

‘Forest land transfer’ to IDCO under NGT scanner

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Cuttack: The alleged transfer of forest land in favour of Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation of Odisha (IDCO) in Angul district’s Chendipada tehsil for the purpose of setting up an industry as well as a rehabilitation and resettlement colony (R&R Colony) has come under the National Green Tribunal (NGT) scanner.

The NGT’s East Zone bench in Kolkata sent notices to the additional chief secretary (state forest and environment department), secretary (Union ministry of environment, forest & climate change) and managing director (IDCO) in this regard.

The notices were issued on Sept 11 on a petition alleging illegal transfer of forest land in favour of IDCO – a state govt agency — without the central govt’s approval, as prescribed under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

According to the petition, the land in question is contiguous to Kosala reserve forest, which is home to various species of flora and fauna. Besides, the land is also an elephant pathway and herds of elephants use it to cross from one area to another and any non-forest activity in the said area would therefore, interfere with the movement of elephants. Two residents of Kosala village — Dilip Kumar Pradhan (64) and Sidharth Sankar Sahoo (41) — had filed the petition. Advocate Sankar Prasad Pani, along with advocate Ashutosh Padhy made submissions on behalf of the petitioners in virtual mode.

The bench of B Amit Sthalekar (judicial member) and Arun Kumar Verma (expert member) felt the “matter requires consideration” and posted it to Nov 21 for hearing along with the counter affidavits from respondents.

The bench also issued notices to the Angul district collector and divisional forest officer as well as the Chendipada tehsildar for filing of counter affidavits within four weeks.

We also published the following articles recently

Forest dept uncovers species dating back to prehistoric era in Dantewada forestThe forest department has identified a rare, ecologically significant forest patch in Chhattisgarh's Bachel forest range. This subtropical broad-leaved hill forest houses ancient plant species dating back to prehistoric times. The discovery aims to promote eco-tourism and attract global scientific attention, highlighting the region's rich biodiversity and ecological importance.113328184

Forest dept training elephants to select lead Dasara jumbo for futureThe forest department is gearing up to select a new lead elephant for future Dasara celebrations by the end of 2024. As Abhimanyu is expected to retire post-2025, potential successors like Mahendra and Dhananjaya are being evaluated through rigorous rehearsals and weight training sessions to ensure they meet the required standards.113236664

MNC refutes tree translocation failure, gets forest dept noticeThe forest department has called three John Deere employees for an inquiry into the alleged failure to translocate 14 scheduled trees at their Sanaswadi plant. Despite a bond ensuring safe translocation, remnants of the trees were found buried under a tar road. The company denies all allegations and claims no wildlife was affected.113238274