



GOVERNMENT OF KERALA



Environment(A) Department

22-02-2022, Thiruvananthapuram

A2/104/2021/Envt

From

Additional Chief Secretary to Government

To

The Chairman

Kerala State Bio Diversity Board, Thiruvananthapuram

Sir,

Sub: Environment- NGT Order dated 28.7.2021 in the matter of OA No-157-2021-Muttill Tree felling -Reg

Ref: Minutes of the Meeting held by Chief Secretary on 18.1.2022 in NGT Order in O. A No. 157/2021(Muttill Tree felling)

I am to invite your attention to the reference cited and forward herewith a copy of the minutes of the CS meeting in the matter of NGT Order in OA No. 157/2021 for taking action on decision No. (ii) of the meeting. I request you to furnish the action taken report urgently to Government .

Yours Faithfully,
GEETHA GOPINATH
UNDER SECRETARY

For Additional Chief Secretary to Government.

Approved for Issue,
Signed by Jayachandran T
R
Date: 22-02-2022 15:25:08

Section Officer.

"രേണോക്താ മാതൃഭാഷ"



കേരള സർക്കാർ



നമ്പർ.ബി1/135/2021-വനം

വനം വന്യജീവി (ബി) വകുപ്പ്
02-02-2022,തിരുവനന്തപുരം

പ്രിൻസിപ്പൽ സെക്രട്ടറി

അഡീഷണൽ ചീഫ് സെക്രട്ടറി, റവന്യൂ വകുപ്പ്

അഡീഷണൽ ചീഫ് സെക്രട്ടറി, തദ്ദേശസ്വയംഭരണ വകുപ്പ്

അഡീഷണൽ ചീഫ് സെക്രട്ടറി, പരിസ്ഥിതി വകുപ്പ്

പ്രിൻസിപ്പൽ ചീഫ് കൺസർവേറ്റർ ഓഫ് ഫോറസ്റ്റ്സ് & ഹെഡ് ഓഫ് ഫോറസ്റ്റ് ഫോഴ്സ്,
ഫോറസ്റ്റ് ഹെഡ് കാർട്ടേജ്, തിരുവനന്തപുരം.

ചെയർമാൻ, ബയോഡൈവേഴ്സിറ്റി ബോർഡ്,

TC24/3219, No.43, കവടിയാർ പി.ഒ., തിരുവനന്തപുരം 695003

സർ,

വിഷയം:- മുട്ടിൽ മരം മുറി-കർമ്മ പദ്ധതി-18.01.2022 ൽ നടന്ന യോഗം -

സംബന്ധിച്ച്.

- സൂചന:-
1. 12.01.2021, 13.01.2021 എന്നീ തീയതികളിലെ ഇതേ നമ്പർ സർക്കാർ കത്തുകൾ.
 2. 18.01.2022 ന് ചേർന്ന യോഗം.

സൂചനകളിലേക്ക് ശ്രദ്ധ ക്ഷണിക്കുന്നു. സൂചന യോഗത്തിന്റെ മിനുട്സ് അറിവിലേക്കും ഇടർനടപടിക്കുമായി ഇതോടൊപ്പം ലഭ്യമാക്കുന്നു.

വീശാസ്കൃതയോടെ,
JAYARAMKUMAR R
DEPUTY SECRETARY
പ്രിൻസിപ്പൽ സെക്രട്ടറിയ്ക്കുവേണ്ടി

അംഗീകാരത്തോടെ

സെക്ഷൻ ഓഫീസർ.



Minutes of the meeting held on 18.01.2022 in the matter of OA No. 157/2021 before the NGT: Report to be filed by the Respondents and compensatory tree planting for the loss caused due to illegal tree felling.

The meeting was chaired by the Chief Secretary. The list of participants is at Annexure.

The meeting commenced at 10 a.m. Based on a report in the Manorama journal regarding Muttill tree-felling incident, NGT has registered *suo motu* case as O.A. no.157/21 and has sought report from all respondent departments. In the orders dated 28.07.2021 and 16.11.2021, the NGT has reiterated its concerns about the huge loss caused to the ecosystem by the massive tree-felling. It has also been inquired whether any steps have been taken by the Government authorities to realize the loss and also regarding imposition of compensation to such loss. This meeting has been convened as the Standing Counsel to NGT has advised that a time-bound action plan for planting enough trees to compensate the loss caused by tree-felling may be submitted to NGT in the next hearing, that is on 02.02.2022 and a discussion has to be held among Forests and Wildlife, Local Self Government and Environment Departments along with Bio-Diversity Board to place an action plan before NGT before 25.02.2022.

Chief Secretary inquired as to who will be filing the statement representing all the respondents. ACS, Environment pointed out that primary responsibility lies with Revenue Department as all the trees cut down that are under reference here were in Revenue *Patta* lands. Chief Secretary inquired about the role of Revenue Department in realizing the loss for the tree-felling incident in *patta* land and the action taken so far. He also stated that it is the responsibility of Revenue Department to take action as per applicable Rules against those who have felled trees in Revenue *patta* land in violation of the

orders. While citing from the NGT order dated 16.11.2021 " ...what are all the steps taken by them to protect the environment against such felling of trees in the guise of Government orders.....the report submitted by PCCf & HoFF has not mentioned anything about the imposition of compensation for such illegal cutting and what is the nature of action, except prosecution taken by them in this regard...", the Chief Secretary invited response from the Departments to the observation of the Tribunal.

Chief Secretary inquired about the measures to be taken to undertake compensatory tree-planting, identification of the land where trees are to be planted and the method to insure that these saplings grow properly/remains protected. Chairman, Biodiversity Board apprised that there are Biodiversity Management Committees under the Board who can be entrusted with the job of tree-planting. PCCF (FM) apprised that the Social Forestry wing of the Forests Department has ongoing schemes of planting natural species and that in the thirty-five ranges across the State the trees may be planted with the help of Panchayaths. PCCF (FM) added that as the State Biodiversity Board does not have the man power to coordinate the venture, Haritha Keralam may also be co-opted into this. Chief Secretary advised Biodiversity Board to carry out field studies in coordination with the proposed action for better outcome.

ACS, Revenue apprised that notices have been issued to those *pattadars* who caused illegal felling of trees and added that the provisions exist to cancel the *patta*/land assignment of the *pattadar* for violation of the conditions. Chief Secretary observed that action has to be concluded by the Revenue Department for violation as per the Land Conservancy Act and advised the Forest Department to complete the process of confiscation of timber of such felled trees and to take these into the account of Government. Principal Secretary, Forests and Wildlife drew attention to present an action plan before NGT for tree-planting to compensate the loss caused to the environment and apprised that a report on this regard has been furnished by PCCF (FM) with a proposed list of range-wise tree planting. PCCF (FM) gave

48961/2022

details of the action plan for planting ten times the number of trees that were cut down illegally.

Concluding the meeting, Chief Secretary asked all the respondent Departments to take action to furnish report to AG within the time limit. Besides, it was also decided that

- i. Revenue Department to report on the action for violation of the Rules and illegal felling of trees;
- ii. Environment Department shall, through the Biodiversity Boardm oversee the tree-planting work.
- iii. Forest Department to complete the process of confiscation of timber of felled trees and take these into government account.
- iv. Forest Department shall co-ordinate with other departments including Panchayaths and Biodiversity Board in compensatory tree-planting,

The meeting ended at 10.35 a.m.