project (354.98 ha.).
- xx. Regarding the Action taken on the Violation, the State Govt. informed that the User Agency has done violation over the JJ Land (Deemed Forest) during the period from Dec-2019 to Dec-2021. As GMJJ land comes under the administrative control of State Revenue Department, DFO Latehar intimated to DC Latehar on 09.05.2025. As per rules published by notification dated 31-08-2025 D.C. Latehar has been requested to submit proposal for registering complaint against the offender vide letter no. 2854 dated 19-11-2025. After getting the proposal from the D.C. Latehar and its approval from competent authority a complaint will be registered in the court against the offender.
- xxi. The habitations or settlements exist within the project area across the two districts involved. The consolidated number of Project Affected Families (PAFs) is 998, comprising 303 families in Chatra District and 695 families in Latehar District, as estimated by the Project Proponent. Land acquisition has been carried out under the provisions of the Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition and Development) Act, 1957. Accordingly, the displacement and relocation of affected families are being managed by the User Agency in accordance with the approved CIL Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2012, which is aligned with the National R&R

Policy. A total of 331 PAFs have been shifted/relocated in Magadh OCP to two R&R sites, namely Hurhurwa Tola and Ojha Tola.

- xxii. The Committee observed that the RO, Ranchi in their site inspection report has informed that the CA plantation is proposed over 710 hectares of Degraded Forest Land (DFL), against 354.98 Ha of forest land proposed for diversion, in the Garhwa North Forest Division of Garhwa district. According to the DFO North Garhwa, the gross area of the CA is 735 hectares, while the net area is 710 hectares. However, only the KML file for the 710 hectares has been submitted. The entire CA land is spread across nine (9) sites/locations, in seven (7) villages. CA land area estimated using DSS is 710.612 ha (Software calculated).
- xxiii. The Committee further observed that forest cover of the CA area reveals that corresponding area falling under VDF, MDF, Open forest, Scrub, Non-Forest, and Water are 05.00 ha., 28.00 ha., 421.00 ha., 81.00 Ha., 170 Ha., and 03.00 Ha., respectively. Therefore, the suitable area for plantation is 672.00 Ha. Additionally, an extra 36 to 40 hectares need to be incorporated into the net CA DFL. Hence, the Compensatory Afforestation (CA) scheme to include additional Degraded Forest Land (DFL) of 40 ha has been recommended by the RO, Ranchi in their report.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Ranchi and the Nodal officer, Govt. of Jharkhand recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval for diversion of 354.98 ha Forest land for Magadh (West) open cast Coal Mining Project of M/s Central Coal Field Limited under Latehar District of Jharkhand State subject to the general, standard and following specific conditions:
- i. The State Government shall initiate necessary action regarding any violations of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, on the GMJJ land, in accordance with the provisions of Sections 3A and 3B of the Adhiniyam.
 - ii. The State Government shall revise the Compensatory Afforestation (CA) scheme to include additional Degraded Forest Land (DFL) of 40 ha, in compliance with the relevant directions issued by the MoEF&CC.
 - iii. The State Govt. shall ensure that the penal CA shall be done by the UA as per the Ministry's Guidelines dated 21.01.2026.
 - iv. 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.
 - v. In view of the significant wildlife presence in the vicinity of the project site, the State Government shall ensure the implementation of a site-specific Wildlife Management Plan in consultation with Wildlife Institute of India, duly approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden, at the cost of the User Agency. A copy of approved Wildlife Management Plan shall be submitted alongwith compliance of Stage-1 approval.

- vi. No Mining activities will be carried out within 60m to 150 m from both side of the Nalla situated at western side of the project. A copy of NoC along with mitigation measures if any from the Water Resource Department (WRD), Government of Jharkhand shall be submitted before the issue of Final/ Stage-II approval.
- vii. The User Agency shall also prepare and implement a comprehensive Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) Plan at its own cost, with a focus on water security, to mitigate the impacts of open-cast mining. A copy of approved CAT plan shall be submitted along with compliance of Stage-1 approval.
- viii. The User Agency shall demarcate and maintain the safety zone strictly in accordance with the applicable norms.
- ix. The User Agency shall submit a progressive reclamation plan, a restoration schedule, and a timeline for the surrender of forest land.
- x. The User Agency shall prepare and implement a detailed Soil and Moisture Conservation Plan to minimise the adverse effects of open-cast coal mining on adjoining forest areas.
- xi. The State Government shall implement Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) measures in accordance with the applicable rules & Guidelines.

Agenda Note 16

Online Proposal No: FP/JH/IND/528045/2025

Subject: Proposal for seeking Ex-post facto approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 184.43 ha Forest land in favour of M/s ESL Steel Limited (Formerly known as Electrosteel Steels Limited) for setting up of an Integrated Steel Plant under Bokaro District of Jharkhand State (Online Proposal No: FP/JH/IND/528045/2025)- regarding.

1. The agenda for the above subject proposal was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (Central), Regional office (RO) Ranchi and Nodal Officer, Govt. of Jharkhand 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 after through deliberation and discussion observed that:
 - i. The Govt. of Jharkhand vide their letter No Van Bhumi-20/2025-3330 dated 18.09.2025 forwarded a diversion proposal to obtain Ex-post facto approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the

Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 for diversion of 184.43 ha Forest land in favour of M/s ESL Steel Limited (Formerly known as Electrosteel Steels Limited) for setting up of an Integrated Steel Plant under Bokaro District of Jharkhand State. The instant proposal electronically received in the Ministry on 18.09.2025.

- ii. ESL Steel Limited (formerly Electrosteel Steels Limited) has set up an Integrated Steel Plant located in villages Siyaljori, Bhagabandh, Budhibinor, Alkusha, Dhandabar, Bandhdih and Hutupathar of Bokaro District of Jharkhand. The present plant is spread over 374.81 ha of land (including the approach road to the plant). The project has adopted steel making through Blast Furnace route and primarily consist of a Sinter Plant, Coke Oven, Blast Furnace, Basic Oxygen Furnace, Billet Caster, Wire Rod Mill, Bar Mill, DI Pipe Plant and Power Plant. The plant has been designed to produce TMT bars, wire rods, DI pipes, pig iron and billets.
- iii. This forest diversion proposal, although applied in Industry category, is towards regularization of encroachment on 184.43 ha of forest land over which steel plant exists. The site is situated about 15 km from Chas town (adjacent to district head quarter of Bokara) and about 5-6 km inside from Chas-Parbatpur Road. A connecting road, constructed by user agency, provides access to the steel plant. The construction of 3 MTPA capacity Steel Plant by M/s Electrosteel Steel Ltd. continued on forest land, despite several litigations during 2008-12, that project proponents claimed to be raiyati.
- iv. The committee have been informed that previously, the proposal for diversion of 184.23 ha of Forest land (174.23 Ha encroached (ex-post facto approval) and 9.84 ha virgin land) in favour of M/s Electrosteel Steels Limited (now known as ESL Steel Limited) in the State of Jharkhand previously got the Stage-I/In-principle approval by this Ministry's letter no. 8-21/2019-FC dated 17.12.2019.

(a) The Compliance report of Stage-1 submitted by the State Government as follows:-

Sl. No.	Conditions	Remarks of the State Government
i	Legal status of the diverted forest land Shall remain unchanged.	Undertaking regarding Compliance of the said condition has been submitted by the User Agency. It shall be ensured that legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged.
ii	Compensatory Afforestation	
a	Compensatory Afforestation over Non forest land, equal in extent, or over Jungle Jhari land double in extent to the forest Land being diverted, shall be raised by the Forest Department at the cost of	The user agency has submitted that 205 hectares of non- forest land have been purchased by them for Compensatory afforestation, for which they have received CA suitability certificate from the concerned DFO.

User Agency. As far as practicable a mixture of local indigenous species will be planted, and monoculture of a species has to be avoided.	Area required for CA Land 1:1 - 184.23 ha			
	S/N	Status of transfer of land	Division	Area (ha)
	1	Land transferred & mutated in favour of the Forest Dept.	Medininagar	16.00
			Jamshedpur	11.39
			Garhwa South	8.49
			Gumla	13.42
			Simdega	15.4
			Total :-	64.70
	2	Land transferred to Forest Dept. but mutation in the name of Forest Dept. is under process	Simdega	58.88
	3	Land procured, registered & mutated in favour of ESL. Suitability Certificate issued by DFOs, but transfer & mutation in the name of Forest Dept. is under process.	Chaibasa	17.76
			Medininagar	34.02
			Simdega	5.21
			Total :-	56.99
	4	Land procured & registered in favour of ESL, but mutation in the name of ESL is pending. Suitability Certificate issued by DFOs, but transfer & mutation in the name of Forest Dept. is under process.	Loharda ga	20.02
			Jamshed pur	5.11
Total:-			25.13	
G. Total: 205.70				
Thus, it may be submit that, though progress has been shown by the user agency but considering the volume of land that needs to be transferred to the forest department, extra-				

		ordinary efforts need to be taken the user agency.			
b	User agency shall provide non forest land equivalent to five times the forest land encroached for the purpose of compensatory afforestation, in addition to normal CA as proposed under 2 (a) above. The CA scheme shall be prepared and approved by the competent authority. The non-forest land shall be mutated and declared as RF/PF prior to stage II approval.	The User Agency submitted that for providing to non-forest land equivalent to five times the encroached forest land, they are procuring private raiyati land as well government land.			
		Area required for (Land 1:5 - 871.95 ha (Per CA)			
		S Status of transfer of	Division	Area	
		N land		(ha)	
		1	Govt. Land identified, suitability certificate issued by DFO. Amount deposited in Treasury by ESL, Clearance given by Revenue Authority but Cabinet approval is awaited.	lohardaga	61.10
		2	Govt. Land identified, suitability certificate issued by DFO. Amount deposited in Treasury by ESL, Clearance given by Revenue Authority but approval by Commissioner and Cabinet is in process.	Giridih East	37.32
		3	Govt. Land identified, suitability certificate issued by DFO. Demand note by DC, Clearance by Revenue Authority & Cabinet approval is pending.	Bokaro	138.08
4	Govt. Land identified, issuance of suitability certificate is under process by DFO	Bokaro	39.86		
5	Govt. Land identified and applied for suitability (Initial Stage)	Ranchi	490.30		
6	Private Land	Medininagar	32.41		

		identified, suitability certificate issued by DFOS. Procurement by ESL is under process.	Jamshedpur	6.22
			Porahat	10.58
			Simdega	10.71
			Total	59.92
		7 Private Land identified, & suitability is under process.	Medininagar	13.90
			Garhwa	15.98
			Porahat	44.06
			Total	73.94
		G. Total		900.52
		Thus, it may be submitted that though progress has been shown by the user agency but considering the volume of land that needs to be transferred to the forest department, extra-ordinary efforts need to be taken by the user agency.		
c	The non-forest land /Jungle Jhari Land proposed for CA and Penal CA shall be transferred and mutated in the name of Forest Department and notified as RF/PF prior to Stage-II approval. copy of the original notification declaring the non-forest land under Section 4 or Section 29 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927, or under the relevant section of the State Forest Act as the case may be, will be submitted by the State Government prior to Stage-II approval.	An undertaking regarding compliance of the said condition has been submitted by the User Agency. Once Land is transferred and mutated in favor of the Forest Department, notification a RF/PF shall be done.		
iii	The cost of compensatory afforestation and penal CA at the Prevailing wage rates as per compensatory afforestation scheme and the cost of survey, demarcation and erection of permanent pillars if required on the CA land shall be deposited in advance with the forest department by the project authority. The CA will be maintained for 10 years. The	An undertaking regarding compliance of the said condition has been submitted by the User Agency. Demand for the cost of compensatory afforestation and penal CA along with survey, demarcation, and pillaring, shall be raised by the Forest Department once non forest land is transfer and mutated in favour of the Forest Department.		

	scheme may include appropriate provision for anticipated cost increase for works scheduled for subsequent years.	
iv	Net Present Value	
a	The State Government shall charge the Net Present Value (NPV) for the 184.23 ha of forest area to be diverted under this proposal from the User Agency as per the orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated 30/10/2002, 01/08/2003, 28/03/2008, 24/04/2008 and 09/05/2008 in IA No. 566 in WP (C) No 202/1995 and as per the guidelines issued by ministry vide letters no. 5- 1/1998-FC(Pt dated 18/09/2003, as well as letter no 5-2/2006- FC dated 03/10/2006 and 5-3/2007- FC dated 05/02/2009 in this regard.	The said condition has been complied. NPV amounting Rs 66,11,68,680/- deposited by ESL on 05.11.2021 through RTGS (incl five time - Rs 54,58,40,700).
b	User agency shall pay five times of applicable NPV for the area used under encroachment.	The said condition has been complied. NPV amounting Rs 66,11,68,680/- deposited by ESL on 05.11.2021 through RTGS (incl five time - Rs 54,58,40,700).
c	Additional amount of the NPV of the diverted forest land, if any, becoming due after finalization of the same by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on receipt of the report from the Expert Committee, shall be charged by the State Government from the User Agency. The User Agency shall furnish an undertaking to this effect.	An Undertaking regarding compliance of condition has been submitted by the User Agency.
v	The cost of felling of trees shall deposited by the User Agency with the State Forest Department.	The User Agency has submitted that felling of trees is not required.
vi	All the funds received from the user agency under the project shall be transferred/deposited to CAMPA fund only through e-portal (https:// parivesh.nic.in/	An Undertaking compliance of regard the condition has been submit by the User Agency.
vii	The User Agency shall obtain the	It is submitted that matter may be decided by the competent authority.

	Environment Clearance as per the provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, if required	
viii	The boundary of the diverted forest land shall be demarcated on ground at the project cost, by erecting four feet high reinforced cement concrete pillars, each inscribed with its serial number, forward and back bearing and distance from pillar to pillar.	The user agency has submit DGPS Survey Report a DGPS co-ordinates of pillars.
ix	The layout plan of the proposal Shall not be changed without prior approval of the Central	An Undertaking regarding compliance of the said condition has been submit by the User Agency.
x	The forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the proposal.	An Undertaking regarding compliance of the said condition has been submitted by the User Agency.
xi	The forest land proposed to be diverted shall under no circumstances be transferred to any other agency department or person without prior approval of the central Govt.	An Undertaking regarding compliance of the said condition has been submitted by the User Agency.
xii	The State Government, Jharkhand should get a through inquiry conducted into the illegitimacy of the settlement or transfer or claim to the rights (tenancy or otherwise) or interest on the forest lands ("GM Jungle Jhari" and lands, notified protected forest lands) involved in this proposal before procurement of these lands by the then user agency M/s Electrosteel Integrated Ltd before 2010, and the ground for the encroachment over these lands vested in the State to secure the interests of State in the notified forest lands and other forest lands. A report on the findings of the enquiry, the remedial measures taken and the action taken against officials/authorities accountable in this case, despite consistent objections of the Forest Department officials, should be	A thorough inquiry is being conducted by the committee constituted by the Government of Jharkhand vide number Vanbhumi-14/2019-1955/V.P. date 13.07.2022. Photocopy of the order for constitution of the enquiry committee is attached annexure Addl.-I

	furnished with the compliance report of Stage I approval.	
xiii	The issue of dispute, as held by user Agency, about legal nature of the land irrespective of title etc., being "forest land" (both the notified Protected Forest" and the "GM Jungle Jhari" should be settled with finality and the current user agency/ Project Proponent should concede Any claims to the contrary. An undertaking in this regard shall be furnished.	The User Agency submitted an undertaking that ESL shall concede any claim to the contrary on any issue dispute, about legal nature of the land irrespective of title etc., being "forest land" (both the notified "Protected Forest and the "GM Jungle Jhari").
xiv	It is felt that the committee being set up by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), Jharkhand may Not be sufficient as the Matter involves violation in respect of forest land of both categories - the Protected Forests (99.27 ha) and GM Jungle Jhari Forests (84.96 ha). The identification of the erring official, regarding the violation in respect of the GM Jhari Jungle Forest land (84.96 ha) should be done by competent authority of the Land Revenue Department.	An enquiry committee has been Constituted by the government of Jharkhand vide order number Vanbhumi-14/2019-1955/V.P. date 13.07.2022 in which representative of Revenue Department has been made member. Photocopy of the order for constitution of enquiry committee is attached as annexure Addl-I.
xv	User agency Shall submit approved CAT (Catchment Treatment Plan) plan for the area.	CAT Plan submitted by the user agency has been approved by the PCCF (HoFF) Jharkhand vide office order no. 108 dated 06.09.2023.
xvi	Government of Jharkhand shall Ensure that Such incidences of encroachment of forest land are not repeated in future.	It shall be ensured that no such incidences of encroachment of forest land take place.
xvii	User agency shall withdraw all the cases against officials The Forest of Department.	The User Agency has submitted that as per their records no such case has been filed against the forest department officials by them as on date. They have also submitted that in future, if any such case is detected or brought in knowledge, the same shall be withdrawn them.
xviii	User agency Shall ensure the compliances of provisions of FRA 2006 prior to stage approval.	User Agency has submitted that FRA certificate has been issued for the entire 455.24 acres of forest land which has been proposed for the diversion.

xix	The User agency shall submit six Monthly self-compliance reports as on 1 st January and 1 st July every year to this office as well as to the Nodal Officer of the State.	The user agency has submit an undertaking that they shall submit six monthly self-compliance reports as on 1 st January and 1 st July every year.
xx	The State government shall monitor compliance of conditions of Forest Clearance and shall submit a yearly report in this regard on 31 st December of every year.	Monitoring of compliance of conditions of Forest Clearance shall be done and a yearly report in this regard on 31 st December of every year shall be submitted.
xxi	Any other condition that the concerned Regional Office of this Ministry may stipulate, from time to time, in the interest conservation, protection and development of forests & wildlife.	
xxii	The Compliance report shall be uploaded on e-portal. (https://parivesh.nic.in/).	The user agency submitted the undertaking to comply.

(b) However, the Stage-I approval accorded by the Ministry vide letter no. 8-21/2019-FC dated 17.12.2019 was revoked by the Ministry vide its letter of even number dated 05.06.2023 owing to the fact as mentioned below and further requested the State Government of Jharkhand to take immediate necessary actions in the matter;

“Keeping in the view the fact that the area proposed is already under possession of the user agency, the proposal is for ex-post facto approval and the fact that a period of more than 2 years had elapsed since the issuing of Stage-I approval and the User agency did not submit the complete compliance report, the Ministry vide letter dated 01.02.2022 requested the State Government as to why the Stage-I approval dated 17.02.2019 should not be revoked.

The User Agency vide their representation dated 09.09.2022 informed that diligent efforts were made by them to comply with the stipulated conditions. However, the details submitted indicated that the complete compliance of the conditions had not been done so far.

In this context, a meeting under the chairmanship of DGF&SS was held on 20.10.2022 to review the progress made by the user agency towards the compliance of Stage-I approval dated 17.12.2019. After detailed deliberations with the State Government authorities and the User agency, it was inter-alia decided that the user agency will prepare an unambiguous time line for identification and procurement of non-forest land for CA and Penal CA by March 2023 and submit the complete compliance report of all the conditions stipulated in Stage-I approval.

In pursuance to decision taken in the said meeting, the User Agency on 28.10.2022, submitted an interim action plan to complete the compliance of conditions stipulated in Stage-I approval wherein it was mentioned that identification & procurement of CA land will be carried out by March, 2023. It was also informed that for demarcation of plant-forest boundary, pillaring is under process and will be completed by November 2022. Further it was mentioned that FRA certificate has been issued for 79.78 ha and FRA proceedings for remaining area will be initiated in November 2022. Moreover, it was mentioned that User Agency will also submit quarterly status report to the Ministry on the progress of compliance of conditions stipulated in Stage-I approval.

However, the User agency failed to take necessary action for compliance of the conditions as agreed upon. The State Government vide their letter No. Van Bhumi-14/2019-3526/V.P. dated 02.12.2022 submitted incomplete compliance report and also intimated that the response of the user agency for compliance of the conditions is very casual and not satisfactory.

The Ministry vide letter of even no. dated 07.03.2023 sent a reminder to the State Government along with copy to User Agency requesting to submit the compliance of Stage-I approval dated 17.12.2019 as decided in the meeting held on 20.10.2022 latest by 31.03.2023, failing which the Ministry may consider to revoke the Stage-I approval.

However, no credible progress in the matter was reported by the State Government or the User Agency. Therefore, in order to review the status of compliance of the conditions stipulated in the Stage-I approval, a meeting was held on 25.05.2023 under the chairmanship of DGF&SS, which was attended by the PCCF Jharkhand and the representatives of the User Agency.

During the meeting it was observed that:

- i. Progress towards the compliance of the Stage-I approval has remained unsatisfactory as no perceptible efforts have been made by the user agency or the State Government despite clear instructions issued during the meeting held on 20.10.2022.*
- ii. The user agency neither submitted the compliance report till 31.03.2023, nor submitted any request seeking time for submission of compliance report..*
- iii. The representatives of User Agency were asked to intimate the progress made for compliance after 20.10.2022. However, user agency was not able to provide the details of any substantial progress in this regard.*

It was decided in the meeting held on 20.10.2022 that the user agency will prepare an unambiguous time line for identification and procurement of non-forest land by 31.03.2023 and in the event of failure on the part of user agency to meet the time lines as decided above, the Ministry will initiate proceedings to revoke the Stage-I approval.

Whereas the area proposed for diversion is already under possession of the user agency, the same is under utilization without a valid Final approval under Forest(Conservation) Act, 1980, and the User agency or the State Government has not made any concrete effort to comply with the stipulated conditions of Stage-I approval despite repeated requests even after lapse of more than 3 years."

- (c) In view of the above, the user agency M/s ESL has again submitted the instant proposal via PARIVESH 2.0
- v. The Committee was further informed that Ministry, after scrutiny of the proposal, observed shortcomings viz. *"The earlier proposal submitted by the User Agency was accorded Stage-I clearance, which was subsequently revoked by the Ministry due to non-compliance with stipulated conditions. A fresh proposal has now been submitted by the same User Agency and has been recommended by the State Government. The forest area of 184.43 ha continues to remain under occupation of the User Agency in violation of the provisions of the VSESA, 1980, without full imposition of the applicable penal provisions. In view of the above, instead of processing the proposal as a fresh case, the State Government is advised to examine the existing proposal and clarify whether any new facts or developments have emerged since its earlier submission."* Additional information was requested from the State on 14.11.2025.
- vi. The State Government submitted its reply online on 04.12.2025 and informed following:
- (a) *Earlier Stage-1 (In-Principle) approval granted under Section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 in -December 2019 was subsequently revoked in June 2023 due to non-compliance of stipulated conditions. Consequently in 2025 the User agency has applied a fresh forest diversion proposal. Hence the same de novo proposal was processed and forwarded to Government of India. The user agency has been directed to comply/undertake all the penal conditions imposed by MoEFCC.*
- vii. Further, the Committee was informed that the site inspection of the instant proposal was conducted by Regional Office, Ranchi between 17th to 24th December, 2025. The SIR has also been recommended by DDGF (C) of RO, Ranchi. As per SIR, following observed:-
- viii. Salient features of the proposal
- a. This forest diversion proposal, although applied in Industry category, is towards regularization of encroachment on 184.43 ha of forest land over which steel plant exists.
 - b. The site is situated about 15 km from Chas town (adjacent to district head quarter of Bokara) and about 5-6 km inside from Chas-Parbatpur Road. A connecting road, constructed by user agency, provides access to the steel plant.
 - c. The construction of 3 MTPA capacity Steel Plant by M/s Electrosteel Steel Ltd. continued on forest land, despite several litigations during 2008-12, that project proponents claimed to be raiyati.

- d. While the steel plant kept functioning the matter related to forest land encroachment and title suit disputes remained under continuous hearing in various judicial/quasi-judicial authorities including Hon'ble Supreme Court, High Court & Lokayukta as well as state pollution control board & MOEFCC till date. The parent Company M/s Electrosteel Steel Limited, a corporate debtor, became insolvent and M/s Vedanta Ltd, through their Resolution Plan under Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code 2016 acquired the plant for whatever assets held by debtor in 2017 renaming it ESL Steel Ltd.
- e. In view of illicit forest land occupation, MOEFCC revoked the EC vide 20.09.2018 and hence ESL Steel Ltd applied for forest clearance under Encroachment Category on 6/12/2018 through PARIVESH 1 portal (Proposal No. FP/JH/ENCRH/37467/2018).
- f. The proposal was processed by state authorities, forwarded to central Govt. and MOEFCC vide its letter dated 17/12/2019 accorded in-principle approval subject to fulfillment of 22 conditions stipulated therein. Imposition of CA on NFL equivalent to 5-times of the forest land encroached, in addition to normal CA NFL was one among those conditions.
- g. Even after many request letters from ministry, compliance of Stage-I was neither submitted, nor its progress updated, therefore, on 05/06/2023 the ministry revoked the Stage-I approval granted in the proposal.
- h. Later in 2025, a fresh online application on (PARIVESH 2.0) has been submitted by user agency to solicit the ex-post facto approval towards the forest land under encroachment.
- i. The visiting team asked the user agency and the DFO, the reason for application and acceptance respectively of the proposal under Industry Category & not Encroachment category. The user agency responded that the application of forest diversion has been made by them without any prejudice to the existing rights. The visiting team could not comprehend the claim as similar application by user agency during its first forest diversion application in 2018 was rejected by State Forest Department because that was applied under *Industry category* (FP/JH/IND/36339/2018). User agency then resubmitted the application under *Encroachment* category (FP/JH/ENCRH/37467/2018) which was later process for Stage-I.
- j. It was also observed that previous diversion application and present diversion application are almost similar except few changes.

Type of Land	Past proposal	Present Proposal
	FP/JH/ENCRH/37467/2018	FP/JH/IND/528045/2025
Applied PF (Ha)	99.27	97.76
GMJJ	84.96	86.67
Total forest	184.23	184.43
NFL	190.58	190.38
Total Pr. Area	374.81	374.81

Evidently, 1.51ha of PF area included in previous proposal is now included as GMJJ (1.31 ha) & non-forest (0.20 ha) in the present proposal.

- ii. **Legal Status:-**The forest land included in the proposal fall in villages- Bhagabandh, Silajuri, Bandhdih, Aikusa, Hutherpathar & Dhandabar of Chas range, Bokaro Forest Division.

Total forest area included in the proposal is 184.43 ha which comprises of 97.76 ha Notified Protected Forest (under jurisdiction of State Forest Department) and 86.67 ha Gair Majorua Jungle Jhade-GMJJ (Revenue forest under jurisdiction of State Revenue Department). The Proposal also involve 190.38 ha of Non-Forest Land (of various types like GM Aam, GM Khas, Private etc) and hence comprises of total area of 374.81ha.

- iii. **Component wise**

Component wise break up of land involved as informed by user agency is presented below:-

Component	Forest land (Ha.)	Non-forest (Ha.)	Total (Ha.)
Power Plant complex, coke oven, Raw Material Handling Station	71.12	12.91	84.03
Blast furnace	13.10	2.98	16.08
Sinter Dolo Complex	31.19	34.42	65.61
Wire rod Mill, Bar mill complex, steel Meltishop	17.47	19.51	36.98
Utility & Office Complex	20.59	12.96	33.54
Four Lane Road	20.58	6.66	27.24
Unutilized	10.38	100.94	111.32
Total	184.43	190.38	374.81

The steel plant is already established with all its components and currently operating at a capacity of ~1.5 MTPA. Of all the forest land under plant's occupation (184.43 ha) almost all, except around 10 ha, is already broken and used for plant construction. There are unutilized areas (as shown in the table as well as the image above) that are for plant expansion and township development.

- iv. **Whether proposal involves any construction of buildings (including residential) or not. If, yes details thereof:** Yes. The Steel Plant is already functioning that comprises of several buildings already constructed.
- v. **Total cost of the project at present rate:**The total cost of the project (as mentioned in the online application) is Rs. 19,374 Cr.
- vi. **Wildlife:**The area related to the proposal is already under possession of user agency and mostly fenced. Therefore, it may not be very significant for wildlife, but it was informed that the surrounding area in adjacency have good forest patches where wildlife thrives. Jackal and striped hyena are often sighted in the vicinity. Other prominent wildlife

species like barking deer, wild boar, porcupine etc. are also reported in the area. Therefore, to reduce the project impact on surrounding wildlife, a comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan must be implemented by forest department at the cost borne by user agency.

vii. **Vegetation:**

a) **Total number of trees to be felled:**

The steel plant construction is complete and in extant proposal no fresh breaking of forest land is proposed, only ex-post facto approval of already occupied forest land is solicited. Therefore, no tree cutting is involved in the proposal.

b) **Effect of removal of trees on the general ecosystem in the area:**

The proposal does not involve tree cutting.

viii. **Background Note on the proposal:**

The same proposal was previously examined by the ministry (FP/JH/ENCRH/37467/2018). After thorough examination and site inspection by the then ADG of Regional Office, Ranchi, the proposal was accorded in principle approval vide ministry's letter dated 17/12/2019. Due to non-compliance of certain conditions of in-principle approval coupled by apparent stagnation in compliance efforts by user agency during the intervening period of about four years, the ministry revoked the in-principle approval vide its letter dated 6/7/2023. The entire proceeding of the previous proposal is available at PARIVESH 1.0 portal. Post revocation, the user agency has moved this present proposal than trying to get the revocation lifted/revive the previous proposal.

ix. **Compensatory Afforestation (CA):**

User agency informed the visiting team that according to the conditions imposed in the previous approval, they had to provide around 1100 ha Non-Forest Land (NFL) for CA purpose (5 times penal CA + one time usual equivalent). Since arranging the staggering amount of non-forest land at a time in one district was not feasible, they progressively continued with the procurement of CA NFL patches whenever and wherever available. The user agency further informed that it has already provided 371 ha NFL for CA to the state forest department in several districts and in several patches. Most of them are already mutated in the name of forest department. But, since the present proposal is new one, they have provided the details of only matching amount of NFL in the online application i.e. 184.43 ha spread across six districts.

The visiting team enquired about the status of mutation from the concerned DFO and his staff. The DFO informed that receipt of CA NFL (against the previous proposal) in Jamshedpur Forest Division has been apprised to them till date.

(a) **Whether land for compensatory afforestation is suitable from plantation and management point of view or not:**

CA NFL of 184.43 ha (gross 209.87ha), provided by the user agency (in six districts, 33 villages, 75 patches) is already said to be mutated in the name of forest department. Most of the patches are smaller than 5 ha and away from any existing forest. Many of these patches are purchased from the private raiyats/farmers and hence surrounded by agricultural fields from most of the sides.

(b) Whether land for compensatory afforestation is free from encroachment/ other encumbrances:

Most of the non-forest land identified for CA purpose are purchased from private raiyats. Currently, most of the land are in the same use as were earlier. Few raiyats complained about pending payments towards the land purchase by user agency. The details of CA land purchase, individual raiyat-wise, however was not provided by user agency at the time of inspection.

(c) Whether land for compensatory afforestation is important from Religious/Archaeological point of view:

Nothing in particular was informed.

(d) Land identified for raising compensatory afforestation is in how many patches, whether patches are compact or not: Evidently, most of the patches are not compact and are smaller than 5 ha.

x. Analysis of CA NFL submitted along with this proposal:

The Compensatory Afforestation area falls in 75 distinct land patches across six districts, totaling approximately 209.87 hectares, with the majority of the land bank concentrated in Simdega and Palamu. A detailed examination of the data reveals a high degree of fragmentation, which poses significant logistical challenges for management and protection.

Size Slab	Count of Patches	Total Area (Ha)
Up to 1 Ha	29	12.67
1 to 2 Ha	11	14.46
2 to 3 Ha	10	25.95
3 to 4 Ha	6	21.20
4 - 5 Ha	6	27.27
5-10 Ha	9	58.16
More than 10 Ha	4	50.16
Total	75	~209.87

Out of the 75 identified sites, 29 patches are one hectare or smaller in size will require high investments in fencing and monitoring relative to the area secured.

From ecological viability angle the analysis of forest connectivity shows that approximately 49.1% of the total land area is contiguous or partially contiguous to existing forest lands, which is favourable for extending the current ecosystem. The remaining CA-NFL lands being isolated from forest lands, vulnerable to encroachment and biotic pressure necessitating fencing and intensive management

Hence state government need to explore the feasibility of management aspects of these patches and ensure its protection.

Total financial outlay: (₹): 1,63,09,872.00 for (from CA scheme details of 2017) 184.43 ha NFL. The forest department officials informed that CA scheme shall be revised as and when the remainder of (P)CA NFL is made available to it by user agency.

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

The proposal is for regularization of encroachment done in the forest land. Therefore, the proposal involves violation of Indian Forest Act. There are at least 53 cases registered by Bokaro forest division against the violation done in relation with the proposal. The violation has already been examined and established by the ministry during the processing of same proposal applied previously.

- xii. **Whether proposal involves rehabilitation of displaced persons. If yes, whether rehabilitation plan has been prepared by the State Government or not:**

Entire project land is already under occupation of user agency and therefore, no displacement or resettlement of persons is involved.

- xiii. **Reclamation Plan**

Not required.

- xiv. **Details on catchment and command area under the project:**

The project area is sharing its south-eastern boundary for about 3.5-4 km with Izri river which is a perennial tributary of River Damodar, therefore, area under present proposal forms part of the catchment of Izri. But the area is already under vivid construction and consequently the surface hydrology is completely modified.

No apparent green belt could be seen differentiating the industrial unit with this natural water body; therefore, river is not proof of the industrial spillovers. The user agency must develop a green belt of considerable width (50m at least) along the river-plant interface within the plant boundary.

- xv. **Cost benefit ratio:**

The benefit-cost ratio for the project has been calculated a staggering 1:140.

The total cost of forest diversion towards the project is calculated as per the revised NPV rates of 2022 and the same is estimated as Rs 5.826 Lakh. Whereas the benefits from the project are estimated to Rs 8,15,157 Lakh. Upon examination of the Cost-Benefit analysis, the inspecting team found that Compensatory Afforestation related cost component has been insufficiently accounted. The C-B analysis has only considered anticipated plantation expenditure over 184.43 ha NFL.

Since the user agency is procuring the CA NFL from private raiyats mostly, the expenditure on the purchase should also have been accounted.

Also, since the proposal involves violation and seeks ex-post facto approval over already encroached & broken forest land, the penal CA as decided by the ministry in past (~1100 ha CA NFL) should also have been accounted within the cost component of the analysis. Further, the C-B calculation has not made any consideration of the project cost incurred. Similarly, benefit component of the calculation is found infested with double accounting.

The user agency was requested to do C-B analysis more precisely under guidance of forest officials so that a realistic analysis towards the project could be arrived.

- xvi. **Dy. Director General of Forests (Central) shall give detailed comments on whether there are any alternative routes/alignment for locating the project on the non-forest land:**
- a. The User Agency shall not be permitted to apply afresh for ex-post facto diversion.
 - b. The User Agency shall comply with all conditions stipulated in the Ministry's Stage-I approval dated 17-12-2019. Regarding the mandate for five times Compensatory Afforestation (CA) on Non-Forest Land (NFL) stipulated in stage I approval dated 17-12-2019, the identification and procurement of NFL shall proceed only after obtaining an acceptance certificate from the concerned Divisional Forest Officer (DFO). This process must strictly adhere to Rule 13 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023, and Para 2.2 of the MoEF&CC Consolidated Guidelines.
 - c. The State Government shall review the NFL provided for CA to ensure adequate management and protection. The User Agency shall bear the cost of necessary fencing to prevent encroachment and shall raise plantations in accordance with the State's CA scheme.
 - d. A comprehensive Wildlife Management Plan and Catchment Area Treatment Plan shall be prepared and implemented by the Forest Department at the cost of the User Agency. These plans must aim to minimize the project's impact on the surrounding wildlife and hydrology.
 - e. The User Agency shall rectify errors in the Cost-Benefit Analysis and submit a recalculated Cost-Benefit Ratio for the project.
 - f. The User Agency shall develop a green belt with a minimum width of 50m along the interface of the Izri River and the plant boundary.
 - g. Intact forest areas within the plant premises that are not included in the proposed diversion shall be returned to the Forest Department.
 - h. The User Agency shall be liable for penal action for commencing rail track construction on non-forest land without securing the necessary forest diversion approval, as the alignment includes forest land. This

pertains to the related proposal submitted in May 2025, which has been delisted since June 2025.

4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Ranchi and officials from Government of Jharkhand, the Committee **deferred** the instant proposal for diversion of 184.43 ha Forest land in favour of M/s ESL Steel Limited (Formerly known as Electrosteel Steels Limited) for setting up of an Integrated Steel Plant under Bokaro District of Jharkhand State with the following directions: -
- (i) The State Government has proposed 209.87 ha towards Compensatory Afforestation. There are 75 land parcels in total; of which 62 patches are less than 5 ha. Out of these, 29 patches are less than 1 ha; while 11 patches are between 1-2 ha. The State Government should provide a detailed justification for proposing such small and scattered land parcels. The Regional Office to examine and ascertain whether the proposed CA land parcels are encumbrance free and whether these lands are feasible to be managed and protected by the State Forest Department.
 - (ii) The Regional Office shall examine and report on various actions by the State Government on the violation cases filed in the matter.

Agenda No. 18

Proposal No. FP/MP/HYD/IRRIG/502063/2024

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 69.02 ha of forest land for Chentikheda Irrigation Project on Kunwari River in Sheopur and Morena district in Madhya Pradesh in favour of Water Resource Department, Madhya Pradesh (Online Proposal No. FP/MP/HYD/IRRIG/502063/2024)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. 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-3/53/640958/0040/6 dated 06.08.2025 forwarded a fresh diversion 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 69.02 ha of forest land for Chentikheda Irrigation Project in Sheopur and Morena district in

Madhya Pradesh in favour of Water Resource Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh.

- ii. The proposed 69.02 Ha of forest land is having the canopy density of 0.4 of Eco Class III. The number of trees proposed to be affected in the instant proposal is 2048.
- iii. As per the information submitted by the State Govt., the proposed land for diversion is not vulnerable to erosion.
- iv. The Wildlife present in and around the land proposed for diversion area Neel Gai, Wild boar, Hayne, wild pig, bear etc.
- v. The proposal does not forms part of National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve, Elephant Corridor etc. However, the protected area is located at a distance of 1.42 KM from Kuno National Park.
- vi. The State Government submitted that no rare/ endangered/ unique species of flora and fauna found in the area.
- vii. Further, no protected archaeological/ heritage site/ defence establishment or any other important monument is located in the area.
- viii. The Component wise break-up of the proposed forest land is as under:

Component	Forest land proposed for diversion (Ha.)	Non forest land (Ha)
Submergence	66.02	1200
Pumphouse	2	0
Pipeline	1	28
Total	69.02	1228

- ix. The proposed dam shall be constructed on River kunwari, a tributary of River Sindh in Yamuna basin, located near Village-Chentikheda in Tehsil- Vijaypur of District Sheopur in Madhya Pradesh.
- x. The dam on completion will provide irrigation facilities to 55 villages of sheopur and Morena districts, of MP, out of which 39 villages are located in Vijaypur tehsil of Sheopur district and 16 villages in Sabalgarh tehsil of Morena district, all these villages are presently unirrigated. The State Govt. submitted that the unique feature of the project is that entire distribution of water for irrigation is through pressurized pipes which shall be laid underground, and irrigation in fields is by sprinkler system only, no flooding irrigation is proposed.
- xi. The cultivable command area of the project is 15300 ha. The dam is having a catchment area of 481.25 sq km. The mean annual rainfall in the catchment is 668.41 mm. The annual yield of water works to be 67.88 MCM, the gross and live storage capacities of the dam are 61.05 MCM and 57.44 MCM respectively.
- xii. The State Government submitted that the CA has been proposed over an area of 69 Ha of non forest land which has been allocated vide collector order dated 25.04.2012. In this regard, consent has been accorded by the Divisional Forest Officer, Kuno Wildlife Division,

Sheopur, for the inclusion of a total of 69.00 hectares of non-forest land of Village Basera and Village Akauda under the Cheetah Project. Further, the District Collector also allocated the Non forest land of 30.771Ha vide order dated 01.05.2025. However, out of 30.771 Ha, only 29.261 Ha is found suitable for plantation and free from encroachment. Further, the DFL has been proposed over an area of 80 Ha (35.0 Ha and 45.0 Ha). The final details of the CA land are as under:

Sl. No.	Legal Status of the CA land	Area (Ha.)
1.	NFL	69.0
2.	NFL	29.271
	Total	98.271
3.	DFL	45.0
4.	DFL	35.0
	Total	80.0
	Grand Total	178.271

- xiii. Total 1568 families (ST-966, SC-72, OBC-423, General-107) will be affected and displaced by the project. The rehabilitation and resettlement of outsees is proposed to be done in accordance with Land acquisition and resettlement act 2013 of Govt. of India.
- xiv. As per the DSS Analysis, the proposed forest area falls under not-in High Conservation Value (HCV) Zone as per Decision Rule 2. However, as per Decision Rule 1, proposed area falls within 250m buffer of Kunwari Nadi. Further, the proposed area is located at an approx. aerial distance of 11.57 km from Kuno Palpur WLS. However, the State Govt. submitted that the land proposed for diversion is located at a distance of 1.4 km from the protected area.
- xv. As per the letter dated 11.09.2024 issued by the Water Resources Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh, the Chief Engineer is the competent authority for approving the dam drawings. Furthermore, the State Government has clarified that there is no requirement for separate approval from the NDSA.
- xvi. Satellite imagery indicates the presence of cultivated land, a *kachha* road, and permanent structures within the area proposed for diversion. In this regard, the State Government submitted that, as per the Working Plan of the Kuno Wildlife Division, the area is recorded as encroached land. It was further submitted that the User Agency, under the present proposal, has not violated the provisions of the Adhiniyam, 1980.
- xvii. The State Government submitted that the instant proposal is located at an aerial distance of 1.4 km of the Kuno National Park. However, the notification of Kuno National Park has not yet been issued. Accordingly, the instant proposal requires Wildlife Clearance, and the User Agency has applied for the same under Proposal No. WL/MP/IRRIG/541262/2025.
- xviii. The Regional Office, Bhopal, in its Site Inspection Report, raised concerns regarding access to the Old Temple, which is situated

approximately 40–50 meters away at a slightly higher elevation to the west of the central portion of the submergence area. It also emphasized that access to the existing Forest Check Post (Chauki), located near the pump house on the northern side, must be adequately addressed and secured. However, it was further stated that a pathway across the submergence area shall be constructed by the User Agency.

- xix. A copy of the CAT Plan has been found uploaded on the portal. However, the copy of the approval letter for the CAT Plan, as required under Chapter 9 of the Consolidated Guidelines and Clarifications issued under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, has not been found uploaded on the portal.
 - xx. The Committee observed that the land proposed for diversion is located 1.4 km from the boundary of Kuno National Park. As the final notification of the National Park is yet to be issued, the area falls within the default Eco-Sensitive Zone of Kuno National Park. Accordingly, the proposal requires a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from Project Cheetah of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).
 - xxi. The Committee observed that the proposed area falls under the default ESZ of the Kuno National Park and hence the proposal requires the Wildlife clearance as per Ministry's O.M. dated 17.05.2022.
 - xxii. The Committee further observed that the CAT Plan has been uploaded on the portal. However, the approval letter for the CAT Plan, as required under Chapter 9 of the Consolidated Guidelines and Clarifications issued under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, has not been uploaded.
 - xxiii. The Committee also observed that the State Government has submitted that Compensatory Afforestation (CA) has been proposed over 69.00 ha of non-forest land allocated vide Collector's order dated 25.04.2012, for which consent has been accorded by the Divisional Forest Officer, Kuno Wildlife Division, Sheopur, for inclusion of non-forest land of Village Basera and Village Akauda under the Cheetah Project.
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 (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 69.02 ha of forest land for Chentikheda Irrigation Project on Kunwari River in Sheopur and Morena district in Madhya Pradesh in favour of Water Resource Department, Madhya Pradesh for want of following information:
- i. The land proposed for diversion is located 1.4 km from the boundary of Kuno National Park. As the final notification of the National Park is yet to be issued, the area falls within the default Eco-Sensitive Zone of Kuno National Park. Accordingly, the proposal requires a No Objection

Certificate (NOC) from Project Cheetah of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). The State Government shall submit the NOC of the Project Cheetah from the NTCA.

- ii. The proposed area falls within the default Eco-Sensitive Zone of Kuno National Park and, therefore, requires wildlife clearance in accordance with the Ministry's O.M. dated 17.05.2022. Accordingly, the State Government shall submit the updated status of the wildlife clearance.
- iii. The CAT Plan submitted by the User Agency requires approval of the competent authority as per Chapter 9 of the Consolidated Guidelines and Clarifications issued under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. Accordingly, the State Government shall submit the same.
- iv. The State Government has stated that Compensatory Afforestation (CA) is proposed over 69.00 ha of non-forest land allocated vide Collector's order dated 25.04.2012, with consent of the Divisional Forest Officer, Kuno Wildlife Division, Sheopur, for inclusion of land from Village Basera and Village Akauda under Project Cheetah. The State Government shall submit the relevant order/notification confirming inclusion of the said land under Project Cheetah for the instant proposal.

Agenda No. 19

Proposal No. FP/MP/MIN/QRY/536130/2025

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Govt. under Section

2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 975.497 ha of forest land (with surface use of 24 Ha) in Singrauli forest division for Mahan Underground Coal mine in favour of M/s JK Cement Limited, Gurgaon (Haryana) in the State of Madhya Pradesh-regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. 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 Government of Madhya Pradesh has submitted the proposal on PARIVESH 2.0 vide letter No. F-1/907/FP/MP/MIN/QRY/536130/2025/ dated 24.10.2025 on the above-mentioned subject seeking prior approval of Central Government under section-2 (1) (ii) of the Van

(Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 and Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023.

- ii. The proposed area for diversion of 975.497 Ha (with 24 Ha of surface use) of reserved forest is of Eco Class III with canopy density of 0.5. The number of trees proposed to be felled in the instant proposal are 9787.
- iii. The State Government submitted that the proposed area for diversion is not vulnerable to soil erosion.
- iv. The State Government submitted that there is no presence of endangered Species of wildlife found in and around the proposed area of diversion.
- v. The proposal does not forms part of a national park, wildlife sanctuary, biosphere reserve, tiger reserve, elephant corridor etc.
- vi. The proposed area for diversion is not located within 10 KM of any national park, wildlife sanctuary, biosphere reserve, tiger reserve buffer zone, elephant corridor, wildlife migration corridor etc. However, the project is located at approximately 10.5 KM from the Sanjay Tiger Reserve.
- vii. The State Government submitted that no rare/ endangered/ unique species of flora and fauna found in the area.
- viii. The State Government further submitted that no protected archaeological/ heritage site/ defence establishment or any other important monument is located in the area.
- ix. The component wise breakup of the forest as well as non forest land is as under:

Component	Forest Land Proposed for Diversion (ha)	Non-forest Land (ha)
Road & Infrastructure	24	0
Green belt	14.379	0.429
Undisturbed area or Mining right for UG	937.118	5.824
Total Land	975.497	6.2530

- x. The compensatory afforestation has been proposed over 24 Ha of non-forest land in 2 patches at the village Charbaheriya of the Narshingpur district.
- xi. As per the site inspection report of the DFO Narsinghpur, the CA sites are found suitable for plantation. Further, RO Bhopal in its SIR submitted that there are two patches of private (revenue) land area 19.30 ha and 4.70 ha contiguous to forest land and separated with a piece of another private land. This is found that the actual area demarcated and hand over to the State Forest Department is more than required, so this is suitable to accommodate the desired

numbers of plantations.

- xii. The State Government submitted that the coal block was allocated to the User Agency vide order dated 18.12.2024. The Ministry of Coal has mandated development of the Mahan Coal Block through underground mining only, thereby limiting forest disturbance to 24 ha for mining- related infrastructure. The User Agency has proposed gap plantation over 38.59 ha within the lease area where tree density is low, development of a 7.5 m-wide safety zone along the periphery of the coal block, and distribution of 50,000 fruit-bearing saplings in the surrounding area, in line with the Terms of Reference (ToR) recommendations.
- xiii. Initially, the block was allocated to M/s Mahan Coal Limited, a joint venture of Hindalco and Essar, for open-cast mining. The allocation was subsequently cancelled and the block was re-auctioned for underground mining to minimize impacts on the forest area. Accordingly, this Ministry also vide letter dated 25.02.2016, withdrew the Stage-II Forest Clearance granted on 12.02.2014 for diversion of 967.65 ha of forest land for coal mining in the Singrauli Coalfield in favour of M/s Mahan Coal Limited, located in the East Sidhi Forest Division, Sidhi District, Madhya Pradesh.
- xiv. The State Government submitted that approval for the road passing through the proposed diversion area was accorded vide letter dated 07.03.2025 under Proposal No. FP/MP/ROAD/454641/2023. It was further stated that no major nallah exists in the area, only seasonal nallahs, and that underground mining operations will not affect the road or the nallahs. Necessary safeguards, in accordance with DGMS guidelines, have been incorporated in the approved Mining Plan, and no road diversion is proposed. However, a copy of the No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the concerned authorities has not been submitted.
- xv. The proposed mine have the subsidence of 14.5 mm/m. Further, the State Govt. submitted that as per the para 7.8 (1) (a) of the Consolidated Guidelines issued by the Ministry under the Van (Sanrakshan evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, maximum tensile strain of 20 mm per meter and thereby the surface cracks of width of about 200-300 mm is permissible as per Ministry's guidelines.
- xvi. The State has informed that the KML file of the mine lease and the forest land under diversion has been prepared on the Google earth and as per the Google earth calculation the area of the forest land proposed for diversion is found 975 ha and the KML file area of the Mine lease is found 982 ha. Also, the State Govt. submitted the land use map based on the KML file for the proposed 24 ha. for surface rights.
- xvii. The State Government also submitted that the proposed land use plan is as per the approved Mining Plan. Further, the breakup of the 24 Ha of Infrastructure use is as under:

Sl. No.	Purpose	Area in Ha
1.	Safety Zone 24 Hect	2.3
2.	Mine Road Area	4.81
3.	Magazine Area	0.36
4.	Magazine Safety Zone Area	0.17
5.	Mine Infra & Other Area	3.14
6.	Sub Station Area	0.5
7.	Mine office Area	0.55
8.	Coal stock & Transport Area	2.1
9.	Shaft (Box cut) Area 1&2	1.39
10.	Incline (Box cut) Area	1.0
11.	MDO Office Area	1.45
12.	Bachelor Accommodation Area	1.25
13.	ETP &STP Area	0.1
14.	Nursery Area	1.57
15.	Store Misc Area	1.0
16.	Parking Area	0.22
17.	Misc Area	2.11
	Total	24.0

- xviii. With respect to the requirement of surface rights over the 24 ha of forest land, the State Government submitted that the Mahan Coal Block is predominantly surrounded by forest land, with approximately 99.4% of the area classified as forest. The remaining 0.6% of the block (6.253 ha) comprises non-forest land located along the western boundary. However, this limited non-forest area is inadequate to accommodate the infrastructure required for the proposed mining operations as per the Mining Plan approved by the Ministry of Coal, and there is no scope for reduction in the infrastructure area. Furthermore, the non-forest land lacks approach road connectivity, and development of such access would itself require separate forest clearance.
- xix. The State Government submitted that no additional forest land is required for mineral evacuation. Coal will be transported from the CHP to the main road via an internal road within the proposed 24 ha of forest.
- xx. Power supply will be met through a 33 kV transmission line from the nearest 132 kV Nagwa Substation. The transmission line will involve limited use of forest land with minimal tree felling. Accordingly, the User Agency has been advised to submit a separate Forest Clearance (FC) application. Water requirements will be met through a borehole within the same 24 ha area, and no additional forest land is proposed for this purpose.
- xxi. The Regional Office Bhopal recommended the proposal with the following comments:
- a. As there are few seasonal streams in the area, special precautions are to be taken during operations beneath these

streams. Continuous advance subsidence monitoring should be conducted, and prompt safety measures must be implemented in coordination with the Forest Department in the event of any subsidence within the forest area.

- xxii. The Committee observed that the proposed underground mine is likely to cause subsidence of 14.5 mm/m. Accordingly, appropriate mitigation measures shall be implemented by the State Government, at the cost of the User Agency, to reduce tensile strain on the surface, and any additional amount towards NPV/CA, as required under the Ministry's guidelines, shall be paid.
 - xxiii. The Committee further observed that in the lease area approximately 99.4% of the area classified as forest and the remaining 0.6% of the block (6.253 ha) comprises non-forest land located along the western boundary. This limited non-forest area is inadequate to accommodate the infrastructure required for the proposed mining operations as per the Mining Plan approved by the Ministry of Coal, and there is no scope for reduction in the infrastructure area.
 - xxiv. The Committee observed the presence of seasonal streams in the area. Accordingly, special precautions shall be taken during mining operations beneath these streams, with continuous advance subsidence monitoring. In the event of any subsidence within the forest area, prompt safety measures shall be implemented by the User Agency in coordination with the State Forest Department.
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 the '*in-principle*' approval for the diversion of 975.497 ha of forest land (with surface use of 24 Ha) in Singrauli forest division for for Mahan Underground Coal mine in favour of M/s JK Cement Limited, Gurgaon (Haryana) in the State of Madhya Pradesh with general, standard and the following specific conditions:
- i. The proposed underground mine is likely to cause subsidence of 14.5 mm/m. Accordingly, appropriate mitigation measures shall be implemented by the State Government, at the cost of the User Agency, to reduce tensile strain on the surface, and any additional amount towards NPV/CA, as required under the Ministry's guidelines, shall be paid.
 - ii. In the event of any subsidence within the forest area, prompt safety measures shall be implemented by the User Agency in coordination with the State Forest Department.
 - iii. Special precautions shall be taken by the User Agency during the mining operations beneath the seasonal streams, with continuous advance subsidence monitoring.

Agenda No. 20

Online No. FP/MP/MIN/QRY/464461/2024

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 149.6878 Ha reserved and revenue forest land for under ground coal mining and surface rights of Pathora West Coal Block (Sohagpur Coalfield) in favour of Shri Bajrang Power and Ispat Limited under Ghunghuti Forest Range, Umaria forest division, Madhya Pradesh (Online No. FP/MP/MIN/QRY/464461/2024)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held 22.01.2026. 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 to the AC by the Member Secretary. 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-1/877/2025/FP/MP/MIN/QRY/464461/2024/1580 dated 10.06.2025 forwarded a 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 149.6878 ha (130.187 ha for underground mining and 19.50 ha for surface rights) forest land of Pathora West Coal Block (Sohagpur Coalfield) underground mechanized Coal Mine located in the Villages of Ghunghuti, Githauri, and PatnarKalan, Tehsil Pali, District Umaria in Madhya Pradesh by M/s Shri Bajrang Power and Ispat Limited.
 - ii. The State Government submitted that the proposed Pathora West Coal Block is an underground, mechanized coal mine located in the villages of Ghunghuti, Githauri, and Patnar Kalan in Pali Tehsil, Umaria District, Madhya Pradesh. The total area is 640.520 ha, with the project covering 554.0843 ha. The mine is planned to produce 0.80 million tonnes of coal per year, with a peak capacity of 1.2 million tonnes per year. The Pathora West Coal Block features an undulating topography, with elevations ranging from 480 to 548 meters above mean sea level. The majority of the block is occupied by cultivable land and settlements, while the remaining area comprises forest land.
 - iii. The density of vegetation is 0.6 for 140.898 Ha reserved forest and 0.4 for 8.789 Ha revenue forest of Eco Class III. 1753 number of trees are proposed to be felled of the Kasam, Khamher, Khair, Gurja, Char, Churhil, Jamun, Tendu, Dudhiya, Dhubna, Neem, Neelgiri, Pakari, Palash, Amaltash, Arjun, Aam, Kathal Bargad, Baheda, Bel, Mahua, Sagaun, Saal, Seeta Phal etc.
 - iv. The State Government reported that the area has undulations and slight possibility of erosion may be present.

- v. The State Government submitted that there is presence of wild animal like tiger, leopard, sloth bear, cheetal etc in and around the land proposed for diversion.
- vi. The State Government submitted that the proposed mining lease Area adjoins area of Bandhavgarh-Achankarmar Wildlife Corridor.
- vii. The State Government has uploaded the copy of the Wildlife Conservation Plan dully approved by PCCF (Wildlife) Bhopal on the portal.
- viii. The State Govt. reported that the Project does not warrant displacement of any human habitation and therefore resettlement and rehabilitation plan is not required for this project.
- ix. The land use plan of the proposal is as under:

Sl. No	Component	Forest Land Proposed for Diversion (ha)	Non-forest Land (ha)
1	Coal Transport Road	1.21	1.055
2	Water Settling Tank	1.1	0
3	Lamp Room and Incline Office	1.2	0
4	Electric Sub Station	1.3	0
5	Store and Workstation	1.1	0
6	Vocational Training Centre	0.5	0
7	Weigh Bridge	0.5	0
8	Rescue Station	0.5	0
9	Coal Handling Plant	1.5	0
10	2 no of incline and 1 no of shaft	1.9	0
11	Coal Dump Area	2.6491	0
12	Green Belt	6.0409	0
13	Mineral Exploration Area	130.1878	403.3415
	Total	149.6878	404.3965

- x. The CA has been proposed over 20.429 Ha of Non forest land in khasra No. 552,553/1, 554/1, 555/1, 556/1/1, 557/1, 558/1, 559/1, 561, 562/1, 563/1, 572/1/1, 573/1, 546/1, 566/1/1/1 of Rewa District. The CA suitability certificate has been given by the concerned DFO. Regional Office also in its SIR recommended the proposal and CA land was also found suitable for CA purpose.
- xi. The revenue documents confirming that the land proposed for CA is non-forest land is found uploaded on the portal. The site suitability certificate provided by the DFO, Rewa for the proposed CA land of 20 Ha is found uploaded on the portal. Further, CA plan has also been found uploaded on the portal with financial outlay of ₹2,87,19,900/-
- xii. The State Government submitted that the as per the report, the maximum subsidence effect after Stage-X mining will be 0.029 mm/m. The subsidence due to depillaring of IB COMB seam is 4.27 mm/m.

Also, as per empirical method, the subsidence estimation is 1.96 mm/m to 4.89 mm/m.

- xiii. The Regional Office has recommended the Proposal subject to the following conditions:
- a) The underground coal mining will be carried out beneath the proposed diversion area, surface subsidence and cracking may occur after depillaring operations. The User Agency shall immediately seal such cracks or take appropriate measures as outlined in the approved mining plan to prevent atmospheric oxygen from coming into contact with the coal seams.
 - b) As discussed with the User Agency, Under the surface right activities, an area preparation of 25 ha for plantation will be affected during the year 2024-25 as part of the external land-use plan. The expenditure incurred on this plantation work, which is funded by the government, will be reimbursed by the User Agency. A written undertaking from the User Agency to this effect is submitted.
 - c) The proposal involves the felling of a total of 1,753 plants, comprising 1,218 trees and 535 bamboo clumps, which may lead to significant forest cover loss within the lease boundary. To mitigate this impact, it is suggested that the surface infrastructure components be realigned or shifted to adjoining revenue land, wherever technically feasible, so as to avoid forest land diversion and conserve existing tree cover.
 - d) A well-planned stormwater management and drainage system will be developed to ensure proper runoff flow. To prevent erosion of waste materials, OB dump management will include mechanical measures such as slope stabilization, parapet wall construction, and terracing. Additionally, a green belt will be developed to capture fugitive emissions, reduce noise levels, and enhance the overall safety of the area.
 - e) The Site-Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan will recommend measures to mitigate the negative impacts of mining activities on wildlife. It will also address the human-wildlife interface, focusing on regulating habitat use, reducing animal-related damages, addressing livelihood concerns, and involving local communities as partners in conservation management. These aspects are reflected in the plan's proposed measures.
 - f) As per MoEF&CC guidelines, Compensatory Afforestation (CA) is not required for areas where only underground mining is proposed and no surface disturbance occurs. CA is applicable only to those parts of the forest land where surface activities for non-forestry purposes are planned.
 - g) To facilitate effective rejuvenation of the site, appropriate soil and moisture conservation measures such as earthen dams, loose boulder check dams, percolation tanks, and water harvesting structures are recommended at suitable locations.

Additionally, it is proposed to establish one watcher's hut-cum-watchtower at a strategic location to ensure efficient monitoring and protection of the Compensatory Afforestation (CA) area.

- xiv. The State Government has submitted that the component wise breakup submitted in Part - I of the application form i.e. the activities like Store and workshop, Vocational Training Centre, Rescue Station, Coal Dump area etc are interlinked with the mine openings/ entrances for the safety of the mine. Hence these are kept closed to the mine entries/ infrastructures area.
 - xv. The State Govt. has submitted the maps showing the forest and non-forest land involved in the project, along with the component-wise requirement of forest land.
 - xvi. The Committee observed that all mine infrastructure has been proposed on forest land. In this regard, the State Government submitted that the Mining Plan Approval Committee extensively examined and finalized the infrastructure area. During preparation of the mining plan, all possible alternatives, including locations on non-forest land, were examined. An independent technical study was also conducted by NIT Raipur, which concluded that no non-forest land was technically viable due to low-lying terrain, location below the High Flood Level of Bijoura Nala and its streams, and associated risks such as flooding, water ingress into the mine, inability to maintain requisite entry gradients, and potential infrastructure damage. Accordingly, use of forest land (Alternative-I) for mine infrastructure was found to be the only safe and technically feasible option for underground mining, ensuring operational safety and feasibility.
 - xvii. The Committee observed that CA land was re-inspected by the APCCF, Bhopal, and was found suitable for plantation and management. It has further been stated by the State Govt. that fertilized soil shall be spread over the CA land, and adequate budgetary provision for this purpose has been made in the Compensatory Afforestation Scheme approved by the CCF, Rewa.
 - xviii. The Committee observed the presence of built-up areas, roads, nalas, and plantation works within the forest land proposed for diversion. In this regard, the State Government clarified that no agricultural activities are being carried out on forest land, the roads are only earthen footpaths, the nalas are natural drainage courses, and the plantation has been undertaken by the Forest Department. As the mining activity is proposed underground, it has been stated that there will be no impact on these features.
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 the Stage-1/In-principle approval for the diversion of 149.6878 Ha reserved and revenue forest land for under ground coal mining and surface rights of Pathora West Coal Block

(Sohagpur Coalfield) in favour of Shri Bajrang Power and Ispat Limited under Ghunghuti Forest Range, Umaria forest division, Madhya Pradesh with general, standard and the following specific conditions:

- i. As underground coal mining will be carried out beneath the proposed diversion area, surface subsidence and cracking may occur following depillaring operations. The User Agency shall immediately seal any such cracks or implement appropriate measures, as stipulated in the approved mining plan, to prevent atmospheric oxygen from coming into contact with the coal seams.
- ii. A site Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan shall be implemented by the State Forest Department at the cost of the User Agency.
- iii. To facilitate effective rejuvenation of the site, appropriate soil and moisture conservation measures such as earthen dams, loose boulder check dams, percolation tanks, and water harvesting structures are recommended at suitable locations within the diverted area and shall be implemented at the cost of the User Agency. A plan in this regard, shall be submitted.

Agenda No. 22

Proposal No. FP/MH/RAIL/507157/2024

Subject: Proposal for seeking approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 4.985 ha. Forest land of Forest Clearance for proposed Boisar Goods Siding Yard near Boisar Station under MUTP-III project of MRVCL in the State of Maharashtra (FP/MH/RAIL/507157/2024)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The Dy. DGF (Central), 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 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 Maharashtra vide their letter No FLD-12A25/C.R. 95/F-10 dated 10.10.2025 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 4.9850 ha. Forest land for construction of proposed Boisar Goods Siding Yard near Boisar Station under MUTP-III project of MRVCL in the State of Maharashtra.
 - ii. The State Government submitted that the land proposed for diversion has vegetation density of 0.1 with Eco Class III.

- iii. The State Govt. reported that the Project does not warrant displacement of any human habitation and therefore resettlement and rehabilitation plan is not required for this project.
- iv. The State Government submitted that the area is not prone to sever erosion.
- v. The State Government submitted that the Project authority submitted an undertaking that the compliance regarding certificate under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 is in process.
- vi. The proposed land for diversion does not falls within the 10 KM distance from the wildlife sanctuary, national park, tiger reserve and tiger corridor.
- vii. The proposal does not falls under Not-Inviolate or not in high conservation zone value as per DSS Rule 1 & 2.
- viii. The land use plan of the land proposed for diversion is as follows:

Sl. No.	Component	Forest Land (Ha)	Non Forest Land (Ha)
1. 1.	Good siding yard	4.1855	7.7721
2. 2.	Construction of Approach Road	0.7995	0
Total		4.985	7.7721

- ix. The State Government has proposed the CA land over approximately 12.918 ha of degraded forest land in compartment no. 84 of village Boisar of Palghar Taluka in a single patch.
- x. The State Govt. further vide letter dated 21.11.2025 submitted that proposed CA land comprises certain portions of rocky terrain and other physical hindrances (such as boulders, non-plantable patches, etc.), which are unsuitable for plantation activities. To ensure that a net plantable area of 10 ha is available for effective compensatory afforestation, a slightly larger area (approximately 12.918 ha) was delineated and included in the KML file.
- xi. The DFO, Dahanu certified that the forest land identified for Compensatory Afforestation in lieu of forest land required for diversion of 4.9850 ha. of Forest land for Forest clearance for proposed Boisar Goods Siding Yard near Boisar Station Under MUTP-III Project of MRVCL in the State of Maharashtra & it is contiguous in itself, suitable for afforestation and management purpose also and it is free from encroachment and encumbrances.
- xii. The Regional Office in its SIR submitted that the State Government has identified 10 ha of degraded forest land in Reserve Forest Compartment No. 84, Palghar Taluka, suitable for Compensatory Afforestation. The area has a density of less than 0.4. As per Ministry guidelines, the State Government shall ensure plantation of a minimum of 1,000 trees per ha; where planting the required number is not possible, the balance shall be raised in nearby degraded forest areas as per the working plan prescription at the project cost.

- xiii. The State Government submitted that the development works were commenced in April 2024 in Khasra no 11/1 of 1.12 ha for which construction permission was requested by MRVC from NPCIL vide letter no. MRVC/W/150/LA/VR-DRD dated 03.10.2023 and 22.09.2023.
- xiv. However, as per the SIR of the Regional Office Nagpur, it was observed that the User Agency had carried out works over 4.0412 ha in total, comprising 2.9212 ha Private Forest and 1.12 ha Protected Forest. Also, as per DSS Analysis, the State Govt. has cleared the majority of the portion of the land proposed for diversion and the State Govt. has not incorporated or taken into account the work in violation of VSSA 1980 which has been carried out by the user agency in khasra no 30 (30/1) (KML area Area - 1.2643 Ha.), Protected Forest land.
- xv. The State Govt. submitted that the office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Dahanu lodged the FIR against contractor agency on 11.04.2024. The case is presently active in the Palghar District Court.
- xvi. The Regional Office Nagpur recommended the proposal subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The State Government shall levy penal Net Present Value (NPV) and initiate appropriate action against the concerned authorities for violation of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Act and allied rules, as determined by the competent authority.
 - b. The Compensatory Afforestation (CA) scheme shall be implemented in conformity with the provisions of the VSS Rules, 2023, and the guidelines issued thereunder.
- xvii. The State Government submitted that as per Survey of India toposheet uploaded with the application, the entire project area falls within Reserved Forest (RF) boundaries. Further, as per the Bombay Government Gazette notification dated 03.08.1905 and 08.12.1982, as provided by the State Govt., the legal status of the land proposed for diversion is Protected Forest. In addition, as per the Site Inspection Report of the Regional Office Nagpur, the legal status of land proposed for diversion is as under: 2.9212 ha is Private Forest and 2.0638 ha is Protected Forest. However, the State Government further submitted that the matter is sub judice before the Hon'ble Bombay High Court. State Govt. has also informed that the forest area proposed for diversion has been finalized based on the Forest Notification and Cadastral Map, and no additional forest land is involved under this proposal.
- xviii. The State Government submitted that the development works were commenced in April 2024 in Khasra no 11/1 of 1.12 ha for which construction permission was requested by MRVC from NPCIL vide letter no. MRVC/W/150/LA/VR-DRD dated 03.10.2023 and 22.09.2023. The NPCIL vide letter dated 24.11.2023 has granted the Working Permission to MRVCL. However, as per the SIR of the Regional Office Nagpur, it was observed that the User Agency had carried out works

over 4.0412 ha in total, comprising 2.9212 ha Private Forest and 1.12 ha Protected Forest. Further, as per DSS Analysis, the State Govt. has cleared the majority of the portion of the land proposed for diversion and the State Govt. has not incorporated or taken into account the work in violation of VSSA 1980 which has been carried out by the user agency in khasra no 30 (30/1) (KML area Area - 1.2643 Ha.), Protected Forest land.

- xix. The NPCIL vide letter dated 24.11.2023 has granted the Working Permission to MRVCL. Further, the NPCIL vide letter dated 27.01.2025 requested the Forest Department to review the claim and issued directions to the concerned in this matter so that the deal between MRVCL and NPCIL facilitated for timely expediting the MRVCL project of National Interest.
 - xx. The Committee observed that the development works were commenced in April 2024 in Khasra no 11/1 of 1.12 ha for which construction permission was requested by MRVC from NPCIL vide letter no. MRVC/W/150/LA/VR-DRD dated 03.10.2023 and 22.09.2023.
 - xxi. The Committee also observed that the User Agency had carried out works over 4.0412 ha in total, comprising 2.9212 ha Private Forest and 1.12 ha Protected Forest. Also, as per DSS Analysis, the State Govt. has cleared the majority of the portion of the land proposed for diversion.
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 recommended the the '*in-principle*' approval for diversion of 4.9850 ha. forest land for construction of proposed Boisar Goods Siding Yard near Boisar Station under MUTP-III project of MRVCL in the State of Maharashtra with general, standard and the 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) Adhiniyam, 1980 be initiated by Regional Office, Nagpur, as applicable.
 - iii. The penal CA shall be paid by the User agency as per Ministry's guidelines dated 21.01.2026.
 - iv. However, this in principle approval shall be incumbent on the outcomes of the existing Court matters over the said area. The State Government shall take necessary measures in this regard.

Agenda No. 23

Proposal No. FP/MH/REHAB/420259/2023

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 21 ha Reserve Forest land of Kille Machindragad Taluka Walwa for rehabilitation of village Niwale Taluka Shirala shifted from Chandoli National Park under Sangli District of Maharashtra State (Online No FP/MH/REHAB/420259/2023)– regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The Dy. DGF (Central), 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 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 Maharashtra vide their letter No FLD-2124/C.R.226/F-10 dated 15.10.2024 submitted the 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 21 ha Reserve Forest land of Village of Kille Machindragad Taluka Walwa for rehabilitation of village Niwale Taluka Shirala shifted from Chandoli National Park under Sangli District of Maharashtra State.
 - ii. The proposed area for diversion of 21.0 Ha of Reserved Forest is having the canopy density of 0.4 with Eco Class III.
 - iii. The number of trees proposed to be affected in the instant proposal is 5220.
 - iv. The State Government submitted that this proposal is rehabilitation proposal for PAP's of Niwale village are shifted from Chandoli National Park. This villager's private lands with gaothan area were taken over by Chandoli Wildlife Division.
 - v. The State Government recommended the proposal that the said forest land may be allowed to be diverted under Section-2 (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, subject to conditions proposed by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF) and Addl. PCCF & Nodal Officer, Nagpur along with the following condition: "*User Agency shall submit necessary compliance under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional ForestDwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.*"
 - vi. The State Government further submitted that the proposed area for diversion is not vulnerable to erosion.
 - vii. The wildlife present in and around the area are Panther, Barking deer, Indian pangolin, Indian wild boar etc.
 - viii. The proposed area does not form part of National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve, Elephant Corridor etc.

- ix. The State Govt. submitted that no any rare/endangered/unique species of flora and fauna found in the area.
- x. The State Govt. further submitted that no protected archaeological/ heritage site/ defence establishment or any other important monument is located in the area.
- xi. As per the notification dated 21.08.2012, the total area going to be vacated in the instant proposal is 944.96 Ha (660.40 Ha of forest land and 284.56 Ha of non forest land).
- xii. The Deputy Director, Chandoli Wildlife Division, Sahyadri Tiger Reserve, Karad submitted that according to Sahyadri Tiger Reserve core area and Buffer area Notification dated 21 august 2012 the land vacated is part of the core of critical tiger reserve or core of the Chandoli National park.
- xiii. The State Government has submitted that the proposal fulfils all the conditions laid down in the Ministry's guidelines dated 20.05.2019 regarding relocation and rehabilitation. Further, all necessary certificates have been furnished by the State Authorities.
- xiv. As per the report dated 15.07.2025 submitted by the DCF, Sangli Forest Division, the total land to be given in the instant proposal is 21.89 Ha.
- xv. The DCF Sangli Forest Division submitted a certificate that there is no any Nistar / community rights at Village Kille (the proposed village for relocation) Machindragad, Tal- Walwa Dist- Sangli, under Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006.
- xvi. The gaothan of PAPs from Niwale Village (Chandoli Wildlife Sanctuary) has been rehabilitated at Borgaon Village, Taluka Walwa, District Sangli, and revenue land for housing has been allotted. However, agricultural land could not be provided within an 8 km radius due to non-availability. Available revenue land within the prescribed radius was shown to the PAPs through a duly constituted village-level committee, but none was selected. As no forest land was available within 8 km, forest land beyond the radius was identified, and the PAPs subsequently selected Gat No. 749/1 of Village Killemachindragad. Accordingly, the proposal seeks diversion of forest land located approximately 10.41 km from the gaothan area.
- xvii. As per the DCF, Sangli Forest Division certificate dated 23.06.2025, the proposed relocation of villagers of Niwale at village Borgaon Tal- Walwa Dist- Sangli will make the total area under the village inviolate.
- xviii. 33 PAPs from Nivale Village (within Chandoli National Park) were rehabilitated in 1998–99 under GR dated 31.03.1995. Under the Maharashtra Project Affected Persons Rehabilitation Act, 1999 and GR dated 17.07.2000, PAPs are entitled to alternate agricultural land. While 29.31 ha has been allotted, 51.20 ha is required, and the balance land is yet to be provided to 22 PAPs relocated to Borgaon Village. As per statutory provisions, the State Government is obligated

to allot the remaining land, and the forest patch selected by the PAPs has been recommended by the State Government for this purpose.

- xix. As per the KML file of village Niwale which has been proposed to be vacated from the Chandoli Wildlife Sanctuary the area is found to be 284.641 ha.
- xx. As per the notification dated 15.05.2017, Central Government notified an area to an extent up to 100 metres from the boundary of Yashvantrao Chavan Sagareswar Sagareswar Wildlife Sanctuary in the State of Maharashtra as the Yashvantrao Chavan Sagareswar Wildlife Sanctuary Eco-sensitive Zone (hereinafter referred to as the Eco-sensitive Zone). Accordingly, the proposed area is outside the ESZ of Yashvantrao Chavan Sagareswar Sagareswar Wildlife Sanctuary.
- xxi. Gat No. 749/1 of Village Killemachindragad, Taluka Walwa, District Sangli is proposed for diversion. No plantation has been carried out under the Compensatory Afforestation (CA) scheme on the said land. As per the report of the Range Forest Officer, Shirala, plantation was undertaken under the State Plan scheme 4406-0492 (Massive Afforestation Programme) during the year 2004–05.
- xxii. The State Government submitted that ground verification revealed the presence of the ancient Machindranath Temple adjacent to the proposed diversion area, with no violation of the Adhinyam. However, DSS analysis indicates that while the temple lies outside the proposed forest land boundary, some built-up area is visible within the boundary.
- xxiii. The PAPs from Nivale Village, Chandoli National Park, were rehabilitated at Borgaon Village, Taluka Walwa, District Sangli, and allotted gaothan land and houses under the Warana Irrigation Project. Agricultural land could not be allotted due to non-availability within the prescribed 8 km radius. Efforts were made to identify land within 8 km through site visits to Forest and Revenue lands; however, no forest land was available and the PAPs did not opt for the revenue land shown. Consequently, the PAPs selected forest land bearing Gat No. 749/1 at Village Killemachindragad, located about 10.41 km from the gaothan area, for agricultural purposes. Accordingly, the diversion proposal has been submitted. However, KML files of alternative sites have not been submitted by the State Government.
- xxiv. The State Government, with due approval of the PCCF (WL), submitted justification for diversion of 21.00 ha of forest land for agricultural use for PAPs of Nivale Village, displaced from the core zone of Chandoli National Park and rehabilitated at Borgaon. The PAPs selected forest land at Village Kille Machindragad, Taluka Walwa, District Sangli, due to non-availability of revenue land near the Borgaon gaothan area. Although leopard presence is common in Taluka Walwa owing to extensive sugarcane cultivation, no incidents of human attack have been reported in the area. The proposed land is surrounded by private agricultural fields and has good road

connectivity. Considering the PAPs' choice and lack of alternative land, the proposal has been recommended for acceptance.

- xxv. In Part-I of the online application, the diversion period is shown as one year. However, the State Government has clarified that, as the proposal is for rehabilitation purposes, the forest land is proposed to be diverted permanently.
 - xxvi. The proposal submitted on the Parivesh-I portal (Online No. FP/MH/REHAB/121398/2021) for diversion of 63.091 ha is not similar to the present proposal. The said proposal pertains to rehabilitation of Village Nivale, Taluka Shahuwadi, District Kolhapur, whereas the present proposal submitted by Sangli Forest Division relates to rehabilitation of Village Nivale, Taluka Shirala, District Sangli. Accordingly, both proposals are distinct.
 - xxvii. The Committee observed that Village Niwale had already been relocated from the Chandoli Wildlife Sanctuary long ago. However, the State Government has submitted the present proposal for providing agricultural land to the project-affected persons at a distance of 10.41 km from the gaothan area due to the non-availability of suitable land within an 8 km radius. The KML files of the alternative sites, however, have not been submitted by the State Government.
 - xxviii. The Committee also observed that the State Government stated that no plantation had been carried out under the Compensatory Afforestation (CA) scheme on the land proposed for diversion. However, plantation activities were undertaken on the said land under Plan Scheme 4406-0492 (Massive Afforestation Programme) during the year 2004–05.
 - xxix. The Committee further observed that the present proposal pertains to the provision of agricultural land to the project-affected persons for rehabilitation from the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve. However, the comments of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) have not been submitted by the State Government.
 - xxx. The Committee also observed several rehabilitation proposals pertaining to cases rehabilitated long ago are now being submitted by the State Government for the allotment of agricultural land and other purposes.
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 '*deferred*' the proposal for prior approval under section 2 (1) (ii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 21 ha Reserve Forest land of Village of Kille Machindragad Taluka Walwa for rehabilitation of village Niwale Taluka Shirala shifted from Chandoli National Park under Sangli District of Maharashtra State for want of following information:
- i. The present proposal pertains to the provision of agricultural land to the project-affected persons for rehabilitation from the Sahyadri Tiger

Reserve. Accordingly, the State Government shall submit the comments/approval of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) in this regard.

- ii. The Village Niwale had already been relocated from the Chandoli Wildlife Sanctuary long ago. However, the State Government has submitted the present proposal for providing agricultural land to the project-affected persons at a distance of 10.41 km from the gaothan area due to the non-availability of suitable land within an 8 km radius. The KML files of the alternative sites, however, have not been submitted by the State Government. The same shall be submitted by the State Government.
- iii. The State Government has submitted the several rehabilitation proposals pertaining to cases rehabilitated long ago are now being submitted for the allotment of agricultural land and other purposes. In this regard, the State Government shall submit a comprehensive list of all such proposals and thereafter submit a consolidated proposal for consideration.

Agenda No. 25

Proposal No.: FP/MH/REDIV/483364/2024

Subject: Proposal for Re-diversion/Change in land-use of 4.03 ha forest land (revised to 3.82 Ha) for production and storage buildings of Defence Explosive products within 87.97 ha of already diverted forest land for expansion of explosive manufacturing unit in favour of M/s Solar Industries India Limited at Village-Chakdhoh, Taluka-Katol, Dist. Nagpur in the Maharashtra State (Online No. FP/MH/REDIV/483364/2024)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The Dy. DGF (Central), 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 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 APPCF & Nodal officer, Government of Maharashtra vide letter No Desk-17/Nodal/Nagpur/PID-483364/1345/2024-25 dated 05.09.2024 has forwarded a re-diversion 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 4.03 ha. of forest land (revised to 3.82 Ha) for production and storage buildings of Defence Explosive products within 87.97 ha of already diverted forest land for expansion of explosive manufacturing

unit at Village-Chakdhoh, Taluka-Katol, Dist. Nagpur in the Maharashtra State.

- ii. Earlier, the Government of India had accorded final stage II approval for diversion of 87.97 ha of forests land for the Expansion of Explosives Manufacturing Unit at Mouza Chakdoh, Tai. Katol, District Nagpur, Maharashtra on 17.12.2018 with non-forestry activity restricted only in 4.73 ha. and rest of the area being diverted shall be maintained as green cover by planting plants in the area at the cost of user agency and no non- forestry activity except fencing and watch tower shall be allowed over such land
- iii. Thereafter the Government of Maharashtra vide letter dated 17.03.2023 forwarded a proposal for re-alignment and additional construction for production and storage of explosive products from 87.97 ha forest land, already diverted in favour of M/s. Solar Industries India Ltd. for the expansion of Explosives Manufacturing Unit.
- iv. The proposal was considered by the Advisory Committee in its meetings held on 14.11.2023 and 18.12.2023. The Committee recommended approval of the proposal for re-alignment or minor shifting of buildings and roads within the originally approved construction area of 4.73 ha. However, since the diversion of forest land was approved with the specific condition that non-forestry activities would be restricted to 4.73 ha and the remaining diverted area would be maintained as green cover, the proposal seeking additional area for construction activities related to production and storage of explosive products within the already diverted 87.97 ha of forest land could not be acceded to.
- v. Subsequently, the User Agency, through the State Government, submitted proposal No. FP/MH/REDIV/483364/2024 seeking approval for re-diversion of 4.03 ha of forest land for expansion of the defence explosives project; later, the HECP-III building was dropped, reducing the area by 0.21 ha, and the proposal was revised to 3.82 ha, including 0.06 ha used for an earthen mound and retaining wall.
- vi. As per the information available on the PARIVESH portal, the proposed land for diversion of 3.82 Ha is of vegetation density of 0.5 of Eco Class III. The legal status of 3.82 Ha is 1.93 Ha Protected forest and 1.89 Ha of Reserved Forest.
- vii. Satellite imagery shows construction within the 4.03 ha forest land; however, as per the DFO's Site Inspection Report dated 25.06.2025, the construction was carried out within boundaries marked as non-forest land at the time of transfer in 2019, and the apparent overlap is due to minor variations in DSS imagery. Accordingly, the construction was undertaken under a bona fide assumption and may not be treated as a violation.
- viii. Further, the Regional Office, Nagpur, in its Site Inspection Report dated 22.11.2024, reported that during the site inspection the User Agency informed that one full building and one partial building, originally planned on non-forest land, were constructed on forest land

due to demarcation errors, constituting a violation of the provisions of the VSSA, 1980.

- ix. The Regional Office, Nagpur, vide letter dated 08.01.2026, during monitoring of the Ministry's approval dated 17.12.2018, reported that the User Agency has complied with the Stage-II conditions of Ministry's approval dated 17.12.2019. Further, an area of 0.06 ha was used for an earthen mound and retaining wall beyond the permitted 4.73 ha for non-forestry activities within the 87.97 ha diverted forest land, thereby deviating from the approved activity.
- x. It is also informed that during the site visit that this work was undertaken considering the area as non-forest land based on field demarcation carried out in 2019, and field inspection revealed that the said 0.06 ha patch abuts forest land and that the work was carried out unintentionally, though it falls within the already diverted 87.97 ha, and the Ministry may take appropriate action.
- xi. It was further informed that the proposed activity, namely establishment of a plant for manufacture of advanced warhead explosive compounds, is site-specific and unavoidable due to technical requirements such as molten condition and specific melt temperature, and that the forest area proposed for change in land use is the bare minimum required for the project.
- xii. The Regional Office further recommended that the User Agency strictly adhered to the conditions stipulated in the final approval order dated 17.12.2018 and promptly applied the instant proposal for change of land use for defence related purpose, the proposal may be considered under VSSA, 1980 for change in land use over an area of 3.82 ha (including 0.06 ha deviating from the approved activity within the 87.97 ha already diverted area), subject to the following specific conditions:
 - a. The User Agency shall submit self certified compliance report of conditions stipulated by the Gol order dated 17.12.2018 to the Regional Office Nagpur regularly for monitoring purpose;
 - b. Wherever feasible tree plantation can be carried out by the User Agency within the 87.97 ha diverted area at the project cost.
- xiii. The State Govt. has uploaded the KML file of compensatory afforestation (CA) sites approved against previous approval dated 17.12.2018 on the PARIVESH portal. KML file area of the CA land is found 88.339 ha. The CA was earlier proposed over the Non-forest land located under Ratnagiri District of Maharashtra State. As per the DSS, the proposed CA land is falling at a distance of 0.61 Km away from the nearest forest compartment boundary. Moreover, part of proposed CA land is falling in the Radhangiri-Chandoli Tiger corridor.
- xiv. The State Government has submitted that cancellation of the HECP-3 building will not affect the production flow or capacity, as HECP-1 and HECP-2 process buildings will be operated on a 1.5-shift basis instead of a single shift. Accordingly, the production capacity will remain unchanged. Therefore, the cancellation of the HECP-3 building is

permanent and not temporary in nature, and the revised proposal of 3.82 ha, in place of 4.03 ha, shall constitute the final land-use plan.

- xv. As per the compliance report of the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Nagpur, private and forest land boundaries were demarcated by poles at the time of transfer of forest land to SILL in 2019, and construction was undertaken within the then-identified non-forest land.
 - xvi. The Committee observed that during the monitoring of the Ministry's earlier approval, the Regional Office Nagpur reported that the User Agency has complied with all the Stage-II conditions of Ministry's approval dated 17.12.2019. Further, an area of 0.06 ha was used for an earthen mound and retaining wall beyond the permitted 4.73 ha for non-forestry activities within the 87.97 ha diverted forest land.
 - xvii. The Committee further observed that the proposed activity, namely establishment of a plant for manufacture of advanced warhead explosive compounds, is site-specific and unavoidable due to technical requirements such as molten condition and specific melt temperature, and that the forest area proposed for change in land use is the bare minimum required for the project.
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 recommended the the '*in-principle*' approval for diversion of 3.82 Ha (revised from 4.03 Ha) for production and storage buildings of Defence Explosive products within 87.97 ha of already diverted forest land for expansion of explosive manufacturing unit at Village-Chakdhoh, Taluka-Katol, Dist. Nagpur in the Maharashtra State with general, standard and the following specific conditions:
- i. Wherever feasible tree plantation shall be carried out by the User Agency within, the 87.97 ha diverted area at the project cost.
 - ii. The State Govt. shall ensures that the non forestry activity shall be undertaken only in 3.82 Ha and rest of the area being diverted shall be maintained as green cover by planting the area at the cost of user agency and no non-forestry activity except fencing and watch tower shall be allowed over such land.

Agenda No.26

Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/502650/2024

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 for diversion of 608.640 ha forest land including safety zone over 6.492 ha for coal mining within total Mining Lease area of 1100.00 ha of Bijahan Coal Block in villages of Bijahan, Bhograkachhar, Girisima & Jharpalam and Jamkani RF under Sundargarh Forest Division of Sundargarh District, Odisha in favour of M/s Mahanadi Mines and Minerals Pvt. Ltd. (Online Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/502650/2024)- regarding.

1. The agenda note for the above subject proposal was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The Nodal Officer, Govt. of Odisha 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. 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 thorough deliberation and discussion observed that:
 - i. The State Government of Odisha vide their letter No. FE-DIV-FLD-0058-2025-26807/FE&CC, dated 09.09.2025 submitted above subject proposal seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
 - ii. Bijahan Open cast Coal mine is a green field mining project spread over a lease area of 1100.00 ha in village Bijahan, Bhograkachhar, Girisuan, Jharpalank & Jamkani RF in Hemgir Tahasil of Sundargarh District. The exploitation of Coal will be done partly through Open Cast Mines and partly through underground mines. The total ML area coming under OCP is 716.83 ha and the total underground mine covers 383.17 ha. In open cast mines, forest land involved is 241.870 ha and non-forest land is 474.95 ha.

Further, in underground mining, forest land involved is 366.77 ha and non-forest land involved is 16.40 ha. Net geological reserve of the project is 327.02 MT and total Mineable OC reserve is 185.24 MT. Out of this; the net extractable reserve is 161.20 MT with average stripping ratio 2.31:1(m³/ton). The total volume of internal dump and external dump has been estimated as 372.74 Mm³. The total life of the mine is estimated to be 32.5 years based on the proposed rate of production of 5.26 MTPA. The total capital outlay of the project is 2600 Crore.
 - iii. The State Government has reported that the forest diversion has been applied for 608.64 ha. However, the diversion for opencast mining has been recommended for 241.87 ha, out of the total 608.64 ha. So, in the first phase mining will happen on the opencast area with completion of diversion of 241.87 ha and the balance 366.77 ha of forest land will be diverted in Phase II. The State Government has recommended the Forest Diversion Proposal in a phase-wise manner.
 1. Phase-I Diversion of 241.870 hectares of forest land for opencast mining.
 2. Phase-II Diversion of 366.77 hectares of forest land for underground coal mining, subject to approval of the revised mine plan.
 - iv. The Nominated authority in the Ministry of Coal, Government of India has vested Bijahan Coal Block in the District of Sundargarh in the State

of Odisha being the successful bidder in accordance with provisions of the Coal Mines (Special Provision) Act, 2015 and the Coal Mines (Special provision) Rules, 2014 in favour of Mahanadi Mines and Minerals Private Limited vide Order no.NA-104/4/2022-NA Dt.10.10.2022. The mining lease is valid for 50 years from the date of issue of vesting order.

- v. The proposed mining lease area is 1100 Ha. The private tenancy land comprises 313.89 Ha, Government land of 177.47 Ha and Forest land 608.64 Ha. The lease area covers lands of four villages, namely Bijahan, Bhograkachhar, Girisuan and Jharpalank, and also falls within Jamkani RF. Out of this village Bijahan and Bhograkachhar are located within the leasehold area and required to be displaced whereas village Girisuan and Jharpalank are located outside of leasehold area, land affected but not required to be displaced.
- vi. Mahanadi Mines and Minerals Private Limited (MMMPL) has applied for Forest Clearance/diversion of total 608.64 hectares of forest land for carrying out mining activities in the Bijahan Coal Block. Out of the total proposed area, 241.870 hectares of forest land, located in the southern part of the Coal Block will be used for coal extraction through opencast mining while the remaining 366.77 hectares of reserved forest, located in the northern part of the Coal Block will be further explored for converting the indicated and inferred reserve to prove category. The mining operations in this 366.77 ha of reserve forest area will be undertaken by the underground mining method after the detailed exploration is carried out. MMMPL further undertakes that remaining 366.77 Ha of forest land will remain undisturbed during Underground Mining.
- vii. The component wise break-up of the total forest land proposed for diversion is given below:

Sl. No.	Pattern of Utilization	Forest land in ha	NFL In ha	Total land in ha
1.	Green Belt	7.8	7.0	14.80
2.	Settling Pond	0.0	20.0	20.0
3.	Area for underground mining	362.984	16.245	379.229
4.	Safety zone around UG area	3.786	0.165	3.951
5.	Opencast Mining	229.60	401.94	631.540
6.	Construction of building, substation, workshop, OH tank, internal roads, magazine etc.	0.57	39.43	40.0
7.	Safety Zone/Fencing around OC area	3.90	6.58	10.48
Total		608.64	491.360	1100.00

- viii. The total extent of safety zone in the ML area over 1100.00 ha is 9.962 ha. Out of which, 6.492 ha comes under forest land, 3.470 ha comes under Non-Forest Government land and non-forest private land. A safety zone at a width of 7.5 mt. in the inner boundary of the mining lease has been taken into account that includes opencast mining and underground mining.

- ix. Legal Status of the proposed forest land are as under:
 5.156 ha - District Level Committee (D.L.C.) Forest
 472.127 ha – Reserved Forest
 131.357 ha– Revenue Forest
- x. The canopy density of the applied area is 0.5 under Eco-Value Class-III. The applied area is coming under Tropical dry deciduous forest.
- xi. Total number of trees estimated to be felled in the proposed area comes to 65,817 nos.
- xii. Compensatory afforestation has been raised over non-forest Private land over 248.209 ha spreading over 15 villages in the district of Ganjam, Balangir, Bargarh, Kandhamal & Cuttack in the state of Odisha. Total Patches of NFL CA land is 14. Further, additional compensatory afforestation land has been proposed on 165 ha degraded forest land in seven patches. The CA schemes for the identified non-forest private lands have been prepared by the respective DFOs under which jurisdiction the land falls based on the One-time cost norm circulated from this office during 2021.
- xiii. The cost of the forest is assessed as ₹2,58,811.30 Lakh and the benefit of the project is estimated at Rs. 23,58,509 lakhs. The Cost-Benefit ratio comes to 1:9.13.
- xiv. The mining plan including Progressive Mine closure plan for Bijahan Coal Block has been approved by Ministry of Coal, Government of India vide F.No.13016/33/2005-CA-1 dt. 13.08.2008 in the District of Sundargarh in the state of Odisha in favour of ex-lessee M/s Bhusan Power & Steel Limited with 02 no. of terms and conditions. The APCCF (FD&NO, FCA) has further reported that as per the condition No.1(iii), a revised Mining plan is required to get approved by the Ministry of Coal, Govt within a period of 03 years of approval of the mining plan. The Ministry of Coal vide F. No. CPAM-34011/28/2019-CPAM [E-343762] dt.31.01.2025 has come up with a Mining Plan guideline for Coal and Lignite Mine, 2025. In Para 1.4 of chapter-1, it is written that the approved mining plan shall be valid for the balance life of the mine enclosure.
- xv. A detailed scheme of reclamation and afforestation has been prepared to reclaim and stabilize the mined out undulating areas and the saturated dumps and by taking up plantations.
- xvi. The project involves displacement of 434 nos. of families in 02 villages i.e. Bijahan and Bhograkachhar under Sundargarh District. The number of project affected families is 376.
- xvii. The Collector, Sundargarh has issued Certificate in Form-II under Schedule Tribe and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 in favour of ex-lessee for forest land over 147.04 ha in village Bijahan, over 48.77 ha in village Bhograkachhar, over 21.38 ha in village Girisuan and over 20.78 ha in village

- Jharapalam involved in the Bijahan Coal Block leased out in favour of M/s Bhusan Steel and Power Limited.
- xviii. No violation under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 has been committed by the user agency.
- xix. After examination of the proposal, Ministry vide its letter dated 22.09.2025 and 17.11.2025 through online requested the State Government to submit additional information on certain points which include the area used for U/G mining will not be converted for open cast in future, site suitability certificate, compensatory afforestation or other plantation through CAMPA funds or otherwise, correct figure of no. of trees estimated to be felled, a justification for opening a new mine in the forest area, the land use which is commensurate with the land use mentioned in the approved mining plan, additional forest land if any, required to fulfil the requirement of electricity and water, justification for the validity of the mining plan approved in 2008, subsidence prediction report etc. In the response of the Ministry's letter, State Government vide letter no. 21404/9F (MG) – 42/2025 dated 23.10.2025 and letter no. 25046/9F (MG) – 42/2025 dated 17.12.2025 respectively through online has submitted their reply
- xx. The State Government has reported that the area of Bijahan Coal Block project is 1100 ha as per MoC vesting order vide letter dated October 10, 2022. The Mine Plan for the same was approved for opencast coal mining only for 716.820 ha (Forest Land-241.870 ha, Govt. Land-177.169 ha and Private land-297.781 ha) vide letter 13016/33/2005-CA-1 dated August 13, 2008. The remaining 383.180 Ha (Forest land-366.77 Ha and Private land- 1.641 Ha), situated in the northern part of the Coal Block, will be explored further to convert indicated and inferred reserves into the proved category. Mining operations in this area will be undertaken using the underground mining method after detailed exploration and subsequent approval of the revised mine plan along with a subsidence report.
- xxi. State Government has submitted the Site Suitability certificates of all 14 CA sites measuring 248.209 ha.
- xxii. With regard to two proposed CA patches in villages Dhanadlupa and Banta, overlap with the forest boundary, State Government has reported that the proposed CA land of 45.645 ha under mouza-Dhanadhipa is of private record holding land and not overlapping with any forest boundary. Further, the area in village Banta has been duly demarcated in presence of both the Revenue & Forest Officials.
- xxiii. With regard to CA patches of less than 5 Ha Gandharibhun is not contiguous with forest land, the State Government has reported that the Gandharibhuin CA plot is adjacent to Revenue Forest in the southern part and northern side. The southern site of the Revenue Forest adjacent to Gandharibhuin CA patch is connected to Badagada PRE. To augment the habitat management in this elephant movement area, ANR @ 200 plants per ha (Fruit bearing species) along with SMC

measures has been proposed in the CA scheme of this CA patch at Gandharibhuin.

- xxiv. The State Government has reported that the land required for construction of Coal Evacuation Road (Internal CTR of 2.5 Km) has already been included in the present Forest Diversion Proposal within the mining lease boundary. This internal CTR road connects with existing road (about 10 Km) connecting to Highway. Therefore, no additional Forest Diversion is required.
- xxv. With regard to discrepancy in area proposed for under ground mining i.e. 383.18 ha instead of 382 ha, State Government has reported that that the variation is due to difference between DGPS area and RoR area, which generally varies to certain extent.
- xxvi. The State Government has reported that the user agency i.e. MMMPL was supposed to plant 2,45,656 nos of seedlings as per the mandate "tree against tree" over the required area of 245.656 ha out of the total 608.64 ha of forest land proposed for diversion and there was a shortfall of 90855 Nos of seedlings for the compliance of "tree to tree" compensation, though the land-to-land compensation has been complied. Accordingly, 165 ha of degraded forest land was identified in 7 patches in five Range offices under Ghumsur (North) Forest Division to accommodate 95,000 nos of seedlings against the shortfall of 90,855 nos of seedlings.
- xxvii. Further, informed that as per the DSS analysis report, a total of 50.0 ha of forest land has been identified in Gallery RF, compartment 19 under Gallery Range of his Division. Out of this, 36.0 ha falls under MDF, 3.0 ha under open forest & 11.0 ha under Non-forest category. Accordingly, the proposal for plantation under ACA will be taken up in the forest and non-forest areas, while other activities such as silvicultural operation including cutting of high stump, singling out of multiple shoots, climber cutting, clearance of weeds and removal of debris from the fie to blank space and also SMC, fencing work will be carried out over the entire 50.0 ha area.
- xxviii. The Regional Office in SIR has stated that the proposal for diversion of 241.87 ha forest land for opencast mining, out of the originally proposed 608.64 ha of forest land, may be considered for coal mining under Bijahan Coal Block subject to the following stipulations:
 - a. Trees should be felled in a phased manner and when become absolutely necessary and under strict supervision of State Forest Department and wherever feasible suitable species should be transplanted. The trees under area of underground mining shall not be disturbed at any case.
 - b. A Safety Zone shall be maintained between the opencast mine area and the underground mine area of Jamkani RF to minimize the negative impact of the opencast mining on the Reserved Forest Area located on the northern side of the lease area. Additionally, biological fencing shall be created to prevent wildlife from entering the opencast mining area and to reduce the risk of wildlife accidents.

- c. As the Budajholia Nallah, trending north–south, flows through the eastern part of the lease area, no excavated material or mine wastewater shall be discharged into the nallah. A 60-metre safety barrier shall be maintained on both sides of the nallah, and dense plantation shall be undertaken along both embankments prior to the commencement of mining operations.
 - d. The State Forest Department 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.
 - e. The State Government shall take necessary action, as per the existing rules, to address the encroachment in Jamkani Reserved Forest falling within the proposed mining lease area by tribal families.
 - f. The User Agency shall implement the progressive reclamation plan along with a restoration schedule in the subsequent mining plan period.
 - g. Out of the proposed 250.7186 ha of non-forest land identified for compensatory afforestation (CA), an area of 242.5512 ha has been recommended taking into account effective forest management considerations. This area is adequate for the proposed diversion of 241.87 ha of forest land. The recommended CA sites shall be made completely free from all encroachments prior to handover to the State Forest Department. The sites must be properly fenced to ensure protection and to prevent unauthorized access or future encroachments. Only after these protective measures are in place, the State Forest Department shall take up plantation and related afforestation works.
 - h. The State Government shall raise plantation over double the extent of the proposed tree felling of 30,000 trees from the old ANR plantation (year 2021-22) in Jamkani RF carried out under CAMPA funds & Urban Plantation in Jharpalam village over suitable degraded forest land within the Division at the cost of the User Agency. The excess seedling plantation proposed by the State Government under ACA may be adjusted against the requirement.
4. **Decision of Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Bhubaneswar and the Nodal officer, Govt. of Odisha recommended the proposal for grant of ***'in-principle'*** approval for diversion of 241.87 ha forest land for opencast mining, out of the originally proposed 608.64 ha of forest land, for coal mining within total Mining Lease area of 1100.00 ha of Bijahan Coal Block in villages of Bijahan, Bhograkachhar, Girisima & Jharpalam and Jamkani RF under Sundargarh Forest Division of Sundargarh District, Odisha in favour of M/s Mahanadi Mines and Minerals Pvt. Ltd. subject to the general, standard and following specific conditions:
- (i) Trees shall be felled only in a phased manner, strictly when absolutely necessary, and under the close supervision of the State Forest Department. Wherever feasible, suitable tree species shall be

transplanted. Trees located over areas proposed for underground mining shall not be disturbed under any circumstances.

- (ii) A Safety Zone shall be maintained between the opencast mine area and the underground mine area of Jamkani RF to minimize the negative impact of the opencast mining on the Reserved Forest Area located on the northern side of the lease area. Additionally, biological fencing shall be created to prevent wildlife from entering the opencast mining area and to reduce the risk of wildlife accidents.
- (iii) As the Budajholia Nallah, trending north–south, flows through the eastern part of the lease area, no excavated material or mine wastewater shall be discharged into the nallah. A 60-metre safety barrier shall be maintained on both sides of the nallah, and dense plantation shall be undertaken along both embankments prior to the commencement of mining operations.
- (iv) The State Forest Department shall implement the Site-Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan for the surrounding landscape, as approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden, Odisha, at the cost of the User Agency.
- (v) The User Agency shall implement the progressive reclamation plan along with a restoration schedule in the subsequent mining plan period.
- (vi) The recommended CA sites shall be made completely free from all encroachments prior to handover to the State Forest Department. The sites must be properly fenced to ensure protection and to prevent unauthorized access or future encroachments. Only after these protective measures are in place, the State Forest Department shall take up plantation and related afforestation works.
- (vii) The State Government shall raise plantation over double the extent of the proposed tree felling of 30,000 trees from the old ANR plantation (year 2021-22) in Jamkani RF carried out under CAMPA funds & Urban Plantation in Jharpalam village over suitable degraded forest land within the Division at the cost of the User Agency. The excess seedling plantation proposed by the State Government under Additional compensatory afforestation may be adjusted against the requirement.
- (viii) The User Agency shall also prepare and implement a comprehensive Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) Plan at its own cost, with a focus on water security, to mitigate the impacts of open-cast mining.
- (ix) The State Government shall implement Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) measures in accordance with the applicable rules & Guidelines.

Agenda No.27

Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/445444/2023

Sub: Proposal for diversion of 216.875 ha of Forest land (including 4.217 ha earmarked for Safety Zone) in village Gandhalapada, Barapada and Guali under Barbil Tahasil, Barbil Range of Keonjhar Forest Division in Keonjhar

District within the Block area of 241.10 ha in respect of Gandhalapada Iron Ore Block by M/s TATA Steel Limited under Section-2 (1) (ii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 (Online Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/445444/2023)- regarding.

1. The agenda note for the above subject proposal was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The Nodal Officer, Govt. of Odisha 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. 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 thorough deliberation and discussion observed that:
 - i. The State Government of Odisha vide their letter No. FE-DIV-FLD-0036-2025-14973/FE&CC dated 21.06.2025 submitted above subject proposal on PARIVESH 2.0 portal seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
 - ii. There are 216.875 ha of forest land out of total mining lease area of 241.10 ha. About 90% of the mineral (Iron ore) deposit falls in forest area. The State Govt. has stated that considering the demand of iron ore by the growing steel industries, the exploitation of the ore from the forest area is essential. Since the occurrence of the ore is site specific, which happens to fall in forest land, the area is required for diversion to win these minerals.
 - iii. The Letter of Intent (LoI) for the Gandhalpada Iron Ore Block was issued on 28.10.2021, with a validity of three years, i.e., up to 27.10.2024. Subsequently, the validity of the LoI has been extended for an additional period of two years, effective from 28.10.2024, by the Department of Steel & Mines, Government of Odisha, vide their Letter No. 9136/SMMC1-MRL-0021-2021, Bhubaneswar, dated 23.10.2024. The LOI is valid upto 28.10.2026.
 - iv. The estimated geological resource of iron ore is calculated to be 314.37 million tons as per present bore hole data, explored by GSI in 200 m X 200 m interval (G-2 level), Total number of bore holes taken for estimation of reserve are 72 of which 69 no. are coming in Forest land & 3 in non-forest land. In first five years of mining operation 160 nos, of exploratory drill holes measuring 16,000 m is planned to be drilled for detailed exploration which will be undertaken on execution of Mining Lease. This will prove the resource at G1 level. At ROM capacity of 10 million tons per annum of iron ore, the life of mine has been estimated to be 33 years, which is likely to increase after detailed exploration. As per the Rule 12(3) of MCDR, 2017 the holder of mining lease shall

carry out detail exploration (G-1 level) over entire lease area within a period of 5 years from date of opening of the mine.

- v. Out of total 241.100 ha of lease area, 24.225 ha comes under non-Forest land (7.436 ha Govt. non-Forest land, 16.789 ha Private Land) and the rest 216.875 ha is of Revenue Forest land under Keonjhar Forest Division.
- vi. The area is bounded by the mining lease area of Nuagaon Iron Ore Mine of M/s. JSW Steel Ltd. in Northeast, Kalamang West (Northern Part) Iron Ore mines of M/s. Tata Steel Ltd. in South and Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines of M/s. JSW Steel Ltd. in East.
- vii. Legal Status of the proposed forest land is reported as Revenue Forest – 181.223 ha + Others - 35.652 ha.
- viii. The average canopy density taken into consideration is **0.5, Eco Class-I** considering the proximity of Thakurani RF which has maximum coverage under MDF category as per ORSAC supplied Forest Block wise canopy density maps based on FSI, SFR 2019. The total nos, of trees enumerated over forest land comes to 32,098 /-.
- ix. The component wise break-up of the total forest land proposed for diversion is given below:

Sl. No.	Particular	Area put to use at end of plan period (Ha)		
		Forest	Non-forest	Total
1	Area under mining	99.16	0.54	99.70
2	Top soil stacking	1.43	0.06	1.50
3	Overburden/waste dumping	33.02	1.86	34.88
4	Mineral storage	21.05	10.52	31.57
5	Infrastructure (workshop, administrative building etc.)	2.67	5.61	8.28
6	Roads	24.48	1.60	26.08
7	Railway	0.00	0.00	0.00
8	Tailing pond.	0.00	0.00	0.00
9	Effluent treatment plant	0.05	0.00	0.05
10	Mineral separation plant	3.58	2.16	5.74
11	Township area	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub-Total		185.44	22.36	207.80
12	Others to specify			
	a) Safety zone	4.148	0.604	4.752
	b) Safety zone proposed to be broken for entry/exit road	0.069	0.019	0.088
	c) Utility corridor	2.90	0.65	3.55
	Sub-Total	7.11	1.28	8.39
Total		192.56	23.63	216.19
13	Area for future use	24.315	0.595	24.910
Grand Total		216.875	24.225	241.100

- x. The applied site is the dwelling habitat of Faunal species such as Bear (*Melursus ursinus*), Barking deer (*Muntiacus muntjak*), Hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*), porcupine (*Hystrix indica*) etc. The proposed site falls under Elephant habitat zone-2. The forest area involved in this lease does not include any National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve or Elephant Reserve. The applied area has got the presence of Elephant. The Karo-Karmpada elephant corridor is located at a distance of 4.40 Km from the project site.
- xi. No rare or endangered species is available in the applied area for diversion. No archaeological /heritage site/defence establishment or any other important monument is located in the area applied for diversion.
- xii. The compensatory afforestation has been proposed over 222.577 ha of Non-forest land in village Talabarada of Banspal Tahasil in Keonjhar District. The NFL is in Single Patch. Further, 350.79 ha of Degraded Forest Land (DFL) has been identified for Additional Compensatory Afforestation. The DFL is in five patches. The site suitability certificate over 222.58 ha non-forest Govt. land has been furnished by the DFO, Keonjhar Forest Division. The total financial outlay of the CA scheme is Rs.5,20,54,700/-.
- xiii. The cost comes to 15710.60731 lakhs and Benefit of the project estimated by the user agency comes to 471471.2759 lakhs. The Cost-Benefit ratio comes to 1:30.009.
- xiv. 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 an area of 216.875 ha in respect of Gandhalapada Iron Ore Block in Keonjhar District in favour of Tata Steel Ltd. vide Letter No. BBS/KJR/IRON/2198/MP/2022-23 dated 23.02.2023.
- xv. There are about 43 nos. of houses present with in the jungle Kisam land. The user agency has submitted the detailed of the R& R policy to be taken up in the mining lease area.
- xvi. The proposal apparently does not involve any violation of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. The inspecting team perambulated through the most of the lease area and found that no mining related work by the user agency (except for delineating Pillars erection) has yet been started within the applied area and therefore the proposal does not involve violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. But few forest patches were found subjected to non-forest uses in violation to other forest regulations not attributed to user agency. On the northern corner within the lease, few machines, equipment's, tin-shades etc. were found lying abandoned in the forest area. Few semi-permanent structures too were seen in dilapidated conditions. Similarly, few unmetalled kachha pagdandi type narrow roads were also found within the forest. The user agency informed that abandoned machineries belonged to some

- previous mine operator (in adjacent area) who might have left them while winding up. Few areas were subject to agricultural also.
- xvii. After examination of the proposal, Ministry vide its letter dated 24.07.2025 through online requested the State Government to submit additional information on certain points which include the area proposed for diversion is barest minimum, detailed action taken report against the violations, explore and shift the non-site specific activities to non-forest land, details of the user agency/persons responsible for the said violation, mitigation measures/ plan proposed to check the soil erosion, correct CB analysis, justification for opening a new mine, details of mineral evacuation plan, land use given in the proposal is commensurate with the land use given in the approved mining plan etc. In the response of the Ministry's letter, State Government vide letter dated 17.11.2025 through online has submitted their reply.
- xviii. With regard to the non-site specific activities, the State Government has reported that 24.225 ha of non-forest land involved in the instant project and 24.225 ha of non-forest land is insufficient to accommodate all essential mine infrastructures and operational components.
- xix. The State Government has reported that the water tank observed at the site proposed for diversion has been constructed by Government Agency for community use. The State Government shall assess the alternative available for community for their needs of water resources after removal the said water tank.
- xx. With regard to encroachment in the land identified for CA, the State Government has reported that the water body has been created by the Forest Department and the cultivation patches are illegal encroachments and will be removed.
- xxi. The State Government has reported that 24.315 ha of forest land earmarked for future use has also been explored at the G-2 level.
- xxii. State Government has reported that 22 houses are situated on Jungle Kisam (Revenue Forest) land. Among these, 2 households have been granted titles under the Forest Rights Act (FRA). The remaining 20 houses constitute encroachments on the forest land.
- xxiii. As per SIR, justification of planning non – site specific components like Overburden dump, Mineral storage, Roads, utility corridors etc in forest areas, the user agency informed the inspecting team that almost all the forest area within the lease is mineral bearing and the forest land apportioned for OB dump or storage is also intended for mining in later phases of operation. OB dump area and storage areas would be shifted as and when substantial mining takes place and land reclamation starts. Roads are required for on – site ore evacuation from pit to lease boundary.
- xxiv. Regional Office, Bhubaneshwar has carried out site inspection and DDGF (C), Regional Office, Bhubaneshwar has recommended the proposal for consideration, subject to following additional conditions:

- a. As the non-forest land identified for Compensatory Afforestation (CA) has dense vegetation, the Forest Department shall undertake crop improvement activities in accordance with Rule 13 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023, at the cost of the User Agency.
 - b. The State Government shall ensure that the degraded forest land identified for Compensatory Afforestation (CA) is free from encroachments and that CA is implemented in accordance with the MoEF&CC directive dated 17-02-2025. Any shortfall in the plantation target shall be met on degraded forest land (DFL) or in protected forest (PF)/reserved forest (RF) areas, at the cost of the User Agency (UA).
4. **Decision of Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Bhubaneswar and the Nodal officer, Govt. of Odisha '**deferred**' the proposal for diversion of 216.875 ha of Forest land (including 4.217 ha earmarked for Safety Zone) in village Gandhalapada, Barapada and Guali under Barbil Tahasil, Barbil Range of Keonjhar Forest Division in Keonjhar District within the Block area of 241.10 ha in respect of Gandhalapada Iron Ore Block by M/s TATA Steel Limited for want of the following information:-
- (i) Out of 216.875 ha of total forest area proposed for diversion, the mining is to be carried out over 99.16 ha, which is around 45% of the total forest area. Hence, majority of the area sought for diversion is meant for non-site specific activities. The State Government shall explore recasting the proposal and consider the possibility of shifting the non-site specific activities to the non-forest lands.
 - (ii) A Comprehensive Wildlife Management-cum-Conservation Plan, shall be prepared in consultation with the Wildlife Institute of India, along with a Soil and Moisture Conservation Plan. These plans shall be implemented through the State Forest Department throughout the project life or until the land is reclaimed and surrendered, whichever is earlier.
 - (iii) The User agency shall prepare Mine Reclamation Plan with exact timelines, including surrender of Land post mining.

Agenda No.29

Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/514821/2024

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of Central Government under Section 2 (1) ii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 2.459 ha of Revenue Forest Land within the block area of 7.987 ha of Lumurajhala (SE) Quartz Block allotted to M/s. Flux Minerals in village Lumurjena and Salepara under Boudh Forest Division in Boudh District (Online Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/514821/2024)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. 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 State Government of Odisha vide their letter No. FE-DIV-FLD-0031-2025-13836/FE&CC dated 06.06.2025 submitted above subject proposal on PARIVESH portal seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
 - ii. The proposed 2.459 ha of forest land within the lease block area of 7.987 ha of Lumurajhala (SE) Quartz Block is located at Lumurjena and Salepara village under Boudh Tahasil of Boudh District at a distance of about 30 Kms. from the district headquarters, Boudh.
 - iii. The proposed forest area is Sabik Forest with canopy density of 0.1 (Eco Class-III) and 1709 nos of trees have been proposed to be felled.
 - iv. The component wise break-up of the total forest land proposed for diversion is given below:

Sl. No.	Component	Forest Land (In Ha)	Non-Forest Land (In Ha)	Total Land (In Ha)
1.	Mining Road	0.688	1.749	2.437
2.	Waste Dump	0.000	0.592	0.592
3.	Minerals Storage/ Stacking Yard	0.000	0.292	0.292
4.	Road	0.081	0.106	0.187
5.	Infrastructure	0.000	0.087	0.087
6.	Top Soil		0.173	0.173
7.	Green Belt	1.185	0.000	1.185
8.	Safety Zone	0.505	0.372	0.877
9.	Entry and exit within safety zone area	0.000	0.005	0.005
10.	Undisturbed Area	0.000	2.152	2.152
	Total	2.459	5.528	7.987

- v. The State Government has informed that pursuant to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015, the e-auction process was conducted in accordance with the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015. The Govt. of odisha issued the notice inviting tender dated 22.08.2022 for the said mineral block and M/s Flux Minerals was declared as the successful bidder under sub clause (c) of Sub-Rule (6) of Rule & of the auction rule. Accordingly, the Government of Odisha, through its Steel & Mines Department, issued the Letter of intent (LoI) vide Letter No.11845/SM-MC3-ML-0043-2022/S&M, Bhubaneswar, dated 19.12.2022 to M/s Flux Minerals for grant of mining lease for Lumurajhala (SE) Quartz Block

over an area of 7.987 ha near Lumurjena and Salepara village, Boudh Tahasil of Boudh District of Odisha for a period of 30 years.

- vi. In the justification for location of the proposal in forest area, the State Government has informed that mining is inherently a site-specific activity as it depends on the occurrence of mineral deposits. The Government of Odisha has allocated the Lumurajhala (SE) Quartz Block through an e-auction process to facilitate mining operations for the extraction of Quartz ore. M/s Flux Minerals has been declared the preferred bidder for the grant of a mining lease for the Lumurajhala (SE) Quartz Block. The Government of Odisha, Steel & Mines Department issued the Letter of intent (LoI) on dated 19.12.2022. As per the data provided by the Directorate of Mines, Steel & Mines Department, Government of Odisha, the total DGPS-surveyed mining lease area is 7.987 Ha. The approved mining plan targets at production of 1686 Tons/Annum of run-of-mine (ROM) and the total mineable reserves of 166739 tons are available within the lease.
- vii. As the significant reserve is within the forest area, judicious exploitation is critical for systematic and scientific mining. To facilitate mining operations, it is essential to obtain approval for the diversion of 2.459 Ha of forest land under Section-2 (1) (ii) of the Van (sanrakshanEvamsamvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. This approval is necessary for the execution of the mining lease and associated ancillary activities in the Lumurajhala (SE) Quartz Block. This will ensure the optimal utilization of resources to meet the growing demand for high purity raw materials in Battery grade silicon manufacturing, Solar glass manufacturing, Engineered slab etc. Although this is a small project, but will generate significant socio-economic benefits for the local communities and the region as a whole. The mining operations are expected to create direct and indirect employment opportunities, with a focus on hiring local workers.
- viii. The details of forest and non-forest land involved in the project are furnished below:

Sl. No.	Name of the Tahasil	Name of the Village	Khata No.	Plot No.	Forest land in Ha.	Non-Forest land in Ha.	Total land in Ha.	Kissam
1	Boudh	Lumurjena	49	653/p	0.875	0.000	0.875	Bada Jungle
2		Lumurjena	49	655/p	0.000	5.528	5.528	Unsurvey
3		Salepada	34	9/p	1.584	0.000	1.584	Patra Jungle
Total					2.459	5.528	7.987	

- ix. An area of 0.877 ha (0.505 ha forest land and 0.372 ha non-forest land) within the mining lease is earmarked for Safety Zone.

- x. The Mining Plan was approved by the Directorate of Mines and Geology, Government of Odisha vide letter dated 6.10.2023, for the Plan Period five years.
- xi. No violation has been committed by the user agency on the forest area proposed for diversion as per Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam 1980.
- xii. The selected area does not form part of any protected area like National park Midlife Sanctuary/ Biosphere Reserve/ Tiger Reserve/ Elephant Reserve or Elephant corridor and Eco-sensitive Zone. The applied area also does not include the place of Archaeological importance.
- xiii. In lieu of diversion of 2.459 ha forest land, 2.459 ha Govt. non-forest land has been identified in single patch in village Udbilika under Boudh Tahasil of Boudh district in Boudh Forest division in a single patch. Site specific Compensatory Afforestation scheme over 2.459 ha Govt. non-forest land has been approved by the Nodal Officer for Rs. 43,97,700/-.
- xiv. The User Agency has applied to the Collector & District Magistrate, Boudh for issue of necessary certificate under Forest Rights Act 2006 and the BDO Boudh has directed the Sarpanch, Gundulia Gram Panchayat for convening the Gram Sabha for the project vide letter No. 3109 dated 05.09.2023. The user agency has submitted an undertaking duly counter signed by DFO, Boudh Forest Division to furnish Forest Right Act Certificate before the final approval.
- xv. As per DSS analysis, the proposed forest land for diversion falls under Boudh district of Odisha State and its area (software-calculated) is found 2.455 ha. No Protected Area/ Tiger Reserve/ Tiger Corridor is located within 10 km radius of proposed project location. The compensatory afforestation land has been proposed in a single patch over non-forest land and its software- calculated area is found 2.527 ha. No encroachment is visible in the proposed CA site.
- xvi. After examination of the proposal, Ministry vide its online EDS requested State Government to submit additional information on certain points, which include copy of approval and the approved mining plan, component wise KML file of Lumurjhala (SE) Quartz Block, justification for opening new mine in the forest area along with the brief company profile, details/ mineral evacuation plan and as to how the requirement of the electricity and water will be met, proposed land use plan is commensurate with the land use given in the approved mining plan, the legal status of the non-forest land involved in the proposal and a valid letter of intent in the instant case.
- xvii. In this reference, the State Government submitted the information on PARIVESH portal on 25.08.2025. The State Government has provided a copy of approval and the approved mining plan and component wise KML file of Lumurjhala (SE) Quartz Block.
- xviii. The justification submitted by the Flux Minerals for opening new mines in the forest area was furnished as under:

- The Government of Odisha has allocated the Lumurajhala. (SE) Quartz Block through an e-auction process to facilitate mining operations for the extraction of Quartz ore.
 - There are two small quartz mines namely Manikeswari Minerals & M/s L K Das are working mines in Odisha. Both the mines are in non-forest land and production is very less.
 - Quartz and Quartzite are strategic minerals used in ferroalloys, refractories, silicon metal. solar PV manufacturing, semiconductors, and advanced ceramics, all of which are critical to India's infrastructure, green energy, and Atmanirbhar Bharat vision.
 - Quartz (silica) is used as a flux during the smelting of iron ore in blast furnaces and electric arc furnaces (EAF). Usually 20-30KG require to produce 1 ton of steel.
 - Quartz is a major raw material in producing ferro- silicon, silico-manganese, and silicon metal.
 - High-grade quartz (also known as high-purity quartz or HPQ) is a rare, highly sought-after raw material due to its exceptional physical and chemical properties. It contains very low levels of impurities (typically less than 50 ppm of metallic impurities), making it suitable for specialized and high-technology applications.
 - India is expanding its semiconductor and solar manufacturing capabilities (under Make in India. PLI schemes) and hence requires quartz/quartzite for Quartz crucibles for solar-grade polysilicon ingot production, High-purity silica for integrated circuits (IC) and optical fibre manufacturing & Indigenous sources to reduce dependence on imports from countries like Norway, the USA, and China.
- xix. The State government has reported that the existing road infrastructure is more than adequate to handle this level of traffic, and no additional road construction or widening is necessary. Furthermore, the company has reported that this is a semi-mechanised mining operation. Water requirements will be met by transporting water via tankers, and a small generator will be installed to meet the basic electricity needs. Accordingly, any additional forest land for water sourcing, power supply, or transportation facilities is not required.
- xx. The State Government reported that the User Agency informed that total annual production of minerals is 1,686 tonnes per annum, which translates to approximately 5.62 tonnes per day. This implies that only one or two truckloads will be transported twice a week to various industries within and outside the State. The mine site is located about 20 km from the major road (SH57) and this distance will be traversed via a kacha and pucca public road. The User Agency has stated that the limited frequency of transportation and the low volume of material will place minimal strain on the local village roads. However, during site visit by RO, the User Agency also assured that they will upgrade the connecting road as per their operational requirement, after obtaining approval from the concerned competent authority for the use of the public road. The State government has informed that the DFO, Boudh

Forest Division has reported that the land use plan is commensurate with the land use given in the approved mining plan.

- xxi. The State Government also informed that Lol was issued by the Govt. of Odisha, Steel and Mines Department vide letter dated 19.12.2022 wherein it has been mentioned that this Letter of Intent was valid for a period of 2 (two) years from the date of its issuance, within which time all the above conditions must be fulfilled and the Mining Lease deed must be executed between the Flux Minerals and the Government of Odisha. In case there is a delay in execution of Mining Lease deed due to reasons beyond the control of the Successful Bidder, then it may submit an application to Government of Odisha, requesting for further extension. The Lol has been extended vide letter dated 15.01.2025 which was valid up to 18.12.2025.
- xxii. The Regional Office, Bhubaneswar has carried out site inspection of the area and uploaded Site Inspection Report (SIR) on PARIVESH portal. The DDG (Central), Regional Office, Bhubaneswar has recommended the Proposal subject to the following conditions:
- a. The User Agency shall maintain the prescribed green belt and safety zone in accordance with applicable norms for dust containment, and shall adopt adequate dust suppression measures to minimise air pollution from mining operations.
 - b. As the Bagh River flows at a distance of approximately 140 metres from the southern boundary of the mining lease area, the State Government shall ensure that the User Agency takes effective measures to prevent the discharge of excavated material or mine wastewater into the river.
 - c. The User Agency shall submit a plan for concurrent and progressive reclamation, including a restoration schedule and a timeline for surrendering forest land, as required under Standard Condition 2(1).
 - d. As the proposed mining area is not connected to a regular electricity supply, the User Agency shall explore the installation of a solar power system to meet the project's electricity requirements and thereby reduce air pollution.
- xxiii. As per SIR by Regional Office, Bhubaneswar, a small river named Bagh River flows approximately 140 meters from the mining boundary. Bagh River is a tributary of River Mahanadi, joining it at Baunsuni. However, nodal officer informed that distance of the Bagh River is more than 140 meters from the mining lease boundary. The Committee observed that the Regional Office should verify the facts and inform the correct distance of the river from the mining lease.
- xxiv. The Committee observed that Quartz mining can generate fine silica dust, which may disperse into the surrounding forest area. Additionally, adequate dust suppression measures must be implemented by the User Agency throughout the mining operations to minimize the dust pollution.

- xxv. The Committee observed that the non-forest land involved has a very good density of trees and is better stocked than the forest land proposed for diversion. Therefore, the legal status of this land needs to be properly examined. In view of this, the State Government may be requested to submit detailed information regarding the legal status of the entire area within, as well as in the surroundings of, the mining lease boundary.
- xxvi. Proposal was considered in the last AC meeting held on 27.10.2025. 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 certain points for further consideration in the matter. Ministry through online EDS dated 11.11.2025 requested the State Government to furnish information as per recommendation of AC. In this reference, the State Govt. has replied through online vide letter no. 25246/9F (MG) 321/2025 dated 16.12.2025.
- xxvii. The Committee noted that details submitted by the State Government are as under:
- a. State Government has reported that the proposed production from this block will be 1686 tonnes per annum. The proposed production of 1686 tonnes per annum through manual, non-mechanized mining will generate only negligible fugitive dust. No blasting, or mechanized excavation or processing shall be involved; therefore, the generation of fine silica dust will be minimal. The limited working area further reduces the possibility of dust migration beyond the lease boundary. Hence, the surrounding forest area will not be impacted.
 - b. With respect to the impact on Bagh River, the river is located at distance of 933 metres from the lease boundary. There is no natural surface run-off or drainage channel from the mining site that leads towards the Bagh River. Given the small scale of operations and the absence of mechanized activity, no significant airborne dust is expected to travel such a distance. Therefore, no adverse impact on the water quality, aquatic ecology, or hydrological regime of Bagh River is anticipated. Further, the approved Mining Plan incorporates adequate environmental protection measures, including regular water sprinkling on approach roads and working faces.
 - c. The State Government has reported that the Lumerjhala Quartz Block covers 7.987 ha, of which 2.459 ha is recorded as forest land and 5.528 ha as non-forest land and only 3.773 ha is proposed for mining and allied activities. As per the authenticated land schedule and verification by the Tahasildar, Boudh, the forest portion has been confirmed as Recorded Forest based on revenue records. The remaining 5.528 ha stand classified as non-forest land as per RoR status as on 25.10.1980. The apparent vegetation in the non-forest portion in satellite imagery is mainly due to shrubs, bushes, creepers, and scattered trees, which does not alter its legally recorded status as non-forest land.

- d. The State Government has reported that the nearest distance from the ML boundary No. 4 to the Bagh River is 933 meters. The measurement has been carried out from the closest point of the lease boundary to the riverbank to ensure accuracy. However, State Government has not obtained verification from the Regional Office for distance of the mining lease boundary from the Bagh River in this regard.
 - e. The extended validity of Lol was for a period of one year. i.e up to 18.12.2025 issued by Steel & Mines department, Govt of Odisha vide letter No.381/S&M dt.15.01.2025.
 - f. The Regional Office vide letter No. .5-ORB715/2025-BHU dated 6th January, 2026 has stated that as per Google Earth imagery and DSS analysis, the minimum distance from the mining lease boundary to the Bagh River is approximately 930 meters. Further, it is observed that the Site Inspection Report (SIR) for Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/514821/2024, submitted by the Regional Office, incorrectly identifies the Canal as the Bagh River flowing at a distance of 140meters from the mining lease boundary. Hence, it is requested that this may be read as canal located at a distance of 140 meters from the mining lease boundary.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:-** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Bhubaneswar and the Nodal officer, Govt. of Odisha '*deferred*' the proposal for diversion of 2.459 ha of Revenue Forest Land within the block area of 7.987 ha of Lumurajhala (SE) Quartz Block allotted to M/s. Flux Minerals in village Lumurjena and Salepara under Boudh Forest Division in Boudh District for want of following information:
1. The extended validity of Lol was for a period of one year. i.e up to 18.12.2025 issued by Steel & Mines department, Govt of Odisha. The State Govt. shall submit the valid LOI in respect of the instant proposal.

Agenda No.30

Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/445466/2023

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 for diversion of 575.16 ha forest land for mining of Limestone Block in Katamater village by Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Limited in Malkangiri Tahasil of Malkangiri District under Malkangiri Forest Division (Online Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/445466/2023)-regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. 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 State Government of Odisha vide their letter No. FE-DIV-FLD-0045-2025-17122/FE&CC dated 11.07.2025 submitted above subject proposal seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
 - ii. The State Govt. has granted the mining lease for Limestone in respect of Kottameta Limestone Block over 802.25 ha under Malkangiri District for a period of 50 years in favour of M/s Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Limited as a "Successful Bidder" vide Govt. Proceeding No.5388/SM dt.25.05.2023.
 - iii. The said lease was executed and registered on 26.05.2023. The Mining Lease Deed has been executed on 26.05.2023 with a validity period of 50 years by the Collector, Malkangiri District.
 - iv. As per section 8A of Amendment MMDR Act, 2015 mining lease is valid for a period of 50 years i.e. upto 25.05.2073.
 - v. Total Mining Lease Area is 802.25 ha, which comprises 575.16 ha (462.247 ha Revenue Forest and 112.913 ha Sabik Forest) of forest land and Non-forest land over 227.09 ha (77.497 ha Non-forest Govt. land and 149.59 ha Non-forest Private Land) for mining, ancillary activities.
 - vi. Out of 575.16 ha, PRF is 186.220 ha and Revenue Forest is 388.940 ha. But, 186.220 ha of forest land has been notified as Kotamateru PRF under Section-4 of OFA, 1972 and the final notification is yet to be published u/s 21 of OFA, 1972. Hence, 186.22 ha has been reflected as Jungle Kissam in Land Schedule.
 - vii. The proposed forest area is 575.16 ha (Revenue Forest - 388.94 + PRF - 186.22) with canopy density of 0.35 (Eco Class-3) and total 85757 nos of trees have been proposed to be felled.
 - viii. The component wise break-up of the total forest land proposed for diversion is given below:

Sl. No.	Item	Forest Land (in Ha)	Non-Forest Land (in Ha)	Grand Total Land (in Ha)
1	Area to be excavated	365.78	145.726	511.506
2	Infrastructure including workshop Administrative Building etc.	0.610	2.633	3.243
3	Roads	0.72	1.357	2.077
4	Green Belt/Plantation	26.910	6.267	33.177
5	Mineral separation Plant	0.510	0.539	1.049

6	Future Exploration and Mining	180.630	70.568	251.198
	Grand Total	575.16	227.09	802.25

- ix. As per justification for locating the project in forest land submitted by the State Government that mining is 'a site-specific project with proven reserve of minerals. The State Govt. granted the mining lease for Limestone in respect of Kottameta Limestone Block over 802.25 ha under Malkangiri District for a period of 50 years in favour of M/s Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Limited as a "Successful Bidder" vide Govt. Proceeding No.5388/SM dt.25.05.2023.
- With the implementation of the proposed project, the living conditions of the population will improve. The project would be beneficial to the local people & the region in terms of infrastructure development, generation of direct & indirect employment avenues, establishment of small & medium scale engineering ancillaries, other small-scale industries with cascading direct and indirect employment opportunities; increased revenue to the state by way of royalty etc.
- x. It is predicted that with the commencing of the proposed project, the sources of income of the locals will definitely increase. Being an economically undeveloped area, the implementation of the proposed project, will positively improve the living standard of the locals and generate employment opportunities. Thus, there will be positive socio-economic impact. The mine shall be contributing to the State & Central Govt. exchequers by way of mining revenue of Rs.26.88 Crores/ year once mine comes into operation
- xi. The Compensatory afforestation has been proposed on 575.173 ha of Non-forest Govt. land in 8 patches in Kalimela and Khairput Tahasil. Further, to accommodate balance 324500 number of seedling, 952 ha of degraded forest land has been proposed in 20 patches.
- xii. As per DSS analysis of the proposal, the proposed forest land falls under Malkangiri district of Odisha State. The software calculated area of proposed forest land is found 574.046 ha. No Protected Area/Tiger Reserve/ Tiger Corridor is located within 10 Km radius of proposed forest land. The Proposed area falls in High Conservation Value (HCV) Zone based on Decision Rule 1 (as it falls within 250m buffer of Sabari/Kolab River) and Not in High Conservation Value (HCV) Zone based on Decision Rule 2. The Additional compensatory afforestation land has been proposed in a twenty patches over degraded forest land and its software- calculated area is found 951.819 ha. The Observation based on high resolution Google Earth images of the proposed ACA: Most of the proposed ACA sites are free from encroachment.
- xiii. DFO, Malkangiri Forest Division in SIR reported that the proposed tree felling is expected to adversely affect forest cover, disrupt wildlife habitats, and contribute to increased soil erosion.
- xiv. The Mining Plan has been approved by the Indian Bureau of Mines vide their Letter No. MCDR-MiFLOLST/5/2023-BBS-IBM RO BBS dated 07.08.2023 with validity period of 5 years.

- xv. No violation has been committed by the user agency on the forest area proposed for diversion as per Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam 1980.
- xvi. The proposed area does not form part of any National Park/ Wild life Sanctuary/ Biosphere reserve/ Tiger reserve/ elephant corridor etc. Also, the applied area is not forming part of any eco-sensitive zone of any protected area. No archaeological monument/ Heritage site/ Defence establishment etc. are located in the applied area. The total cost of this project is Rs24,500 Lakhs. This project will generate employment for 82 persons permanently and it will also create temporary employment for about 1500 persons.
- xvii. The Advisory Committee noted that the Ministry has granted permission under Section 2 (iii) of VSESA, 1980 vide letter no. 8-18/2022-FC dated 18.05.2023 over 575.16 ha of forest land within the granted ML area over 802.255 ha for Kottameta Lime Limestone mining in Katamateru village under Malkangiri Tahasil of Malakangiri District, Odisha by M/s Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Limited.
- xviii. After examination of the proposal, the Ministry vide its online EDS dated 31.07.2025 requested the State Government to submit additional information on certain points which include the compliance of the conditions of the approval dated 21.07.2023, detailed analysis of Cost Benefit ratio, justification for opening a new mine as per the provisions of the Para 7.8 of the Consolidated guidelines dated 29.12.2023, clarification regarding Satellite imagery shows that the agriculture land is visible in the proposed area for diversion, component wise breakup of Kottameta Limestone Mine , details of mineral evacuation plan, details regarding requirement of electricity and water, justification for the diversion of 180.630 hectare land for future exploration.
- xix. The State Government vide letter no. 19640/9F (MG)-373/2025 dated 18.09.2025 through online has submitted their reply.
- xx. The State Government has submitted the annual self-compliance submitted by Dalmia Cement (Bharat), which has already been certified and forwarded by the DFO, Malkangiri, to the Addl. PCCF, FD & NO, FC Act, O/o the PCCF & HoFF.
- xxi. The State Government has given justification for opening new mine that this new limestone mine has a proven mineral reserve of 97.50 MMT of high-quality cement-grade limestone (CaO: 45.865 & MgO: 0.75) as per the approved mining plan. This mining lease spans over 802.225 ha of land encompassing 575.16 ha of Forest land in Malkangiri District of Odisha. It was further informed that the identified land proposed for diversion was previously affected by shifting cultivation practices. However, based on recent field assessments, no ongoing instances of shifting cultivation have been observed. The State Government has reported that about 0.5 MW of power will be required for the instant project, which will be met from the State Electricity Board/ grid, and the evacuation line will be along the RoW of the existing all-weather road.

- xxii. Regarding the mineral evacuation plan, the State Government reported that there is an existing all-weather road extending approximately 17 km from Kotamateru (Katamater) village to State Highway-25, passing through the villages of Matapaka, Namgonda, and Sikhapali. This road is presently connected to a single kaccha road, which provides site access through Pillar No. 03. Future upgradation of this kaccha road, specifically for facilitating mineral evacuation from the proposed mines, may involve additional diversion of forest land. The land schedule pertaining to this kaccha road alignment is not yet finalized.
- xxiii. Regarding the justification for the diversion of 180.630 hectare land for future exploration, the State Government has reported that the Supreme Court of India, in their order of 6th July 2011, issued guidelines so as not to create a fait accompli situation in the matter of diversion of forest land under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980. Therefore, in the case of new mining lease projects having forest land in part or in full, approval under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980, for diversion of the entire forest land located within the mining lease project is to be obtained before execution or renewal of the mining lease project. The component-wise breakup of land in the proposal depicts that 251.198 ha has been proposed for future exploration and mining, out of which 180.630 ha is forest land and 70.568 ha is non-forest land.
- This mine is explored up to the G4/G3/G2 level. The complete area 251.198 ha including 180.630 ha will further be explored as per the provision of Rule 12(3) of MCDR -2017, which reads as "The holder of a mining lease shall carry out detailed exploration (G1 level) over the entire potentially mineralized area under the mining lease".
- xxiv. The State Government has reported that as per the approved mine plan, an area of 6.369 ha will be used for utility services, i.e., road, infrastructure, mineral separation and crushing plant, etc. (inadvertently mentioned as public use) and 251.198 ha land will be put for exploration in G1 level post. The User Agency will ascertain the quantum of land to be considered for mining and remaining land to be considered for ancillary activities. Till then, this will be maintained as a greenbelt. The State Government has submitted the Hydrological report & Rainwater harvesting plan.
- xxv. The Regional Office, Bhubaneshwar in SIR informed that out of the total 575.16 hectares of proposed forest land, 186.22 hectares constitute Protected Reserved Forest (PRF), while the remaining 388.94 hectares fall under Revenue Forest. The 186.22 hectares of PRF have been notified as Kotamateru Protected Forest under Section 4 of the Orissa Forest Act, 1972. However, the final notification under Section 21 of the said Act is yet to be issued. Furthermore, this 186.22 hectares has been recorded as "Jungle Kissam" in the land schedule submitted by the Tahasildar. The proposed mining lease area has been explored up to G4/G3/G2 level. In accordance with the provisions of Rule 12(3) of the Mineral Conservation and Development Rules

(MCDR), 2017, G1 level exploration has been proposed for the entire mining lease area, including the 180.63 hectares under consideration.

- xxvi. The Regional Office, Bhubaneswar in SIR informed that during the site inspection, no structures of religious or archaeological importance were found or reported within the proposed CA land. However, it was informed during the visit that the proposed non-forest Government land under KhairputTahasil falls within the Bonda tribal region of Odisha, where the Bonda community resides in isolated hill areas The Bonda, also known as the Remo, are regarded as one of the oldest and most primitive tribes of mainland India. It was also informed that the Bonda community has extended their consent for undertaking plantation activities at the proposed site, including incorporation of fruit-bearing species The activities will be carried out under the supervision of the Forest Department, ensuring community participation and facilitating smooth implementation of the scheme.
- xxvii. The Regional Office has recommended the Proposal for consideration under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, subject to the following conditions:
- a. Trees shall be felled in a phased manner, only when absolutely necessary, under the strict supervision of the State Forest Department Wherever feasible, suitable species shall be transplanted.
 - b. As the Sabari River flows along the western boundary of the proposed mining lease, no excavated material or mine wastewater shall be discharged into the river. To prevent this, an embankment shall be constructed along the riverbank at the cost of the User Agency, with the approval of the competent authority. In addition, a buffer plantation of appropriate width shall be developed and maintained along the riverbank by the User Agency, in consultation with the Forest Department and at the cost of the project proponent.
 - c. As submitted by the User Agency, an area of 251.198 hectares, including 180.63 hectares of forest land, shall be maintained as a green belt until detailed exploration in the G1 category is completed, based on which the final land use will be determined.
 - d. The State Forest Department 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.
 - e. The State Government shall ensure that all Additional Compensatory Afforestation (ACA) sites are free from encroachment prior to undertaking plantation activities. Wherever required, proper fencing shall be carried out at the cost of the User Agency in the case of Compensatory Afforestation sites in non-forest land (NFL) areas, the State shall ensure that the sites are properly fenced and afforested also at the cost of the User Agency.
- xxviii. On the basis of recommendations of Regional Office and examination in the Ministry, the proposal was considered 1st time in the AC meeting

held on 27.10.2025. 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 certain points for further consideration in the matter. The Ministry through online EDS dated 06.11.2025 requested the State Government to furnish information as per recommendation of AC.

xxix. In the absence of a nearby cement plant and with the plant location yet to be finalized, the State Government justified the limestone mining lease on site-specific geological grounds and its potential to support a backward, LWE-affected district through employment, allied economic activity, CSR benefits, and additional State revenue. The lessee deposited ₹112 crore on 26.05.2023 at lease execution. While production was required within two years under MMDR/MCR/MDPA, a final extension up to 25.05.2026 has been granted, after which non-commencement may lead to lease termination, necessitating timely clearances and compliance. The Kottameta Limestone Block, a virgin non-captive resource, is proposed to support a 2 MTPA integrated cement plant planned adjacent to the mine by Year-6; until then, limestone will be transported via road to Jeypore siding and onward by covered rakes to Rajgangpur, subject to strict compliance with forest diversion conditions, phased mining, and environmentally safe transport measures.

xxx. The State Government has not provided details of any additional forest land that may be required for the conveyor belt, coal handling, or related infrastructure. Further, it has been mentioned that road expansion would be necessary; however, details regarding the forest land involved in the same have not been submitted. The State Government shall examine the matter and furnish the requisite details in this regard. The State Government informed that the project proponent has requested the District Administration to upgrade the existing corridor; no additional forest land is proposed for evacuation at this stage.

Looking ahead, once the nearby cement plant site, as reported by the user agency, is finalized and land is allotted, crushed limestone is intended to move by conveyor, with the conveyor alignment to be fixed after plant land allocation to Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Limited. Pending that, evacuation will be done on the existing approach to SH-25, with attention to staged road improvements, dust suppression, speed discipline, and covered transport to minimize impacts on local communities and roadside vegetation.

xxxi. The State Government has reported that since the forest area involved in the proposal exceeds 100 hectares, State Government has submitted the site inspection report of the CCF (Nodal), O/o the PCCF & HoFF, Odisha duly countersigned by the Addl.PCCF (FD & No, FC Act). User Agency has furnished an undertaking duly countersigned by DFO, Malkangiri Forest Division wherein it has been stated that the 180.63 hectares of unexplored forest land will not be used for any purpose other than mining.

- xxxii. Sabari River (also known as the Kolab River) flows along the western side of the proposed mining block, with the distance between the mine boundary and the river ranging from 30 metres to 200 metres, the User Agency has submitted the Hydrological Report & Rain water Harvesting Plan of the project site.
- xxxiii. The proposal was considered 2nd time in the AC meeting held on 02.12.2025. 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 certain points for further consideration in the matter. Ministry through online EDS dated 13.12.2025 requested the State Government to furnish information as per recommendation of AC. In this reference, the State Govt. has replied through online vide letter no. 25887/9F (MG) – 373/2025 dated 26.12.2025.
- xxxiv. The Advisory Committee noted that details submitted by the State Government are as under:
- a. Regarding the upgradation of the exiting corridor by the district administration will be without use of additional forest land or otherwise, the State Government has reported that the User Agency has proposed to utilize only the existing evacuation route for transportation of limestone without construction of any new road or alternative alignment. The evacuation route comprises an existing all-weather black-top road passing adjacent to Katamatcru village and connecting directly with National Highway-326, along with a short stretch of existing kachha road measuring about 600 metres in length and covering an area of 0.765 ha. This kachha road connects the mine entry point near boundary pillar no.-3 with an existing PMGSY cement concrete road, which in turn links to the black-top road. As per verified Sabik and Hal revenue records, the entire stretch of the evacuation route (Kachha Road) falls under non-forest land classified as Kissam "Rasta" and does not involve any forest land.
 - b. Regarding an area of 180.63 hectares of unexplored forest land has been proposed to be maintained as a greenbelt. The state Government shall provide a justification for including this area in the present diversion proposal and clarify why it should not be excluded at this stage, The state Government shall also confirms whether the future use of this 180.63 ha for mining would entail changes in land use for other project components. Detailed information in this regard, along with the relevant provisions in this approved mining plan, shall be submitted. In this regard, the State Government has reported that that the Hon'ble supreme court of India, vide its order dated 6th July 2011, has laid down explicit guidelines to avoid creation of a fait accompli in matters relating to diversion of forest land provided in Para 7 .3 of Chapter-7 of van (SanrakshanEvamSamvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and Rule, 2023 dated 29.12.2023.

In pursuance of the said directions, it has been mandated that in case of new mining leases or projects involving forest land either in part or in entirety, prior approval for diversion of the entire forest land falling

within the mining lease area is required to be obtained under the provisions of the Act before execution or renewal of the mining lease. In compliance with the above judicial mandate, the instant project involving 575.16 ha of forest land, constituting the entire forest land within the mining lease, has already obtained approval of the Central Government under Section 2(iii) of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 vide order dated 18.05.2023 for execution of the mining lease, following which the mining lease was executed with the Government of Odisha on 26.05.2023 over a total mining lease area of 802.255 ha, including the said forest land.. Hence, 180.63 hectares of unexplored forest land to be included in the proposed forest land to be diverted.

- c. It is further submitted by the user Agency that the 180.63 ha of unexplored forest land proposed to be maintained as green belt is not a contiguous block but is spread throughout the mining lease area and fall in different patches in the lease area. As per the approved Mining Plan, detailed exploration is proposed during the first five years of mining operations of total 139 boreholes, out of which 103 boreholes are proposed in forest area. Out of 103 boreholes in forest land, 43 boreholes are specifically located within the aforesaid unexplored forest area of 180.63 ha. Based on the outcome of this detailed exploration, the delineation of mineralized and non-mineralized zones shall be finalized and the final conceptual land-use plan shall be prepared. At present, based on available geological data, the said 180.63 ha has been shown as undisturbed.
- d. Considering that limestone is a homogeneous sedimentary deposit without significant structural deformation, it is anticipated that the unexplored area may also contain limestone resources, and exclusion of this area at the present stage would substantially reduce the mineral potential and adversely affect the viability of the project. It is also clarified that forest clearance is a prerequisite even for carrying out exploration activities in the said unexplored forest area, and that actual mining operations in forest land can commence only after approval under Section 2 (1) (ii) of van (SanrakshanEvamSamvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. The user Agency has submitted earlier an undertaking that the 180.63 ha of unexplored forest land shall be maintained as green belt until completion of exploration and finalization of land use, and that the said area shall not be utilized for any purpose other than mining.
- e. As per the submitted compliance by the User Agency and the approved Mining plan, the area earmarked for future exploration and mining is 251.20 ha, comprising 180.63 ha of forest land and 70.568 ha of non-forest land, which has been considered as a separate component and does not impact other project components [vide the approved mining plan (table no. 6.2.11)]. Any change in land-use post detailed exploration shall be incorporated through a modified mining plan to be submitted to the Indian Bureau of Mines for approval. It is also pertinent to mention that Net Present Value amounting to ₹55.98 crore for the entire 575.16 ha of forest land has already been deposited, and the user Agency has committed to provide equivalent non-forest land for

compensatory afforestation against the total forest land proposed for diversion.

4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Bhubaneswar and the Nodal officer, Govt. of Odisha recommended the proposal for grant of ***'in-principle'*** approval for diversion of 575.16 ha forest land for mining of Limestone Block in Katamater village by Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Limited in Malkangiri Tahasil of Malkangiri District under Malkangiri Forest Division subject to the general, standard and following specific conditions:
- (i) Trees shall be felled in a phased manner, only when absolutely necessary, under the strict supervision of the State Forest Department. Further, wherever feasible, suitable species shall be transplanted.
 - (ii) As the Sabari River flows along the western boundary of the proposed mining lease, no excavated material or mine wastewater shall be discharged into the river. To prevent this, an embankment shall be constructed along the riverbank at the cost of the User Agency, with the approval of the competent authority. In addition, a buffer plantation of appropriate width shall be developed and maintained along the river bank by the User Agency, in consultation with the Forest Department and at the cost of the project proponent.
 - (iii) As submitted by the User Agency, an area of 251.198 hectares, including 180.63 hectares of forest land, shall be maintained as a green belt until detailed mineral exploration is completed, based on which the final land use will be determined.
 - (iv) The State Forest Department shall prepare and implement the Site-Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan for the adjoining landscape, at the cost of the User Agency, as approved by the Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW), Odisha,.
 - (v) The State Government shall ensure that all Additional Compensatory Afforestation sites are free from encroachment prior to undertaking plantation activities. Wherever required, proper fencing shall be provided at the cost of the User Agency. In the case of Compensatory Afforestation on non-forest land (NFL), the State Government shall ensure that the sites are duly fenced and afforested at the cost of the User Agency.
 - (vi) As per recommendation of State Government, livelihoods plan for at least one village near to the Mining lease area shall be prepared and implemented by the User Agency at project cost in consultation with the DFO, Malkangiri Forest Division.
 - (vii) The User Agency shall also prepare and implement a comprehensive Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) Plan at its own cost, with a focus on water security, to mitigate the impacts of open-cast mining. A copy of approved CAT plan shall be submitted along with compliance of Stage-1 approval.

- (viii) The User Agency shall demarcate and maintain the safety zone strictly in accordance with the applicable norms.
- (ix) The User Agency shall submit a progressive reclamation plan, a restoration schedule, and a timeline for the surrender of forest land.
- (x) The User Agency shall prepare and implement a detailed Soil and Moisture Conservation Plan to minimise the adverse effects of open-cast coal mining on adjoining forest areas.
- (xi) The State Government shall implement Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) measures in accordance with the applicable rules & Guidelines.

Agenda No. 32

Proposal No. FP/OR/TRANS/463389/2024

Sub: Proposal for *ex-post facto* approval under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 of diversion of 26.3443 ha of Revenue Forest land for construction of 132 KV transmission line from 132 KV OPTCL Grid (Barbil) to Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines of M/s JSW Steel Ltd. in Keonjhar Forest Division, Dist: Keonjhar, Odisha (Proposal No. FP/OR/TRANS/463389/2024)-regarding.

1. The agenda note for the above subject proposal was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The Nodal Officer, Govt. of Odisha 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. 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 thorough deliberation and discussion observed that:
 - i. The State Government of Odisha through their online proposal no. FP/OR/PWR_TRANS/463389/2024 submitted above subject proposal on dated 11.9.2024 on PARIVESH 2.0 portal seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 to Regional Office, Bhubaneswar.
 - ii. The Site inspection of the above project was carried out on 13.11.2024. During site inspection and in DSS analysis, it is observed that 6 nos. of towers were constructed on the proposed forest land prior to submission of the proposal. The towers have been removed once the Sabik status of the land was ascertained. On the date of site inspection the land was free from encroachment and transmission line have been removed. Since, the user agency has committed violation, as per Rule 10 (4) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules 2023, the

proposal file submitted along the site inspection report to Ministry by RO on 10.12.2024 for further necessary action

- iii. The Govt. of Odisha has informed that M/s JSW Steel Ltd. is operating 4 iron ore Mines in Odisha. M/s JSW Utkal Steel Ltd. intends to set up a Greenfield Integrated Steel Plant along with Captive Power Plant near Paradeep, Jagatsinghpur District for production of 13.2 MTPA crude steel with 10 MTPA cement plant and 900 MW power via Blast Furnace (BF)-Basic Oxygen Furnace (BOF)-Caster route, followed by hot & cold rolling for production of flat & long products.

In the 1st phase of the Integrated Steel Project, JSW plans to set up 20 MTPA Central Processing Unit, Grinding, Beneficiation-cum-Slurry Pumping Unit of 30 MTPA Capacity at Nuagaon and 10 MTPA Central Processing Unit at Narayanposhi with 6 MTPA Washing Unit in Odisha for transportation of raw material in slurry form through pipeline approximately over a distance of 300 Km to the proposed Integrated Steel Plant at Paradeep. M/s JSW Steel Ltd. is having a power requirement of 75 MW for the proposed Central Processing Unit, Grinding and Slurry Pumping Unit at Nuagaon Mines. It is assessed that the power can be provided from nearest 220 of 132 KV substation from Nuagaon Mines based on approval from OPTCL. There is a 132 KV Grid Sub-station at Barbil which is nearest and is connected from Joda 220/132 KV OPTCL Substation. Barbil Grid is the nearest source to avail the power at Nuagaon Mines. There is no other alternative EHT power source available in the vicinity of 50 Km radius from Nuagaon Mines.

The user agency has applied for 75 MW power to operate 30 MTPA Grinding and Beneficiation & Slurry pumping station units at Nuagaon Mines. Based on their requirement, OPTCL has conducted system study and feasibility. The connectivity permission has been released by OPTCL wherein, it has been approved to source the above mentioned power by drawing 132 KV power in a double circuit transmission line from Barbil 132/3 KV Grid Sub-station.

- iv. It is reported that in complying with the decision of the Project Screening Committee held under the Chairmanship of the PCCF (Nodal), Odisha on 20.03.2023, the co-ordination meeting was held at Bileipada on 05.04.2024 under the Chairmanship of RCCF, Rourkela to explore possibility of multi circuit transmission line. As per the decision taken in the aforesaid co-ordination meeting, M/s Tata Steel Ltd. and M/s JSW Steel Ltd. have mutually agreed to construct 44 nos. of multi circuit towers in the JSW Corridor. On the basis of above, M/s JSW Steel Ltd. will start construction of 132 KV double circuit transmission line from Barbil Grid Sub-station to Nuagaon Mines and will construct a 132/33 KV Sub-station to step down the voltage to further usages at Plant level.
- v. The State Govt. has reported that the line starts from Barbil Grid and terminates at the Nuagaon Mines in village Guali of Keonjhar District. In the same route many patches of forest land, many villages and NH crossing are there. The user agency has tried in all possible ways to

avoid forest while proposing the corridor but not found suitable route. In fact out of 103 spans (tower to tower distance) spread over 21 Km, only 9.8 Km span is passing over forest area. The user agency has succeeded in avoiding forest in rest of areas except these spans where no other option existed to re-route the line. Maximum emphasis has been given for conservation of flora and fauna along with undisturbed eco-system during the survey for transmission line demarcation. The selected alignment/route covers 26.3443 ha forest land including 11.3679 ha of Reserved Forest.

- vi. The total length of the 132 KV line will be about 21 Km out of which 9.8 Km is passing through forest area and 11.2 Km is through non-forest area. Total 104 nos. of towers will be erected consisting of 44 towers in forest area and 60 towers in non-forest area. The width of Right of Way (RoW) of the proposed transmission line is 27 mtr and minimum height of the tower is 27 meter.
- vii. Total land involved in this project is 56.798 ha comprising of 26.3443 ha of forest land (11.3679 ha of RF + 10.5908 ha of Revenue Forest + 4.3856 ha of Sabik Kisam Forest) and 30.4537 ha of non-forest land. The detailed land schedule of forest and non-forest land involved in the project including status of forest and non-forest land as on 25.10.1980 duly authenticated by Tahasildar, Barbil and DFO, Keonjhar has been furnished the proposal. The purpose wise break of total land involved in this project is given below:

Purpose of Utilization	Area (in Ha)					
	Reserve Forest	Revenue Forest	Sabik Forest	Total Forest	Non-Forest	Grand Total
Construction of 132 KV Transmission Line	11.3679	10.5908	4.3856	26.3443	30.4537	56.798
Total	11.3679	10.5908	4.3856	26.3443	30.4537	56.798

- viii. It has been mentioned in the proposal that Sidhamath Reserved Forest is the dwelling habitat for elephant (*Elephas indicus*), Leopard (*Panthera pardus*), Sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*), Barking Deer (*Munticus muntjak*), Hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*), Porcupine (*Hystrix indica*), etc. Wild elephants often visit Sidhamath Reserve Forest and the adjoining forest blocks. However, no wildlife was seen during site inspection.
- ix. The Elephant corridor Karo-Karampada is situated about 3.5 km from the proposed forest area. The proposed site falls under Elephant Zone-2 as per the book titled Remote Sensing Application for characterization of elephant habitat and corridor in Odisha and parts of Bihar published by ORSAC in September, 1999.
- x. The forest land applied for diversion forms part of Sidhamatha RF and adjoining revenue forest land. Sidhamatha RF falls under forest type 3C/c 2e (iii) moist peninsular valley sal. The prevailing vegetation in the forest land proposed for diversion includes Sal and Sal associates. The

geological formation of this area is quite suitable for growth of Sal. Sal constitutes around 70 to 75 % of the top canopy. The canopy density of the prevailing forest growth varies from 0.2 to 0.8.

Pure patches of Sal along with miscellaneous Sal associates occurs in Sidhamatha RF. The prevalence of pole crop to middle aged Sal crop in this area indicates the shifting cultivation in the past and the crop can therefore be considered to be of secondary origin. The average canopy density of the forest area proposed for diversion is found to be 0.6. The canopy density of RF where transmission line will pass is of around 0.6.

- xi. Total 6388 (4013 number of sound trees and 2375 number of unsound trees) standing in the forest land proposed for diversion of 26.3443 ha. Total 1323 number of trees (703 number of sound and 620 number of unsound trees) have been enumerated in the non-forest land over 30.4537 ha.
- xii. The DFO, Keonjhar reported that the proposed forest land applied for construction of 132 KV transmission line form 132 KV OPTCL Grid (Barbil) to Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines of M/s JSW Steel Ltd. is located in part of Sidhamath Reserved Forest and over passes through RF at 3 locations.
- xiii. The applied area does not form a part of any National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary, Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve, Elephant Corridor etc. and also the applied area does not involve any eco-sensitive zone of any Protected Area.
- xiv. In lieu of 26.3443 ha of forest land proposed for diversion, State Govt. has identified 54.387 ha or say 54.00 ha degraded forest land in Kuanar DPF under BJP Range of Keonjhar Forest Division for raising compensatory afforestation. There are two patches such Patch-A and Patch-B comprising of 47.596 ha and 6.791 ha respectively. As per report of DFO, Keonjhar plantation will be carried out over 27.00 ha and SMC, regeneration activities will be carried out in the balance 27.00 ha. The DFO, Keonjhar furnished the land suitability certificate, free from encroachment & encumbrances, not allotted previously to any organization etc with the proposal.
- xv. The DFO, Keonjhar has prepared a C.A. Scheme for planting AR mode of plantation over 27.00 ha @ 1000 plants per hectare with 10 years maintenance. The PCCF (Nodal), Odisha has technically approved the C.A. Scheme with a total financial outlay of ₹2,64,17,800/-. The copy of approved C.A. Scheme has been furnished with the proposal.
- xvi. The project does not involve displacement of any human habitation and therefore resettlement and rehabilitation plan not required.
- xvii. The State Govt. has informed that the cost benefit analysis has been worked out by DFO, Keonjhar as per the guidelines of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. Total benefit of the project comes to Rs.3556.2827 Lakhs and the loss in forest including Environmental loss, NPV cost etc. comes to ₹10,21,06,024.41. Hence, the Cost Benefit Ratio is 1:28.71.

- xviii. The DFO has recommended the proposal with following conditions:
- a. The Transmission pole shall be fenced in such a way that Elephant any case, cannot tinker with it e.g. putting spikes at 5-6 feet height. It should be made with Iron rope fence and not merely barbed wire fencing.
 - b. Around base of pole chhaka grass mats/ pads are to be put to avoid soil erosion.
 - c. Sidhamath Reserve forest is rich in Siali creepers. Except tall trees, all other shrubs, bushes including Siali must be kept undisturbed except area required for raising and stringing tower and conductor. As such, the submitted diversion proposal over 26.3443 ha forest land under Keonjhar Forest Division for construction of 132 KV Transmission Line from 132 KV OPTCL Grid (Barbil) to Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines of M/s JSW Steel Ltd in Keonjhar District, Odisha may be considered under section-2(ii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
- xix. The Nodal Officer has recommended the proposal and informing that this project was taken up in the interest of manufacturing of precious and non-ferrous metals. This project intent to set up of green field integrated steel plant and with captive power plant. In the first phase of the integrated steel project, JSW plans to set up 20 MTPA Central Processing Unit for which it is Recommended for diversion of 26.3443 ha of forest land for construction of 132 KV Transmission Line from 132 KV OPTCL Grid at Barbil to Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines under Keonjhar Forest Division of Keonjhar District, Odisha by M/s JSW Steel Ltd. for approval under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
- xx. On examination of the proposal, it has been observed that earlier State Govt. vide letter No.FE-DIV-FLD-0006-2023-3623/FE&CC dated 27.02.2023 had submitted a proposal for diversion of 26.268 ha of forest land for construction of 132 KV transmission line from 132/33 KV OPTCL Grid Station at Barbil to Nuagaon Iron ore Mines of M/s JSW Steel Ltd. Regional Office has sought certain information from State Govt. on 23.03.2023.
- xxi. The user agency vide letter No.JSW/S/O/2023/25 dated 17.09.2024 addressed to Nodal Officer, Odisha has withdrawn the above proposal citing the following reasons:
- a. The OPTCL has subsequently changed the location of bay at the substation end at the opposite end w.r.t. original planned space. This has necessitated the user agency to cross three no. of 132 KV lines and technically very challenging to cross three lines simultaneously at one location,
 - b. After their application, M/s Rungta has laid 132 KV line that runs close to their proposed route,
 - c. A storage shed has been constructed by a private company and it is not allowing them to draw the line over its shed & the proposed route was close to a habitation area.

xxii. The RO has carried out SIR and the main observations in the SIR are as under:

- a. JSW Steel Ltd has also formed JSW Utkal Steel Limited as a Non-Government Company incorporated on 16th November, 2017. This company will deal with manufacture of precious and non-ferrous metals. JSW steel is also operating 4 iron ore mines in Odisha. M/s JSW Utkal Steel Limited intends to set up a Greenfield Integrated Steel Plant along with Captive Power Plant (CPP) near Paradeep, Jagatsinghpur district for production of 13.2 MTPA crude steel with 10 MTPA cement plant and 900 MW power via Blast Furnace (BF)-Basic Oxygen Furnace (BOF)-Caster route, followed by hot and cold rolling for production of flat and long products. In the 1st phase of the Integrated Steel project, JSW plans to set up 20 MTPA Central Processing Unit, Grinding Beneficiation-cum-Slurry Pumping unit of 30 MTPA capacity at Nuagaon and 10 MTPA Central Processing unit at Narayanposhi with 6 MTPA washing unit in Odisha for transportation of raw material in slurry form through pipe line approximately over a distance of 300 km to the proposed ISP plant at Paradeep.

M/s JSW Steel Ltd is having a power requirement of 75 MW for the proposed CPU, Grinding and Slurry pumping units at Nuagaon mines. It was informed that the power can be provided from nearest 220 or 132 KV substation from Nuagaon mines based on approval from OPTCL. There is 132 KV grid substation at Barbil which is nearest and is connected from Joda 220/132 KV OPTCL Sub station. Barbil Grid is the nearest source to avail the power at Nuagaon Mines. It was informed that there is no alternative EHT power source available in the vicinity of 50 kms radius from Nuagaon mines. The user agency has applied for 75 MW power to operate 30 MTPA grinding and beneficiation and slurry pumping station units at Nuagaon mines.

Based on their requirement, OPTCL has conducted system study and feasibility. The connectivity permission has been released by OPTCL wherein, it has been approved to source the above mentioned power by drawing 132 KV power in a double circuit transmission line from Barbil 132/33 KV grid substation. OPTCL has allotted the power in 2 phases. In 1st phase, JSW can draw up to 35 MW and in 2nd phase JSW can draw additional 40 MW, totaling 75 MW.

It was informed that in complying with the decision of the Project Screening Committee held under the chairmanship of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Odisha on 20.03.2024, the coordination meeting was held at Bileipada on 05.04.2024 under the chairmanship of RCCF, Rourkela to explore possibility of multi circuit transmission line. As per the decision taken in the aforesaid coordination meeting, M/s Tata Steel and M/s JSW Steel Ltd have mutually agreed to construct 44 numbers of multi circuit towers in the JSW corridor. Accordingly, JSW will start construction of 132 KV double circuit transmission line from Barbil Grid Substation to Nuagaon mines and will construct a 132/33 KV substation to step down the voltage to further usages at plant level. The corridor for 132 KV line is as follows:

1.	Total length of the line	21 km
2.	Right of Way Corridor	27 meter
3.	Number of towers to be erected	104
4.	Number of towers to be erected in forest area	44
5.	Number of towers to be erected in non forest area	60
6.	Length of line passing through forest area	9.8 km
7.	Length of line passing through non forest area	11.2 km
8.	Minimum height of the tower	27 meter

The line starts from Barbil grid and terminates at the Nuagaon mines at village Guali, Keonjhar. After carrying out various options, JSW Steel Ltd has selected a route which involves minimum forest land. The total length of 132 KV line will be about 21 km consisting of 104 towers of various types as approved by OPTCL. Maintaining a corridor of 27 meters, the total area covered by the line comes to be 56.7980 ha. Out of this 26.3443 ha comprises of forest land while balance 30.4537 ha falls in non forest area.

- b. Degraded Forest land over 54.387 or say 54 ha i.e. twice the forest area proposed for diversion has been identified in Kuanar DPF under BJB Range in Keonjhar Forest Division for compensatory afforestation. These CA sites were visited during site inspection. There were shifting cultivation noticed in this degraded forest land earmarked for CA.

However, during discussion with the DFO, Keonjhar and the local communities inhabiting the adjacent area, it was informed that a Gramsabha has been conducted and it has been agreed upon that the Forest Department will take up CA in the area by planting native fruit bearing trees and the usufructs will be shared by the local communities and as a reciprocal commitment they will guard and take care of the CA plantation area. This is a win-win situation and needs to be replicated in other such CA sites where traditionally shifting cultivation is being practiced. The DFO, Keonjhar Forest Division has prepared CA scheme for planting AR mode of plantation over 27 ha @1000 plants per ha.

- c. The land suitability certificate for 54 ha of degraded forest land in Kuanar DPF under BJB Forest Range of Keonjhar Division has been submitted by the DFO, Keonjhar Forest Division.
- d. The financial outlay of CA scheme has been approved by the PCCF (FD & NO), Nodal, FC Act for ₹2,64,17,800.
- e. During site inspection, it was reported that no violation has been observed in respect of the forest land involved in the instant diversion proposal. In DSS analysis 7 towers were noticed on the proposed site in Revenue Forest land. They were visited on field. The observations are mentioned below:

Tower ID	Latitude	Longitude	Village Name	Status of land	Remarks
1	22° 3'5.16"N	85°19'24.77"E	Kanrda	Tenant	Tower

				land (non forest)	number 2,3,4,5,7 have been demolished and removed from the project site
2	22° 3'7.13"N	85°19'29.64"E	Lasarda	Sabik jungle	
3	22° 3'5.73"N	85°19'58.51"E	Lotapani	Sabik jungle	
4	22° 3'6.07"N	85°20'4.63"E	Lotapani	Sabik jungle	
5	22° 3'25.44"N	85°20'26.88"E	Kolhabarapada	Hal jungle	
6	22° 3'31.36"N	85°20'29.55"E	Kolhabarapada	Sabik forest	
7	22° 5'0.88"N	85°21'44.62"E	Kolhabarapada	Sabik forest	

Towers were constructed on the proposed site prior to the submission of proposal. They have been removed once the Sabik status of the land was ascertained. On the date of site inspection the land was free from encroachment and the transmission lines have been removed. Photographs enclosed.

- f. The project does not involve displacement of any human habitation and therefore the Re-settlement and Rehabilitation plan is not warranted.
 - g. The project may generate regular employment of 15 persons and temporary employment of 60 persons during construction phase and provide temporary employment to 4560 man days during operational phase.
 - h. The elephant corridor namely Karo-Karampada is situated about 3.5 km from the proposed forest area.
 - i. Since the towers have been removed from the revenue forest land on the project site, we may recommend the proposal with 5 times NPV and standard conditions as deemed fit.
- xxiii. The Deputy Direction General of Forests has recommended the proposal informing that in the site inspection report the DIGF (C) has pointed out that 6 towers were constructed over 0.06 Ha of forest land. But, later when it came to the notice that the land in question is Sabik forest land, the towers were removed and the land has been made encroachment free. Diversion of 26.3443 ha of forest land is recommended with 5 times Penal NPV over the area where violation has been done and with other general standard conditions.
- xxiv. Proposal was considered in the last AC meeting held on 26.12.2024. 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 certain points for further consideration in the matter. The Ministry through online EDS dated 13.01.2025 requested the State Government to furnish information as per recommendation of AC. In this reference, the State

Govt. has replied through online vide letter no. 21649/9F (Trans) – 38/2024 dated 27.10.2025 uploaded on Parivesh portal on 18.12.2025.

xxv. The Committee noted that details submitted by the State Government are as under:

- 1) State Government has reported that the User Agency in their compliance categorically mentioned that Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines will only supply the Iron Ore to the Steel Plant, at Paradeep under the entity of JSW Utkal Steel Limited for manufacturing of Steel as supplied to other mines of JSW. Further, the power so obtained from the proposed Grid will be utilized for establishment of Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines, which is not a part of JSW Utkal Steel Limited under which the Steel Plant is coming up at Paradeep.
- 2) State Government has reported that the instant proposal for diversion of 26.3443 ha forest land for construction of 132 KV Transmission Line from 132 KV OPTCL Grid (Barbil) to Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines of M/s JSW Steel Ltd. Accordingly, the Degraded Forest Land over 54.00 ha i.e. twice the forest land proposed to be diverted has been identified in Kunar DPF under BJP Range in Kconjhar Forest Division. The Range Officer, BJP Range has submitted the Joint Verification/ Suitability Certificate wherein it has been mentioned that, out of 54.00 ha, 27.00 ha is suitable for plantation @ 1000 seedlings/ha and balance 27.00 ha can be taken up towards SMC activities. Accordingly, the Compensatory Afforestation Scheme has been prepared over an area of 54.0 ha and the financial outlay of CA Scheme over an area of 54 ha has been approved by this office.
- 3) The PCCF (WL) & CWLW, Odisha, Bhubaneswar has furnished the comments are as follows:
 - a) Detailed survey and design aspects are firmed up, both M/s. JSW Steel Limited and M/s. Tata Steel Limited have appraised the development to OPTCI and necessary approvals for tower schedule are obtained.
 - b) The detailed project design is finalized having provision for laying of four number of circuits.
 - c) Height of the tower is to be increased to ensure that the clearance of bottom conductor remain more than 20 meters.
 - d) An estimated 17 nos., of towers will be erected in Sidhamath Reserved Forest and each tower structure will be effectively fenced up to a height of 4 meters.
 - e) The above mitigation measures have been taken up to mitigate any probable negative impact the wildlife of the area. The height of the transmission line towers will be raised, and the user agency will use double circuit transmission line, so that multiple user agencies can use the same infrastructure in order to prevent further fragmentation.
 - f) The proposal is recommended from wildlife point of view subject to the condition that the Project Proponent will incorporate the mitigative

measures as suggested by the DFO, Keonjhar Forest Division during the preparation of the Site-Specific Wildlife Management Plan.

- 4) State Government has reported that forest diversion proposal over an extent of 26.268 ha was applied for laying of 132 KV Transmission line from OPTCL Grid Barbil to Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines vide proposal No. FP/OR/TRANS/155005/2022. It is submitted by the User Agency that, due to change in allocation of space at OPTCL Grid, construction activities were undertaken by Pvt. land owners on the route proposed in their earlier proposal. Hence, there was a slight deviation in the route proposed earlier. Keeping in view, these developments, JSW has withdrawn its application (under Proposal No. FP/OR/TRANS/155005/2022-BHU for diversion of 26.268 ha vide letter No. JSW/S/Q/2023/25 on dated 13.06.2023.
 - 5) State Government has reported that all the towers erected in forest land i.e. Tower No. 2,3,4,5,6 & 7 have already been demolished & removed from the forest land. Now, the said land is free from encroachment.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Bhubaneshwar and the Nodal officer, Govt. of Odisha recommended the proposal for grant of '*in-principle*' approval for diversion of 26.3443 ha of Revenue Forest land in favour of M/s JSW Steel Ltd. for construction of 132 KV transmission line from 132 KV OPTCL Grid (Barbil) to Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines in Keonjhar Forest Division, Dist: Keonjhar, Odisha subject to the general, standard and following specific conditions:
- (i) The State Government shall initiate necessary action regarding violations of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, on the 0.06 ha of forest land, in accordance with the provisions of Sections 3A and 3B of the Adhiniyam.
 - (ii) The State Govt. shall impose penal CA as per the guidelines dated 21.1.2026 issued by the Ministry.
 - (iii) The User Agency shall pay the five (5) times penal NPV for the extent of violation done along with 12 percent simple interest from the date of raising of such demand till the deposit is made by the User Agency.

Agenda No. 33

Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/484312/2024

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of Central Government under Section 2 (1) ii) of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 205.209 ha forest land Including Safety Zone over 12.662 ha within the total Block area of 781.787 ha for non-forest purpose in respect of Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines under Keonjhar Forest Division of Keonjhar District in Odisha of M/s JSW Steel Ltd. (Online Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/QRY/484312/2024)- regarding.

1. The agenda note for the above subject proposal was considered by the Advisory Committee (AC) in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The Nodal Officer, Govt. of Odisha 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. 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 thorough deliberation and discussion observed that:
 - i. The State Government of Odisha vide their letter No. FE-DIV-FLD-0120-2021-25205/FE&CC dated 16.08.2025 submitted above subject proposal seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 through PARIVESH 2.0 portal.
 - ii. Government of Odisha in Steel & Mines Department have awarded the Letter of Intent vide letter No 2291/S&M, Bhubaneswar dated 02.03.2020 for grant of Mining Lease for Iron Ore in favour of M/s JSW Steel Ltd, the successful bidder in respect of Nuagaon Iron ore Black over an area of 767.284 ha as per RoR (776.969 ha as per DGPS) In Nuagoan, Barpada, Gandhalpada, Guali, Katesahi, Kendudih, Kolharudukela, Panduliposi and Topadihi villages under Barbil Tahasil of Keonjhar district and Barbil Range of Keonjhar Forest Division.
 - iii. The Nuagaon Iron Ore Mine is an operational open-cast project with an annual production capacity of approximately 6 million tonnes (MT). The mining lease, covering a total block area of 781.787 ha, was originally executed in favour of Karamchand Thapar and Brothers Pvt. Ltd. for the period 04-03-1959 to 03-03-1979, and was subsequently transferred to Hindustan General Electrical Corporation (HGEC) in 1967. The lease was renewed for HGEC from 04-03-1979 to 03-03-1999, during which period it was transferred to M/s KJS Ahluwalia on 18-12-1984.
 Following a second renewal (04-03-1999 to 03-03-2019), the lease was auctioned by the Government of Odisha in 2020 under the amended Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957. M/s JSW Steel Ltd. acquired the lease as the successful bidder. In accordance with Section 8A of the MMDR Act, 1957, the lease is now valid for a 50-year term, extending up to 2070.
 - iv. As per the Record of Rights (ROR), the leasehold comprises 644.570 ha of forest land and 137.217 ha of non-forest land. Since the forest land within the lease was classified as Revenue Forest under the jurisdiction of the State Revenue Department, formal diversion was not sought until the Hon'ble Supreme Court's landmark judgement dated 12-12-1996. The project subsequently obtained Environmental

Clearance (EC) in 2021 for an enhanced ore production capacity of 7.99 MTPA.

- v. The previous lessee, M/s KJS Ahluwalia, had secured Stage-II forest clearance for 371.192 ha (Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/476/2001) vide orders dated 22-04-2004. An additional 63.3 ha of 'Sabik' forest land—recorded as non-forest in current revenue records but classified as forest as of 25-10-1980—received Stage-II clearance on 12-02-2024 (Proposal No. FP/OR/MIN/18827/2016) as per the Ministry's letter dated 16-09-2021, all approvals previously accorded to the prior lessee have been vested in the current user agency, M/s JSW Steel Ltd.
- vi. Furthermore, National Highway 520 (NH-520) traverses the lease, effectively bisecting the area. A forest area of 4.869 ha within the lease boundary falls under the highway, for which the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has already obtained diversion permission. Consequently, after accounting for the previously diverted areas and the highway land (644.570 ha- 371.192ha - 63.3ha - 4.869ha), the remaining 205.209 ha of admittedly unbroken forest land is the subject of the current diversion proposal.
- vii. The total cost of the project has been estimated to be 2000.0 crore. The total estimated mineable reserve of mineral is 628.77 MMT. Out of this the estimated reserve in forest land comes to 518.65 MMT.
- viii. The completeness and correctness of the filed proposal was approved in the 72nd Project Screening Committee held on 07.07.2025 under the chairmanship of the Additinal Principal Chef Conservator of Forests (Nodal).
- ix. The State Govt. has submitted the justification for locating the project in forest land stating that Nuagaon Iron Ore Block has been allotted through auction and as always mining is site specific. More than 80% area is falling under forest land in Mineralized zone area and the valuable mineral deposit of iron ore falls in forest land. Considering the demand of the above mineral by the growing Industries and also for captive use of Steel industries, the exploitation of such mineral from the area is very essential to cater to their own industry.

Since, the occurrence of the above mineral is site specific, which happens to fall in forest land, the area is required for diversion to win these minerals. The Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM), Nagpur has declared that the cut-off grade of Iron Ore is 45% Fe content (minimum) and it will be possible to Increase the percentage of iron ore by using mineral processing plant. The maximum ore bearing zone coming under forest area contains minimum grade of 55% Fe and maximum grade of 65% Fe. Hence, to carry out the mining and ancillary activities in forest land, proposal has been submitted for diversion.

However, the mining and ancillary activities have been proposed in a conservative way to meet the requirement only which is located in forest land as no alternative is there and at the end of the mining, the entire utilized area will be reclaimed & rehabilitated with plantation as per the Mine Closure Plan & Reclamation Plan. This would definitely

enhance the financial resources of the state in shape of Royalty and other taxes etc. Moreover, the project is site specific as mineral deposits do occur in the appropriate sites.

- x. Total forest land in the Mining Lease block over 781.787 ha is 644.570 ha. Forest diversion within the mining block has been accorded in two phases in first phase 371.192 ha forest land has been diverted in favour of ex-lessee on 21.04 2004. The transfer of approval granted by Govt. of India, MoEF & CC under Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 vide F No 8-17/2001-FC dtd 22.04.2004 from the erstwhile User Agency M/s KJS Ahluwala to M/s JSW Steel Ltd. was accorded by the state Govt. for non-forestry use of 371 192 ha of forest land for mining In Nuagaon Iron Ore under Keonjhar Forest Division, Barbil Tahasil Dist-Keonjhar, Odisha.
- xi. Further, 63.30 ha forest land has been diverted in favour of the present lessee on 12.02.2024. The National Highway No.520 which runs from Remull to Rajamaunda passes through the mining Lease of Nuagaon Iron Ore Block of JSW Steel Limited. The NH alignment covers 4.869 ha Forest land and 0.756 ha of non-forest land of the Mining Lease. The NH project has been accorded Stage-II approval for the stretches passes through the Mining Lease. The NH authority has not issued any "No Objection Certificate" to the present lessee for the diversion of the area for mining within the Mining Lease area.
- xii. The pattern of utilization of forest and non-forest land proposed for diversion as per the Site Inspection Report of DFO, Keonjhar Forest Division as well as RCCF, Rourkela is furnished below. The DFO, Keonjhar Forest Division has furnished the pattern of utilization of forest land in his Site Inspection Report based on the DGPS area le 201.683 ha. However, EDS was raised in the 69th PSC meeting to consider the RoR area for the purpose of diversion. The DFO, Keonjhar Forest Division vide his memo No 6359 dt. 20.06.2025 has complied the EDS wherein he has changed the pattern of utilization of the forest land based on the RoR area of the lease:

Sl. No.	Particular	Area put to use at end of plan period (Ha)				
		Forest	Sabik	Total	Non-Forest	Total
1	Mining with haul road & Temporary stacking yard	35.634	29.865	65.499	49.738	115.237
2	Waste Dump	1.537	0.000	1.537	0.000	1.537
3	Mineral storage	62.121	10.783	72.904	10.263	83.167
4	Infrastructure outer limit	0.029	0.510	0.539	11.862	12.401
5	Township area	0.213	1.257	1.470	0.931	2.401
6	Mineral processing plant (Grinding, Crushing, CPU,	29.967	5.593	35.560	33.994	69.554

	Beneficiation & other ancillaries with mineral storage					
7	Green belt	7.785	5.628	13.413	21.323	34.736
8	Others (Magazine)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	Sub-Total	137.286	53.636	190.922	128.111	319.033
9	Safety Zone	8.364	4.298	12.662	5.954	18.616
10	Public Purposes (Road, nallah etc.)	0.000	1.625	1.625	2.396	4.021
Proposed diversion for		145.650	59.559	205.209	136.461	341.670

- xiii. The average canopy density taken into consideration is 0.5, Eco Value Class-I. The total nos, of trees enumerated over forest land comes to 26,608/-.
- xiv. Total CA proposed in the proposal is 207.068 ha on Non-Forest land. Total patches of CA are five (5). The Non-Forest land identified for CA can accommodate only 60,000 saplings towards CA plantations. For planting remaining number of 140,000 plants, 240 ha of Degraded Forest land identified for CA. Total patches for CA are 7 (as per DSS Report) and 5 patches (as per State Forest Department).
- xv. As reported by the DFO, Keonjhar Forest Division, the applied site is the dwelling habitat of Faunal species such as Elephant, Bear (*Melursus ursinus*), Barking deer (*Muntiacus muntzak*), Hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*), porcupine (*Hystrix indica*) etc. The proposed site falls under Elephant habitat zone-2 as per the book titled Remote Sensing Application characterization of elephant habitat and corridor in Odisha and parts of Bihar published by ORSAC In September, 1999.
- xvi. 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 an area of 767.284 ha (as per RoR)/ (776.969 ha as per DGPS) in respect of Nuagaon Iron Ore Block In Keonjhar District in favour of JSW Steel Ltd vide L. No MPM/A/03-ORI/BHU/2021-22 dated 31.05.2021.
- xvii. A detailed scheme of reclamation and afforestation has been prepared to reclaim and stabilize the mined out undulating areas and the saturated dumps and by taking up plantations.
- xviii. The user agency i.e. previous lessee i.e. M/s K.J.S. Ahluwalia & Present lessee i.e. M/s JSW Steel Limited has used 17.81 ha of forest land (Revenue Forest over 14.09 ha + SabikKissam Forest over 3.72 ha) within the mining lease area of said Mines without obtaining the approval of MoEF& CC, Govt. of India, New Delhi. Revenue Department has booked eight nos of cases in the name of previous lessee and four cases vide Case No 40/2025-26, 41/2025-26, 42/2025-26 & 43/2025-26 in the name of present lessee (M/s JSW Steel Limited).

- xix. Regarding the water stream and canal is visible in Addl. CA land, the State Government has informed that degraded forest land over 240.00 ha has been identified over 05 patches for ACA. It is a fact that, one water canal and a stream exist in the aforesaid ACA land Keeping the ground conditions and taking care of the above features, plantation of 500 seedlings/ha has been planned in the said ACA patch.
- xx. After examination of the proposal, Ministry vide its letter dated 10.11.2025 through online requested the State Government to submit additional information on certain points which include the water stream and canal is visible in Addl. CA land, Cultivation land is visible in the proposed CA, comments of PCCF (Wildlife) and CWLW, correct cost benefit analysis, detail of the violation etc. In the response of the Ministry's letter, State Government vide letter no. 23799/9F (MG) – 29/2025 dated 26.11.2025 through online has submitted their reply
- xxi. With regard to cultivation land and kachha road visible in proposed CA land, State Government has reported that an area of 207.068 ha of Non-Forest Govt. land been identified for raising of compensatory afforestation village meetings were conducted in 3 villages i.e. Talabali (Jamudiha), Budhighar and Upper Bali. It was resolved that villagers did not have any objection to carrying out plantation activities on the said land and they suggested for planting of fruit bearing trees there. Further, kachha road is an old one, which was used by the local people earlier.
- xxii. The State Government has reported that the enumeration of trees has not been done on sampling basis but it has been done for all standing trees (census) over the entire forest land applied for diversion.
- xxiii. The State Government has reported that in view of the presence of elephant in the buffer zone area, site-specific wildlife conservation plan for Nuagaon Mine has been prepared by DFO, Keonjhar and approved by the PCCF & Chief Wildlife Warden, Odisha, Bhubaneswar vide his letter No 1834 dated 25 02 2022
- xxiv. The State Government has reported that the violation on 17.81 ha of revenue forest land within the mining lease area has been done during the previous lessee period (i.e. before 31 March, 2020) and the said violation is continued in some patches from the previous lessee period till date. Revenue Department has booked eight nos of cases in the name of previous lessee and four cases vide Case No 40/2025-26, 41/2025-26, 42/2025-26 & 43/2025-26 in the name of present lessee (M/s JSW Steel Limited).
- xxv. The State Government has reported that for raising of Compensatory Afforestation, 207.068 ha of Non-Forest Govt land has been identified. Out of the total 207.068 ha of Non-Forest Govt. land, an area of 119.453 ha (107.453 ha in Village Bali + 12.00 ha in Village Budhighar) is found suitable for plantation @ 500 nos of seedlings per ha and thereby, total 59,726 nos of seedlings can be accommodated there. In order to compensate the shortfall of plantation of 1,47,374 or 1,47,500 nos of seedlings (2,07,100 - 59,726), degraded forest land of 240.00 ha

for Additional Compensatory Afforestation has been identified in 05 nos of patches across 03 forest Ranges of Keonjhar Forest Division.

- xxvi. The State Government has reported that Mining Plan has been prepared for the entire Mining Lease area of 776.969 ha comprising of 641.044 ha of Forest land & 135.925 ha of Non-Forest land.
- xxvii. With regard to explore and shift the non-site specific activities i.e. mineral storage, Mineral processing plant, township on non-forest land, the State Government has reported that the user agency has intimated that, presence of non-forest land within the lease is in a scattered manner. It is technically not feasible to accommodate the layouts of these facilities completely in non-forest area. The storage of mineral, crushing & screening are intermediary and integral parts of mining activities, which need to be performed within the mining lease itself and become site specific.
- xxviii. The State Government has submitted the compliance reports of all previous approvals over 371.192 ha & 63.30 ha of diverted forest land. However, the same has not verified by the Regional Office.
- xxix. The Regional Office has recommended the Proposal excluding 1.470 ha of forest land identified for township development purposes, subject to the following conditions:
 - a) The User Agency shall submit the compliance status of the conditions stipulated in the Stage-II approvals of the two earlier forest diversion cases.
 - b) The State Forest Department shall prepare and implement a comprehensive Wildlife Management Plan to mitigate the adverse impacts of mining on the forest and its flora and fauna in the surrounding area, at the cost of the User Agency.
 - c) The User Agency is utilising certain undiverted forest patches, both within and outside the lease area, for ancillary mining activities. The User Agency shall seek ex-post facto approval for the forest land located outside the lease area and shall deposit the penal Net Present Value (NPV) for the use of 17.81 ha of undiverted forest land within the lease area. Further, if a violation of the Van (SanrakshanEvamSamvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, is established, the State Government shall initiate appropriate action in accordance with the provisions of the Act.
 - d) As mining operations have been ongoing since the 1960s, the User Agency shall submit a time-bound plan for reclamation of the mined-out area and surrender of the land to the State Government, and shall strictly adhere to the approved timeline.
 - e) A comprehensive Catchment Area Treatment Plan shall be prepared and implemented by the User Agency through the State Forest Department to minimise the adverse impact of the mining project on the surface hydrology of the area, particularly in view of the River Karo flowing along the western boundary and the proximity of the River Baitarani.

- f) The Cost–Benefit Ratio for the proposal shall be reassessed by the User Agency based on the area of 205.209 ha as per Government records, instead of the DGPS survey area of 201.683 ha.
 - g) The User Agency, in consultation with the State Government, shall explore the feasibility of translocation of affected trees wherever possible, subject to species suitability and other relevant considerations.
 - h) The User Agency shall maintain a contiguous safety zone along the entire project boundary.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Bhubaneswar and the Nodal officer, Govt. of Odisha recommended the proposal for grant of *'in-principle'* approval for diversion of 205.209 ha forest land including Safety Zone over 12.662 ha within the total Block area of 781.787 ha in favour of M/s JSW Steel Ltd for non-forest purpose in respect of Nuagaon Iron Ore Mines under Keonjhar Forest Division of Keonjhar District in Odisha subject to the general, standard and following specific conditions:
- (i) The User Agency shall submit the compliance status of the conditions stipulated in the Stage-II approvals of the two earlier forest diversion cases duly verified by the Regional Office before Stage-II approval.
 - (ii) The State Forest Department shall prepare and implement a comprehensive Wildlife Management Plan in consultation with Wildlife Institute of India (WII) to mitigate the adverse impacts of mining on the forest and its flora and fauna in the surrounding area, at the cost of the User Agency.
 - (iii) The State Government shall initiate necessary action regarding any violations of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980, on the 17.81 ha of undiverted forest land, in accordance with the provisions of Sections 3A and 3B of the Adhinyam.
 - (iv) The State Govt. shall impose penal CA as per the guidelines dated 21.1.2026 issued by the Ministry.
 - (v) 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.
 - (vi) As mining operations have been ongoing since the 1960s, the User Agency shall submit a time-bound plan for reclamation of the mined-out area and surrender of the land to the State Government, and shall strictly adhere to the approved timeline.
 - (vii) A comprehensive Catchment Area Treatment Plan shall be prepared and implemented by the User Agency through the State Forest Department to minimise the adverse impact of the mining project on the surface hydrology of the area, particularly in view of the River Karo flowing along the western boundary and the proximity of the River Baitarani.
 - (viii) The User Agency, in consultation with the State Government, shall explore the feasibility of translocation of affected trees wherever

possible, subject to species suitability and other relevant considerations.

- (ix) The User Agency shall maintain a contiguous safety zone along the entire project boundary.
- (x) The State Government shall implement Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) measures in accordance with the applicable rules & Guidelines.

Agenda No.36

Proposal No: FP/UP/PetrolPump/505912/2024

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 0.1568 ha protected forest land in favour of M/s HPCL RETAIL REGIONAL OFFICE GORAKHPUR for Entry/Exit approach to HPCL Retail Outlet on Pharenda-Jarwal Road (SH-1A) in Km No. 207 (CH. No. 206.200 to 400, LHS) at Gata No-416, Village:-Parsa Gaudari, Tehsil:-Colonelganj, District:-Gonda, Uttar Pradesh State (Proposal No: FP/UP/PetrolPump/505912/2024)-regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Lucknow 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 and discussion observed the following:
 - i. The proposal is for ex-post facto approval of 0.1568 ha Protected Forest.
 - ii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.3 of Eco class III with no tree felling during implementation of the project.
 - iii. Proposal does not fall within 10 km radius of the boundary of any PAs. 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.
 - iv. As per decision rule 1 and decision rule 2 the area does not falls under High Conservation Value Zone.
 - v. DFO, Gonda has mentioned that there is violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 over an area of 0.1568 ha. Further, it is mentioned that the case was booked against the personal responsible for violation and the case was compounded on 22.03.2024.

- vi. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 0.32 ha degraded forest land in VidyaNagar Beat C.N NO- 1 Redaura, PadriKirpal Range, Gonda Forest Division. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO. Examination of the area using DSS tools and Google Satellite Imagery, the CA land appears to be suitable for raising afforestation.
 - vii. The Committee was informed that Ministry, after preliminary scrutiny of the proposal, observed certain shortcomings and the same was communicated to the State Government on 09.09.2025. The State Government submitted its reply online on 09.12.2025.
 - viii. The Committee was further informed that Regional Office, Lucknow has recommended the proposal subject to imposition of penal provision as per rules and guidelines in vogue.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF, Regional Office, Lucknow and after going through the facts of the proposal, the Committee decided to '**defer**' the proposal with the following observations:
- i. Status of action taken against the officers who were not able to stop the violation.
 - ii. The State Government may furnish the details of penal CA proposed in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Ministry on 21.01.2026.

Agenda No. 37

Proposal No. FP/TR/MINOIL/445521/2023

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 in f/o M/s Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. for non-forestry use of 0.9642 ha of Reserved Forest land for Exploration of Hydrocarbon / Natural Gas through Drilling and Approach Road of location AA-ONO-184-BOA-A in Village-Paschim Magpusk Arini, District- Gomati in the State of Tripura (Online Proposal No. FP/TR/MINOIL/445521/2023)- regarding.

1. The agenda item was considered by the AC in its meeting held on 22.01.2026. The corresponding agenda note may be seen at www.parivesh.nic.in. The DDGF (C), Regional Office, Shillong 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 and discussion observed the following:
 - i. The proposal involves diversion of 0.9642 ha Reserved Forest.

- ii. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0.1 of Eco class I with 294 project affected tree.
 - iii. Trishna WLS is located at an approx. aerial distance of 5.65 km from proposed forest area. 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:
 - iv. Canopy density in the proposed area is reported to be 0 of Eco class III with no tree feeling proposed to be felled during implementation of the project.
 - 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. As per decision rule 1 and decision rule 2, the area does not falls under High Conservation Value Zone. Out of total forest area proposed for diversion, 1 ha is classified as moderately dense forest.
 - vii. Compensatory Afforestation has been proposed over 1.9284 ha degraded forest land in Compt. No. 4, Site Name- Chandrapur Block, Survey No. 1, Village- Murapara, Range- Udaipur, Tehsil- Udaipur, Division- Gomati, District- Gomati. CA scheme with 10 years of maintenance is provided. Site suitability certificate has been furnished by the concerned DFO. Examination of the area using DSS tools and Google Satellite Imagery, the CA land appears to be suitable for raising afforestation.
 - viii. As per component wise details submitted in the proposal, 0.3692 ha is proposed for approach road and 0.595 ha area for drill area.
 - ix. No violation of the Adhinyam have been reported. Authorities in the State Government have recommended the proposal. However, DFO has recommended the proposal stating that it was seen that there were some rubber trees found at the location, User Agency is requested to submit the requisite RoFR Certificate accordingly.
 - x. The Ministry, after preliminary examination of the proposal, observed certain shortcomings and the same was communicated to the State Government on 05.05.2025. The State Government submitted its reply on 09.12.2025 which is found satisfactory.
 - xi. The Committee also observed that area was earlier used for rubber plantations. Examination of the area using Google Satellite Imagery reveals signs of encroachment in the forest area proposed for diversion.
4. **Decision of the Advisory Committee:** The Committee after detailed discussion and deliberation with the DDGF (C), Regional Office, Shillong and after going through the facts of the proposal, the Committee decided to **'deferred'** the proposal with the following observations:

- i. The area proposed for diversion reveals signs of encroachment as it was earlier reported to be used for rubber plantation in the past. The State Government shall therefore, inform the status of removal of encroachment from the reserved forest and measures proposed to prevent such encroachment in future.

(Confirmed through E-mail)

Dr. K R Sree Harsha
(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 on file)

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

(Confirmed through E-mail)

Shri Ramesh Kumar Pandey
Additional Director General of Forests (WL)
(Member)

(Approved)

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