

PROCEEDINGS OF THE PRINCIPAL CHIEF CONSERVATOR OF
FORESTS AND HEAD OF FOREST FORCE

Present: T.M.Manoharan IFS

Sub:- Establishment of five Rapid Response Teams to drive back the crop raiding wild elephants-Deployment of staff-orders issued-reg

Read:- G.O.(Rt.) 275/11/F&WLD dated 22-06-2011.

Order No. WL4-5052/011 dated 22-08-2011.

The programmes/schemes identified for implementation as part of the 100 days programme of the State Government as per the Government Order cited above includes the establishment of five Rapid Response Teams to drive back the crop raiding wild elephants and to manage other problems relating to man-animal conflict. The programme envisages at setting up of five numbers of sufficiently equipped Rapid Response Teams in Wayanad (Wildlife), Nilambur, Kannur, Palakkad and Ranni forest divisions.

A detailed scheme for setting up of the Rapid Response Teams in the divisions identified above is being prepared for the approval of the state government. Proposals for creation of additional staff, procurement of vehicles and other essential equipments have to be included in the scheme. In the meantime, instances of wild elephants entering the human habitations and causing damage to crop, other properties and human life are reported from many parts of the state. In the above circumstances it is decided to set up the Rapid Response Teams as envisaged in the 100 days programme of the state government by utilizing the available manpower, vehicles and other equipments either presently available or which can be procured utilizing the existing budget provisions.

Each Team will be in the overall charge of a Range Forest Officer. One vehicle will be identified by the concerned Chief Conservator of Forests (Territorial) for the Team until vehicle for this purpose is allotted by the Addl.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Development). It is proposed that the team will consist of 1 Forester 2 Forest Guards and 4 members of VSS/EDC.

For the immediate setting up of the Rapid Response Teams in the locations stated above the following staff will be deployed by the Chief Conservators of Forests in charge of the Territorial Circles with immediate effect.

Sl. No	Location of the Rapid Response Team	Headquarters of the Rapid Response Team	Territorial Division to which the Team is attached	Range Officer in charge of the Team	Details of staff deployed
1	Sulthan Batheri	Sulthan Batheri	Wayanad Wildlife Division	Assistant Wildlife warden, Batheri Range, Wayanad Wildlife Division	1 Forester from Wayanad Social Forestry Division 2 Forest Guards deployed from Wayanad (South), Wayanad (North) and Wayanad (Wildlife) Forest Divisions on rotation for a period of 2 weeks by the Chief Conservator of Forests, Kannur.
2	Kannur	Thaliparamba	Kannur	Range Officer, Thaliparamba	1 Forester from Kannur Social Forestry Division 2 Forest Guards deployed from Kannur Forest Division on rotation for a period of 2 weeks by the Chief Conservator of Forests, Kannur.
3	Palakkad	Olavakode	Palakkad	Range Officer, Olavakode	1 Forester from Palakkad Social Forestry Division 2 Forest Guards deployed from Palakkad, Nemmara and Mannarkkad Forest Divisions on rotation for a period of 2 weeks by the Chief Conservator of Forests, Olavakode.
4	Nilambur	Nilambur	Nilambur North	Range officer, Nilambur Range	1 Forester from Malappuram Social Forestry Division 2 Forest Guards deployed from Nilambur (North) and Nilambur (South) Forest Divisions on rotation for a period of 2 weeks by the Chief Conservator of Forests, Olavakode.

Sl. No	Location of the Rapid Response Team	Headquarters of the Rapid Response Team	Territorial Division to which the Team is attached	Range Officer in charge of the Team	Details of staff deployed
5	Ranni	Ranni	Ranni	Range officer Ranni	1 Forester from Pathanamthitta Social Forestry Division 2 Forest Guards deployed from Ranni Forest Division on rotation for a period of 2 weeks by the Chief Conservator of Forests, Kollam.

In addition to the staff deployed above, 4 members of VSS/EDC from the areas adjoining the headquarters of the Rapid Response Teams will be deployed by the DFO concerned on monthly rotation.

The team in Palakkad division will operate in the areas of Palakkad, Mannrakkad and Nemmara divisions and the areas of Thrissur Circle and Wildlife Circle, Palakkad except Wayanad (Wildlife) and Aralam Wildlife divisions. The team in Wayanad (Wildlife) division will operate in the areas of Wayanad (North), Wayanad (South) and Wayanad (Wildlife) divisions. The team in Nilambur (North) division will operate in the areas of Nilambur (North), Nilambur (South) and Kozhikode divisions. The team in Kannur division will operate in the areas of Kannur division and Aralam Wildlife division. The team in Ranni division will operate in the areas of Southern Circle, High Range Circle and Wildlife Circle, Kottayam. The teams at Palakkad and Ranni will take the assistance of the already existing facilities for anti-depredation in Parambikulam Tiger Reserve and Periyar Tiger Reserve.

The Chief Wildlife Warden will deploy the teams in any areas outside the above mentioned jurisdiction as and when necessity arises.

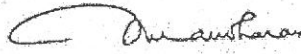
In this connection, the following operational guidelines are also issued.

1. The Forester deployed from the Social Forestry Division will have a minimum tenure of 6 months. He will be in charge of the vehicle and other equipments of the Rapid Response Team.

2. A suitable building will be arranged at the proposed headquarters of the Team by the concerned Divisional Forest Officer. Camping facilities for the Team also shall be provided.
3. One of the vehicles available in any of the sub offices in the Circle will be temporarily deployed for the Rapid Response Team by the concerned Chief Conservator of Forests until vehicle exclusively for this purpose is allotted by the Addl. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Development).
4. One mobile telephone connection will be provided exclusively for the use of the team by the Divisional Forest Officer concerned out of the BSNL connections provided to the Division. An easy to remember telephone number in the closed used group of the department will be procured for this purpose by the DFO concerned in consultation with the Addl. PCCF (D).
5. The above telephone number will be notified for the information of the public in the locality.
6. A tranquilizer gun available with the Wildlife Wing and sufficient medicine as advised by the Forest Veterinary Officer will be placed at the disposal of each team by the concerned Chief Conservator of Forests. Arrangements will be made for the storage of the medicine by the Divisional Forest Officer/ Wildlife Warden concerned.
7. The Range officers of Territorial and Wildlife Divisions vulnerable to crop raiding will set up camp of sufficient number of mazdoor watchers and VSS/EDC members in such areas to provide support to the Rapid Response Team during the elephant depredation operations.
8. Each Team will work in tandem with the Elephant Squad of the Animal Husbandry Department in the District or in the adjoining District. The Forest Veterinary Officer Konni will coordinate the activities in this regard for the Team at Ranni. Assistant Forest Veterinary Officer, Sulthan Bathery will coordinate the activities for the Teams at Sulthan Bathery, Kannur, Nilambur and Palakkad. Telephone numbers of the concerned Veterinary Officers will be made available to the Team and the concerned Range Officer by the Forest Veterinary Officer/ Assistant Forest Veterinary Officer.

9. The concerned staff of the Territorial and Wildlife Divisions will collect information relating to the movement of elephant herds or lone elephants in the areas vulnerable for crop raiding and keep the Rapid Response Team informed of the same through the respective Range officers.
10. A suitable register will be maintained by the Team on daily basis consolidating the above information.
11. The Rapid Response Team will march to the locality where crop raiding is reported and will organize and carry out the anti-depredation activities with the support of the local team of staff, watchers and VSS/EDC members provided by the local Range Officer. The Team will camp in the area for sufficient time to ensure that the elephant herd or lone elephant has moved in to the forest.
12. In the case of lone elephants, steps will be taken for tranquilizing the crop raiding elephant if the driving operation fails. The decision in this regard will be taken by the Chief Conservator of Forests concerned under the orders of the Chief Wildlife Warden.
13. The assistance of Elephant Squad concerned also will be requisitioned by the Range officer in charge.
14. The Rapid Response Team will march and halt as per the orders of the Range officer in charge.
15. The team will have two numbers of 315 sporting rifle with them allotted by the concerned Divisional Forest Officer.
16. Fire crackers, sufficient number of high beam torches, medicine for first aid, sufficient quantity of drinking water etc will be supplied to the team by the Range Officer in charge.
17. The vehicle and other equipments and accessories will always be kept in readiness for operation at any time
18. A portable microphone system will be supplied to each team by the concerned Divisional Forest Officer for making announcement to the public during the operation.
19. The Station House Officer/ Circle Inspector of Police of the locality will be informed of the operation in advance by the Range officer and their help should be sought for controlling the crowd during the operation.

20. The DFO/Wildlife Warden in charge of the Team will have the powers to call for the services of staff working in various wings of the Department in the locality for the anti-depredation operation.
21. A log book of anti-depredation operation will be maintained by the Team in a suitable format approved by the Chief Wildlife warden.
22. A summary report regarding the anti-depredation operation will be e-mailed by the Range Officer/Asst. Wildlife Warden in charge of the team to the Chief Wildlife Warden within twenty four hours of the operation.
23. The team will carry out regular perambulation in areas vulnerable for elephant depredation, inspect the condition of the elephant proof trenches, solar fences, stone walls etc and collect information from the public and make weekly reports to the DFO/Wildlife Warden concerned.
24. The functioning of the Rapid Response Team will be reviewed by the Regional Additional Principal Chief Conservators of Forests once in every month.
25. The activities of the Rapid Response Teams will be monitored and coordinated by the Chief Wildlife Warden.
26. The expenditure towards the functioning of the Rapid Response Team will be met out of the allotment under the budget head 2406-01-800-56-Measures to Reduce Man-Animal Conflict.



Principal Chief Conservator of Forests

To

The Chief Wildlife Warden

The Addl. P.C.C.F (NR), Addl. P.C.C.F (RS)

The C.C.F (NC), (EC) and (SC), Wildlife (Palakkad), F.D (PT), Kottayam

The DFOs & WLWs concerned.

AR 6-11