

**Minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of Regional Empowered Committee (REC) of Regional Office (Eastern Zone), Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Bhubaneswar held on 14.08.2015 (Odisha State).**

The 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Regional Empowered Committee (REC) of Regional Office (Eastern Zone), Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Bhubaneswar was held on 14.08.2015 in the Conference Hall of Eastern Regional Office, Bhubaneswar. The following members/special invitees were present during the meeting.

1. Dr. Tejinder Singh,  
Addl. PCCF (Central),  
Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change,  
Regional Office (EZ), Bhubaneswar **Chairperson**
2. Shri P.R. Mohanty,  
House No.2, HIG-1, B.D.A. Colony,  
Kapila Prasad, Old Town,  
Bhubaneswar-751002, Odisha **Non-Official Member**
3. Shri R.K. Zutshi,  
224, Phase, Vasant Vihar,  
Dehradun-248006, Uttarkhand **Non-Official Member**
4. Dr. Bhagirathi Behera,  
Annapurna Bhawan, New Lingraj Colony,  
Old Town, Bhubaneswar-751002, Odisha **Non-Official Member**
5. Shri S. Das,  
APCCF & Nodal (FC),  
Forest Department, Govt. of Odisha,  
Aranya Bhawan, Chandrasekharpur,  
Bhubaneswar - 751016, Odisha **Special Invitee**
6. Shri S. Mohapatra,  
Conservator of Forests (Central)  
Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change,  
Regional Office (EZ), Bhubaneswar **Member Secretary**

At the outset, the Chairperson extended a warm welcome to the members of REC and special invitees representing the State Govt. of Odisha. The proposals in the agenda were examined by the Committee. The representative of the project proponents made power point presentations of the proposals before the Committee. The recommendations/decisions of the Committee, based on the deliberations, are as under:-

**AGENDA NO.1**

**Diversion of 98.632 ha of forest land for construction of 765 KV/DC transmission line from 765/400 KV Angul Pooling Sub-Station to 765/400 KV Pooling Sub-Station at Ramakrishnapuram in Srikakulam district (Andhra Pradesh) through Dhenkanal, Athagarh, Nayagarh, Ghumusar (North), Ghumusar (South) and Berhampur Forest Divisions located in the districts of Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Nayagarh and Ganjam districts of Odisha (Odisha portion) by M/s Power Grid Corporation India Ltd.**

1. The proposal envisages diversion of 98.632 ha of forest land for construction of 765 KV/DC transmission line from Angul Pooling Sub-Station to Pooling Sub-Station at Ramakrishnapuram in Srikakulam district (Andhra Pradesh) through Dhenkanal, Athagarh, Nayagarh, Ghumusar (North), Ghumusar (South) and Berhampur Forest Divisions located in the districts of Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Nayagarh and Ganjam districts of Odisha (Odisha portion) by M/s Power Grid Corporation India Ltd.

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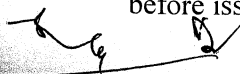
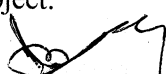


2. The total length of the above transmission line is 275.589 Km. out of which 242.615 Km. is coming within the State of Odisha and remaining 32.974 Km. is within the jurisdiction of the State of Andhra Pradesh. It is proposed to erect 722 nos towers along the transmission alignment in the State which includes 43 nos towers in the forest area. The width of Right of Way (RoW) for the above transmission line is 67 mtr. at a minimum height of 15.50 mtr.
3. Total area required for the project is 1625.523 ha including 98.632 ha of forest land, 174.629 ha of Govt. non-forest land and 1352.262 ha of Private land.
4. The legal status of the forest land is Reserved Forest, Protected Reserve Forest and Revenue Forest.
5. The density of vegetation in Athagarh Forest Division is reported to be 0.4-0.7 and in other five forest divisions it is below 0.4.
6. The user agency has examined three alternative route alignment of the transmission line and Alternative-I is found to be most feasible and hence finalized by the user agency as it includes least extent of forest land including RF land and also least density of forest growth.
7. The area does not form part of any National Park/ Wildlife Sanctuary/ Biosphere reserve, Elephant corridor, Tiger Reserve etc.
8. There is also no report of availability of rare/endangered flora and fauna in the area except for the report of RCCF, Angul, who has reported that the area is part of tiger and elephants movement area for which he has suggested for not undertaking construction activities after sunset.
9. Further, DFO, Ghumsur (South) has reported that Black buck, Peacock and Elephants are available in Ghumsur South Division. Mainly Black Buck found in Bhetanai area (protected by community) and Peacock in Pakidi DPF.
10. No protected archaeological /heritage site/ defence establishment or any other important monuments is located in the area.
11. No violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 by project proponent has been reported by the concerned DFOs.
12. No displacement of human habitation is involved in this project.
13. The user agency has submitted certificates/documents under FRA, 2006 with the proposal. It is indicated that the proposal does not involve recognized rights of PTG and PAC on the forest land proposed for diversion.
14. The user agency has submitted SOI toposheet, DGPS map of proposed forest land and map for identified land for compensatory afforestation.
15. State Govt. has identified degraded forest land twice in extent i.e. 197.264 ha (98.632 ha X 2 = 197.264 ha) in Nariamba DPF near Kaliamba village under Odagaon Range in Nayagarh Forest Division for compensatory afforestation purpose.
16. The DFO, PCCF & State Govt. have recommended the proposal for diversion.
17. This office vide letter dated 20.07.2015 has requested the State Govt. to furnish the status of the 174.629 ha of Govt. non-forest land involved in this proposal as on 25.10.1980. The reply from the State Govt. was received on 12.08.2015.

**Decision/Advice of REC:**

The Committee considered the proposal and the subsequent reply of the State Govt. and approved the grant of in-principle approval with usual standard conditions MoEF&CC and the State Govt. in addition to following specific conditions of REC:

- i) The State Govt. shall furnish the status of 6.442 ha govt. non-forest land as on 25.10.1980 before issue of Stage-II approval of the project.



## AGENDA NO.2

### **Diversion of 141.872 ha of forest land for construction of Angul-Duburi-Sukinda Road New BG Rail link project (98.70 Km) in Angul, Cuttack and Dhenkanal Forest Divisions in Dhenkanal, Jajpur and Angul districts of Odisha by East Coast Railways.**

1. The present proposal is submitted by the State Govt. for diversion of 141.872 ha of forest land for construction of Angul-Duburi-Sukinda Road New BG Rail link project (98.70 Km) in Angul, Cuttack and Dhenkanal Forest Divisions in Dhenkanal, Jajpur and Angul districts of Odisha by East Coast Railways.
2. Total length of this railway line is 98.70 Km., out of which 62.740 Km. is in Dhenkanal district (Dhenkanal Forest Division), 29.547 Km in Jajpur district (Cuttack Forest Division) and 6.413 Km. in Angul district (Angul Forest Division).
3. The user agency has explored the possibility of three alternative route alignment within the entire alignment and Alternative Route-2 is found to be most viable for the project. While surveying the route alignment, forest land has been avoided as far as possible and bare minimum extent of forest land has been proposed for this project.
4. Total railway alignment involves an area of 669.400 ha, which includes 141.872 ha of forest land, 71.581 ha of Govt. non-forest land and 455.947 ha of private land.
5. The legal status of forest land is Reserved Forest and Revenue Forest.
6. The density of vegetation is reported to be 0.4 in Cuttack Forest Division and 0.3 in Dhenkanal Forest Division.
7. The applied area does not form part of any National Park/ Wildlife Sanctuary/ Biosphere Reserve/Tiger Reserve.
8. It has been reported by DFO, Dhenkanal in his site inspection report that the proposed Railway line will obstruct free movement of resident elephant of K. Nagar Sub-Division. Moreover, it will create hindrance towards movement of elephant which are coming from Rupabalia R.F., Kapilas (WL) Sanctuary and Bumpa R.F. The existing Rengali Left Canal and proposed Railway line will create havoc for free movement of elephants. The proposed Railway line project of this Division from Kamalang to Rendapatna is coming under proposed Mahanadi Elephant Reserve.
9. State Govt. has informed that many kinds of faunal species including Schedule-I species like Pangolin, Asian Elephants, Python, Ratel and Sloth bear are noticed in the area. Therefore due care has to be taken for conservation of wildlife available in the area including elephants and their habitats. For this purpose State Govt. has recommended that the user agency has to implement the Site Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan for this project at their cost. The said plan shall be prepared by the user agency as per guidelines of CWLW, Odisha and it shall be approved by the CWLW, Odisha for implementation at project cost. The approved plan shall adequately address the issues raised by the DFO, Dhenkanal and RCCF, Angul with regard to existence of elephants and other schedule-I species in the area.
10. There are no reports of any rare or endangered species in Dhenkanal Division.
11. No such report of any protected archeological/heritage site/defence establishment or any other important monument is located in the area.
12. No displacement of human habitation is involved in the project area, Hence, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Plan is not required for the project.
13. The user agency has submitted necessary FRA certificate issued the Collector, Jajpur and Dhenkanal under FRA, 2006.
14. The user agency has submitted SOI toposheet, DGPS map of proposed forest land and map for identified land for compensatory afforestation.

15. The State Govt. has identified 294.00 ha of degraded forest land in Cuttack and Dhenkanal Forest Division for CA.
16. No violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 has been reported by the DFOs of Cuttack and Dhenkanal Forest Division. However, DFO, Dhenkanal forest division has reported that an area of 20.761 ha of non-forest land has been used by the user agency for construction of railway bridge over river Brahmani in village Kamalanga under Odapada tehsil of Dhenkanal district in view of relaxation granted by Govt. of India, MoEF guidelines bearing NO.11-63/2012-FC dated 07.01.2013 to para 4.4 of F.C. Act guidelines.
17. The DFO, PCCF & State Govt. have recommended the proposal for diversion.
18. This office vide letter dated 06.08.2015 has requested the State Govt. to furnish the following compliances which are awaited from State Govt.
  - a) There are some serious observations by DFO, Dhenkanal Forest Division regarding impact of this railway line on the wildlife so much so that he writes that "the existing Rengali Left Canal & the proposed railway line will create havoc for free movement of elephants". The State Govt. should submit detail comments of the Chief Wildlife Warden on the proposal along with his approval of the proposed mitigation measures such as number and location of elephant passes.
  - b) It is stated that Angul-Sukinda Railway Limited (ASRL) is a joint venture company of Rail Vikas Nigam Limited, Jindal Steel & Power Limited & Bhushan Steel Limited, which has been incorporated for execution of Angul-Sukinda New Railway Line. It may be clarified whether the present proposal is from East Coast Railways or from ASRL.
  - c) The State Govt. has proposed CA over double degraded forest land of 294 ha considering this as a proposal of East Coast Railway. However, if the project is to be implemented by ASRL, then, equivalent non-forest land for CA shall be insisted upon instead of double degraded forest land.
  - d) There are some over writings/corrections in Page- 56 & 70 of Part-I of DP submitted by the user agency and also in Page- 81 of Part-II submitted by the DFO, Cuttack Forest Division. This must be authenticated by the user agency and the concerned DFO.


**Decision/Advice of REC:**

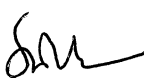
The Committee considered the proposal and decided to defer the same to the next REC meeting because the views of the Chief Wildlife Warden, as asked for vide Regional Office letter dated 06.08.2015, are still awaited.

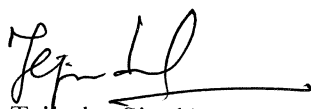
  
(P.R. Mohanty)  
Non-Official Member

  
(R.K. Zutshi)  
Non-Official Member

  
(Dr. Bhagirathi Behera)  
Non-Official Member

  
Shri S. Das,  
APCCF & Nodal (FC),  
(Special Invitee)  
Forest Department,  
Govt. of Odisha,

  
(S. Mohapatra)  
CF (Central) and  
Member Secretary

  
(Dr. Tejinder Singh)  
Addl. PCCF (Central) & Chairperson  
MoEF&CC, Regional Office (EZ), Bhubaneswar