

GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

Abstract

Forest – Schedule of rate – Revision of labour Rate - orders issued.

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AGRICULTURE (FOREST) DEPARTMENT

G.O.(MS) No. 436/80/AD

Dated, Trivandrum, 15-11-1980

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- Read:- 1) Government Notification No.7899/E1/73/LBR Dated 1-4-1974/
2) Letter No.P3-26346/80 dated 27-9-1980 from the
Chief Conservator of Forests.

ORDER

In the letter read as second paper above, the Chief Conservator of Forests has reported to Government that the Committee which was constituted to enquire into the prevailing labour rates has recommended increase in basic rates of wages in the Minimum Wages Notification dated 1-4-1974 by 50% and revision of D.A for daily rated work-men at the rate of 36 paise of the increase of every point above 100 pointed in the new series (District head quarters or the nearest centre).

On the basis of the above recommendation of the Committee the Chief Conservator of Forests has requested Government to issue orders revising the labour rates of all classes of daily labourers of the Forest Department by 50% of enhancement of the rates given in the Minimum Wages Notification No.7899/E1/73/LBR dated 1-4-1974 with new formula of Dearness Allowance calculation i.e. 6 paise increase for every point rise above 100 points in the cost of Living Index at different stations in the new series of published by the Kerala Governments Bureau of Economics and Statistics.

Government approve the above proposals in the Chief Conservator of Forests and they order accordingly. The above revision of labour rates will be applicable to all the employees under Category I Time-Rated working Category. Category II- price-Rated working (Minimum piece-Rates) and Category III-Forest Nursery and Plantation workers listed out in the Notification read as first paper.

Labour Department will issue revised notification. Immediately in respect of category I, II and III included in that Department Notification No.7899/E1/73/LBR dated 1-4-1974.

BY Order of the Governor,

A,S. PRABHAKARA PANICKER,
Joint Secretary to Government.

To

The Chief Conservator of Forests, Trivandrum

Endt. On No.P3-26346/80

Office of the Chief Conservator of
Forests, Trivandrum, dt.11.80

Copy with copy of the recommendation forwarded from this office
To Government to all Conservator of Forests, and Divl. Forest
Officers for information and further action.

Sd/-

For Chief Conservator of Forests.

Copy of letter No.P3-36346/80 dated 27-9-80 from the Chief Conservator of Forests, Trivandrum, to Sri. V. Vidyadharan, Secretary to Government, Agriculture (Forests) Department, Trivandrum.

Sub: Forestry Schedule of rate-Revision of Labour rate

Ref: Govt. Notification No.7899/E1/73, LBR dated. 14-9-1979.

Kindly refer to my D.O. letter No.P3-26346/80 dated. 18-7-1980 in which the revision of the rates for certain items of timber extraction works was recommended. Orders on these are yet to be received. During the recent conference of the Conservator's the problem created by the unworkable labour rate now adopted by the Forest Department was discussed in detail. The labour rate current adopted for the Forest Department is as given in the notification referred to above. Though this notification fixed only the minimum wage the Forest Department has adopted these as the wage rates fixed by Government. This notification was issued in April 1974 and labour rate have gone considerably high from the minimum rates shown in this notification. During the discussions based on the data collected by different Conservators' and Divisional Forest Officers' from various parts of the State, it was seen that the current workable labour rate is 50% above these shown in this notification .

In my D.O letter of 30-7-1980 which was based on the similar discussion on Conservator's conference, I had recommended to enhance for the labour rate for Axemen by 50% from what is shown in the above referred notification. The axemen is first category of worker given in the group skilled workers' in the above notification. When the axemen's wages has to be increased by 50% the wage rate of other workers in the same skilled class should also be increased by 50%. The same enhancement principle has to be adopted for the wage rate of the Semi-skilled, Unskilled and Adolescent classes of workers also. All the Conservators and Divisional Forest Officers who participated in the recent conference was of opinion that unless the labour rates is revise in this standard, it will not be possible to take or any work for departmental execution. This means all the silvicultural workers which have to be done in proportions will grind to a halt. The departmental extraction of timber, which has been adopted as the policy of the present Government also will not possible without this revision of rates.

As decided in a concurrence convinced by the Minister for Forests and Labour of labour leaders and departmental officers a Committee was constituted to enquire in to the

prevailing labour rates and to hold further discussions and to recommend to Government reasonable labour rates. This committee collected the data and met in more than one conference. In the last labour conference of this committee held on 4-9-80 and presided by the Additional Labour Commissioner in which leaders of all Central Unions and Forest Officers participated, the following is the first decision.

“The committee recommends increase in basic rates of wages in Minimum Wages Notification-dated 1-4-1974 by 50%. The Dearness Allowance for daily rated workmen will be revised at the rate of 6 paise of the increase of every point above 100 points in the new series (District head quarters or the nearest Centre”).

The above recommendation also makes it more or less obligatory on the part of the Government to increase the existing labour rates of the daily labourers of the department by 50%.

As you know the forest areas classified into 3 categories and therefore for each class of workers there will be 3 rates for ordinary area, difficult area, and very difficult area. For ready reference, I am giving below minimum wage rates for different classes of labourers as given in the notification date 1-4-1974. Below these rates are given in bracket the enhanced rates to be sanctioned for immediate adoption by the Department.

	<u>Ordinary</u>	<u>Difficult</u>	<u>Very difficult</u>
Skilled	8 (12)	9 (13.50)	10 (15)
Semiskilled	6.50 (9.75)	7.31 (10.96)	8.12 (12.18)
Unskilled	4.80 (7.26)	5.40 (8.10)	6.00 (9.00)
Unskilled and Adolescent	3.80 (5.70)	4.27 (6.18)	4.75 (7.12)

Dearness Allowance (V.D.A) in addition to the has to wages. So far the department has been giving the variable Dearness Allowances given in part ‘B’ of the Minimum Wages notification dated 1-4-1974. According to this “Workers shall be eligible to get Variable Dearness Allowance for every day of work linked to the latest available consumer price index numbers-published for Ernakulam Centre by the Bureau of Economics and Statistics of Government of Kerala at the rate of 2.75 paise for every fine full points above 800 pointed.

The decision of the labour conference is to change the rate and method of Variable Dearness Allowance calculation. According to this decision the Variable Dearness Allowance is to be calculated based on the new series giving 6 paise raise for every full point raise in case of living index from the base of 180. So orders are required to adopt in the forest Department Allowance at this new paise. The enhancement in Variable Dearness Allowance by adopting the per formula is not much. To show the exact figure an example is given below.

Old Formula: Index for Ernakulam ***** for 1980 June in old series is 1687.

V.D.A for the 800 basic point = Nil

For the rest 887 pointed 2.75 paise for 5 points = Rs. 4.88

New Formula: The index for the same Ernakulam District for same month 1980 June in new series is 191.

V.D.A for 100 basic point = Nil

For the rest 91 point @ 6 paise per point - Rs. 5.45

Difference: 5.46 – 4.88= Rs. 0.38 (fifty eight paise only)

Note: In old formula only the Ernakulam District index was to be considered, but in the new formula the District head quarters or other nearest centre for which index figures are available is to be *** . The change in variable dearness allowance to this will be negligible, and it only makes the actual Variable Dearness Allowance calculated more realistic.

It may be pointed out here that the Public Works Department rate has been recently revised with effect from 1-7-1980. Taking an example from the Public Works Department revised rates the labour rate for Carpenter, *** which are given under the class of skilled labour is Rs. 18 & 19 in two Zones of the state. According to the natural labour rates now recommended for the Forest Department this rate would become including the higher V.D.A calculated as per the new formula which is an present (June 1980) Ernakulam District in ordinary area Rs. 17.46 is difficult area Rs. 18.36 and very difficult area Rs. 20.46. The labour rate in the forest area has to be always higher than the labour rates allowed in the PWD schedule because the PWD works are mostly in towns or such other convenient places. It has also to be pointed out that the above PWD rates of Rs. 18 & Rs. 19 allowed at 15% increase (which make the rate Rs. 20.70 & 21.85) for hill areas which according to PWD specification is any area above 600ft. in elevation. Almost all Forest areas could be hill areas according to this definition.

In view of the above facts I request Government to issue orders revising the labour rates of all classes of daily labourers of the Forest Department to the extent recommended by the conference of the Conservators and the labour conference. This is enhancement of 50% of the rates given in the minimum wages notification No. 7899/E1/73/LBR dt. 1-4-1974 with new formula of Variable Dearness Allowance Calculation. i.e. 6 paise increase for every point rise above 100 point in the Cost of Living Index at different stations in the new series as published by the Kerala Government's Bureau of Economics and Statistics.

Sd/-

Chief Conservator of Forests.

For Chief Conservator of Forests.