

IN THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI

O.A. No.152 of 2024 (SZ)

[Earlier O.A. No.254 of 2024 (PB)]

IN THE MATTER OF:

Suo Motu based on the news item appearing in 'The Indian Express' dated 12.02.2024 titled, "Andhra Pradesh : Rise in footfall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wildlife".

With

Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board
Through its Member Secretary,
Vijayawada and Anr.

...Respondent(s)

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Dated at Chennai on this the 4th day of November 2024



Counsel for the 2nd Respondent

**REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE IN COMPLIANCE TO THE HON'BLE
NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL (PB), DELHI ORDER DATED 21.03.2024 IN
O.A. NO. 254 OF 2024 (NEW OA No. 152 OF 2024 IN NGT, SZ)**

1.0 BACKGROUND:

The Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (PB), New Delhi, has taken up a Suo motu case based on a news article titled "Andhra Pradesh: Rise in footfall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wildlife" published in the New Indian Express dated 12.02.2024. The news article raises an issue relating to the risk imposed on biodiversity and the native wildlife of the eco-sensitive areas of Andhra Pradesh due to increased human footprint, evident in the form of litter and waste.

By an order dated 21st March 2024, the Hon'ble NGT (PB) Delhi directed that "Considering the issue raised in the matter, we also deem it proper to form a Joint Committee comprising of the Regional Officer, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF & CC), Chennai and the representative of Member Secretary, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), who will ascertain the current state of affairs in view of the facts reflected in the news item and submit the report before the Southern Zonal Bench of the Tribunal at least one week before the next date of hearing." (A copy of NGT order dated 21.03.2024 is attached as **Annexure 1**)

2.0 CONSTITUTION OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE:

In compliance to the Hon'ble NGT (PB) Delhi order dated 21st March 2024, a Joint Committee was constituted with the following Members after the receipt of nominations from concerned departments/ agencies:

S. No.	Name of the Official	Department/Agency
1	Smt. H. D. Varalaxmi, Regional Director	Regional Directorate, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Chennai
*2	Dr. Suresh Babu Pasupuleti, Scientist 'D'	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub-Office, Vijayawada.
3	Shri Balaji Kari, IFS, Assistant Inspector General of Forests	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub Office, Vijayawada
*4	Dr. Murali Krishna Chimata Scientist-E	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub Office, Vijayawada

5	Smt. Saritha Environmental Engineer	Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB), RO, Vizianagaram
6	Smt. Budigi Reddy Soni Scientist-B	Regional Directorate, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Chennai
*Note: Pursuant to transfer and posting of Dr. Suresh Babu Pasupuleti, Dr. Murali Krishna Chimata was made a Member of Joint Committee.		

3.0 FIELD VISITS BY COMMITTEE:

On May 3rd and 4th 2024, the Joint Committee met Shri Narentheran GG, IFS, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Rampachodavaram Division, Alluri Sitarama Raju District and Shri Suraj Ganore, IAS, Project Officer of the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) in Rampachodavaram. Further, the Joint Committee accompanied by officials from Forest Department and Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) conducted field visit to Gudisa grassland. Gudisa grassland is situated in the Pullangi Protected Forest (PF) of Aku Mamidi Kota Beat within the Pullangi section of Rampachodavaram forest division. The detailed observations of the Joint Committee during the field visit to Gudisa are given in **Annexure 2**.

On September 25th, 2024, the Joint Committee met Shri. Vinod Kumar, IFS, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Paderu Division, Alluri Sitarama Raju district. Further, the Joint Committee conducted field visit to Vanjangi hills, which is a part of reserved forest area and falls under the jurisdiction of Vanjangi VSS (Vana Samrakshana Samithi). The detailed observations of Joint Committee during the field visit to Paderu are given in **Annexure 3**.

4.0 FIELD OBSERVATIONS OF COMMITTEE W.R.T ISSUES RAISED IN THE HON'BLE NGT DATED 21.03.2024:

Issues highlighted in Hon'ble NGT Order	Field observations of committee
<i>The news item mentions that several hill stations, such as Paderu, Gudisa and segments of the Nallamalla forest region in Andhra Pradesh, have been compelled to shut their doors temporarily to address the mounting debris issue.</i>	Based on discussions held with several Departments, local people and as gathered during the inspection, it is to state that the News Article published is true and during the past 2 years there has been severe crowd gathering and tourists inflow to Gudisa Grasslands as well as Vanjangi Hills in Paderu District. It was informed by the officials that due to severe inflow of tourists there has been drastic change and enormous amount of waste and garbage was thrown all over and

	<p>for cleaning the pristine environment and region, the State Forest Department / ITDA had to impose restrictions on entry of tourists also on few occasions. And further, it was also noted that this inflow of tourists is more especially during the winter seasons especially from the Months of November to February.</p>
<p><i>The news item also contains advice to the local authorities to enforce a ban on plastic within the protected area and stresses the importance of collective responsibility in maintaining cleanliness and minimizing garbage in these environments.</i></p>	<p>The Joint Committee noted that currently there is no ban imposed on plastic at present on both the hills. According to the information provided by DFOs of Rampachodavaram and Paderu, approval for the establishing Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) has been granted for both Gudisa and Paderu. However, due to lack of coordination among officials of the Forest Department, ITDA and local Panchayats, the CBET activities are getting delayed and not yet implemented. Therefore, a collective effort is essential for regulating tourism, maintaining cleanliness and minimizing garbage in these areas.</p> <p>Further, the Joint Committee during its visit to Paderu, noted that the then District Collector arbitrarily handed over the Reserve Forest land to ITDA for promotion of tourism without obtaining the concurrence from the Forest Department and pursuant to handing over of the Forest Land to ITDA, huge destruction of forest land without diversion or approval is being undertaken especially for laying of roads and infrastructure development, which is a big reason of concern and the Joint Committee opines that both the Departments instead of a coordinated effort in addressing challenges engaged in conflict management and accordingly, no agency is taking the ownership for addressing the pollution related issue.</p>

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	<p>Accordingly, the Joint Committee opines that the Forest Area concerned may be restored back to Forest Department and the responsibility for managing the pristine environment, pollution under control etc. be vested to the same agency so that pollution may be kept under control. Copies of communication exchanged between Revenue and Forest Department is enclosed as Annexure—4.</p>
<p><i>It also suggests the proposal to establish the checkpoints to monitor the transportation of plastic in the hilly and reserved areas.</i></p>	<p>The Joint Committee during the visit to Gudisa, it is observed that at Aku Mamidi Kota, approximately 15km from Gudisa, a checkpoint was established in November 2022 and is being managed by the Forest Department. At the checkpoint, all disposable items of tourists are affixed with stickers, and a deposit of Rs.10 per item is being collected. Upon presentation of the item at the checkpoint during departure, the deposit is refunded to tourists. However, during the visit to Paderu, no such checkpoints observed and this issue is pending due to lack of coordinated efforts between Forest Department and ITDA.</p>
<p><i>It also raises the issue of forest fire.</i></p>	<p>The Joint Committee noted that the flow of tourists to these places was maximum in the months of winter especially during November to February and in that season due to extreme cold weather there is a possibility of fire due to camp fires by tourists. However, based on discussions with forest department officials, it was noted that the primary causes of forest fires was due to the shifting cultivation methodology being practiced by local communities and fires initiated by locals in pursuit of a beetle insect believed to be a rich source of protein, and natural ignition of dried grass litter particularly prevalent during the summer months. From the</p>

Gudisa hilltop, patches of land burnt due to shifting cultivation were noted.

5.0 CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS:

Based on the discussions with various stakeholders and observations made during the field visits to Gudisa and Paderu, the Joint committee suggests the following recommendations:

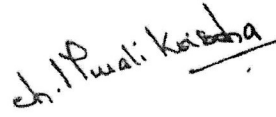
- A local Committee with representatives of State Forest Department / ITDA and Local Villagers may be constituted in these two places and the responsibility for management (entry, maintenance of the area) etc. be given to this Committee and reasonable entry fee may be charged through establishment of checkpoints and gate and the fee so collected can be used for paying salaries to local youth engagement for security and maintenance of this area and the surplus fund if any available can be used for other developmental works without destructing the pristine environment.
- Checkpoints may be established and operated at Paderu, similar to Gudisa to regulate the plastic pollution. At the checkpoint, entry tickets may be collected for all the vehicles; a refundable deposit may be collected on all the disposable items.
- Unregulated tourism practices such as camp fires, open defecation, etc., may be prohibited and Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) may be encouraged.
- Shifting Cultivation practiced by local communities also causes forest fire. These locals may be provided with alternate livelihood opportunities to reduce dependency on shifting cultivation. Additionally, incentives may be provided to local people for collecting the plastic waste.
- Natural ignition of dried grass litter takes place during the summer months which causes forest fires. As a precautionary measure, tourism may be discouraged during summer months.
- At Gudisa, many educational boards were observed at regular intervals, showing Do's and Don'ts for tourists. Similar boards may be established at Paderu also for educating the tourists.



Shri. Balaji K

AIG, MoEF&CC

Sub-Office, Vijayawada



Dr. Murali Krishna

Scientist-E, MoEF&CC

Sub-Office, Vijayawada



Smt. Varalakshmi

Regional Director,

Regional Directorate,

CPCB-Chennai

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Smt. Saritha

Environmental Engineer

APPCB, Vizianagaram

ANNEXURE-1

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Item No. 02

Court No. 1

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI**

Original Application No. 254/2024

News item titled "Andhra Pradesh: Rise in foothall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wildlife" appearing in the New Indian Express dated 12.02.2024

Date of hearing: 21.03.2024

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE PRAKASH SHRIVASTAVA, CHAIRPERSON
HON'BLE DR. A. SENTHIL VEL, EXPERT MEMBER**

ORDER

1. This original application is registered *suo-motu* on the basis of the news item titled "Andhra Pradesh: Rise in foothall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wildlife" appearing in The New Indian Express dated 12.02.2024. The news item raises an issue relating to the risk imposed on biodiversity and the native wildlife of the eco-sensitive areas of Andhra Pradesh due to increased human footprint, evident in the form of litter and waste. The news item mentions that several hill stations, such as Paderu, Gudisa and segments of the Nallamalla forest region in Andhra Pradesh, have been compelled to shut their doors temporarily to address the mounting debris issue. The news item also contains the advice to the local authorities to enforce a ban on plastic within the protected area and stresses the importance of collective responsibility in maintaining cleanliness and minimizing garbage in these environments. It also suggests the proposal to establish the checkpoints to monitor the transportation of plastic in the hilly and reserved areas. It emphasizes on the plastic pollution and the efforts which are required to combat it. It also raises the issue of forest fire.

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2. The news item involves substantial issue relating to compliance of environmental norms.

3. Power of the Tribunal to take up the matter *suo-motu* has been recognized by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter of "*Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai vs. Ankita Sinha & Ors.*" reported in 2021 SCC Online SC 897.

4. Hence, we implead the following as respondents in the matter:

- (i) Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB), through its Member Secretary
- (ii) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Regional Office (SEZ), Chennai

5. Let notice be issued to the above Respondents for filing their response before the appropriate bench of the Tribunal atleast one week before the next date of hearing.

6. Considering the issue raised in the matter, we also deem it proper to form a Joint Committee comprising of the Regional Officer, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF & CC), Chennai and the representative of Member Secretary, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), who will ascertain the current state of affairs in view of the facts reflected in the news item and submit the report before the Southern Zonal Bench of the Tribunal atleast one week before the next date of hearing.

7. Since the matter relates to the Southern Zonal Bench, Chennai, therefore, OA is transferred to the Southern Zonal Bench for appropriate further action. Office is directed to transfer the original record of the OA to Southern Zonal Bench, Chennai.

8. List before Southern Zonal Bench at Chennai on 10.05.2024.

9. A copy of this order, along with a copy of the petition, be forwarded to the Regional Officer, MoEF & CC, Chennai and Member Secretary, CPCB by e-mail for compliance.

Prakash Shrivastava, CP

Dr. A. Senthil Vel, EM

March 21, 2024
Original Application No. 254/2024
AS.

ANNEXURE-2

REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEE IN COMPLIANCE TO THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL (PB), DELHI ORDER DATED 21.03.2024 IN CASE OF O.A. NO. 254 OF 2024

1.0 Background:

The Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (PB), Delhi, has taken up a suo motu case based on a news article titled "Andhra Pradesh: Rise in footfall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wildlife" published in the New Indian Express dated 12.02.2024. The news article raises an issue relating to the risk imposed on biodiversity and the native wildlife of the eco-sensitive areas of Andhra Pradesh due to increased human footprint, evident in the form of litter and waste.

By an order dated 21st March 2024, the Hon'ble NGT (PB) Delhi constituted a Joint Committee comprising the Regional Officer, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF & CC), Chennai and the representative of Member Secretary, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB); directed to ascertain the current state of affairs in view of the facts reflected in the news article and to submit a report before the Southern Zonal Bench of the Tribunal.

2.0 Constitution of the Committee:

In compliance to the Hon'ble NGT (PB) Delhi order dated 21 March 2024, a Joint Committee has been constituted as below after receiving the nomination from concerned departments:

S. No.	Name of the Official	Department
1	Smt. H. D. Varalaxmi, Regional Director	RD-Chennai, Central Pollution Control Board, Chennai
2	Dr. Suresh Babu Pasupuleti, Scientist 'D'	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub Office, Vijayawada.
3	Shri Balaji Kari, IFS, Asst. Inspector General of Forests	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Sub Office, Vijayawada

In addition to the above, Smt. Saritha, RO Vizianagaram, APPCB; Smt. Budigi Reddy Soni, Scientist B, CPCB RD Chennai; (ITDA) were also present during the Inspection.

3.0 Committee visit to Gudisa Grassland:

3.1 Committee Visits & Meetings

The Joint Committee met with Shri Narentheran GG, IFS, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Rampachodavaram Division. The Committee had detail discussion with DFO on tourism activities in Gudisa Grass land, DFO shared the following information as per the records available:-

- Gudisa grassland is situated in the Pullangi Protected Forest (PF) of Aku Mamidi Kota Beat within the Pullangi section of Rampachodavaram forest division. It is a hilltop Savanna grassland primarily inhabited by the Konda Reddy tribes. The road connecting from Maredumilli town to Gudisa grassland is about 44km. The entire route meanders through natural evergreen forests, teak plantations, villages and perennial streams.
- In Maredumilli Mandal, there are 72 Revenue recongnized habitations, managed by 12 Panchayats which are responsible for local administration and governance in those areas. The land occupied by these habitations falls under the jurisdiction of the Panchayats. Roads and other non-habitation areas are under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department.
- Tourism activities at Gudisa have increased over the past two years, especially after several movie shootings took place. The DFO informed that there is a lack of staff to manage tourism and regulate tourist vehicles. Currently, only one forest guard is available for a total Beet area of 12,694 hectares, whereas 12 guards are required as per regulations.
- The primary causes of forest fires include Shifting Cultivation practiced by local communities, fires initiated by locals in pursuit of a beetle insect believed to be a rich source of protein, and natural ignition of dried grass litter particularly prevalent during the summer months. As a precautionary measure, tourism is discouraged during summer months. Additionally, local tribal communities have been offered alternate livelihood opportunities to reduce dependency on shifting cultivation.
- DFO informed that tourists were restricted from visiting the Gudisa grasslands on several occasions to mitigate potential fire hazards, regulate tourism activities, and conduct clean-up drives to address plastic waste.
- Further, DFO mentioned that previously unregulated tourism practices were prevalent. Activities such as Jeep Safaries, tented camping and open defecation were common. However, the Forest Department and Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) have intervened to curtail these practices and promote Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET).

- The proposal to establish a CBET Committee, involving local communities and the Forest Department, has been discussed with the villagers of Pullangi multiple times to ensure forest protection and promote sustainable tourism. Conflict among local people within the Jurisdiction of Pullangi Panchayat has hindered the establishment of CBET Committee. Consequently, forest officials sought the involvement of ITDA to facilitate the operation of the CBET. A new Committee has now been formed, involving the ITDA, and orders were issued by DFO on 03.04.2024 to commence CBET activities with immediate effect.

3.1.1 Meeting with Project Officer, ITDA

The Joint Committee also met with Shri Suraj Ganore, IAS, Project Officer of the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) in Rampachodavaram at his office. The ITDA's PO highlighted that while the Pullangi Protected Forest falls under the Jurisdiction of the Forest Department, the road leading to the forest is within the governance of the Pullangi Panchayat. As the region is governed by Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), obtaining Gram Sabha resolutions from the Panchayats is essential for any decision-making process. However, due to lack of cooperation from the Panchayat members and their repeated absence from meetings, progress on CBET activities has been slow. To address these challenges, the ITDA's PO suggested the formation of a District Level Committee, chaired by ITDA, to expedite decision making processes related to CBET and accelerate the development of eco-tourism in Gudisa area.

3.1.2 Field Observations of Joint Committee:

On May 4th 2024, the Joint Committee accompanied by officials from Forest Department, Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) and Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB), conducted a site visit from Maredumilli to Gudisa grassland. Along the route, educational boards were observed at regular intervals, showing Do's and Don'ts for tourists.

At Aku Mamidi Kota, approximately 15km from Gudisa grassland, a checkpoint was established in November 2022 and is being managed by the Forest Department. The following are the findings of Joint Committee after verifying the documented records and interaction with workers Dharma Reddy and Badram Reddy, currently employed at check post:

- Tourist vehicles are permitted to enter Gudisa grassland only between 4am and 4pm. During the months of January and February, approximately 30-40 tourist vehicles are

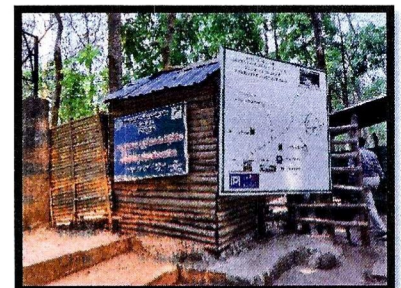
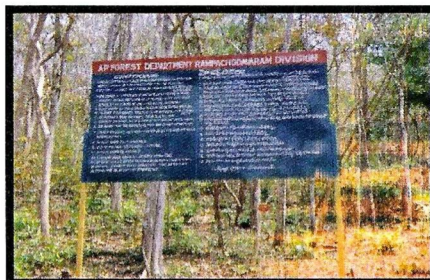
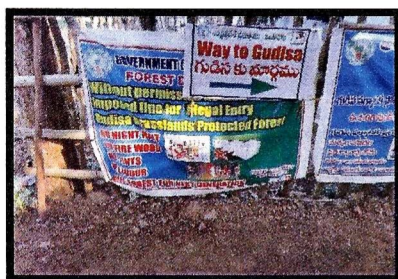
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recorded per day. In summer, tourism is not being encouraged due to the heightened risk of forest fires.

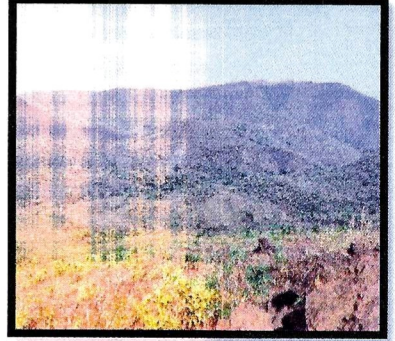
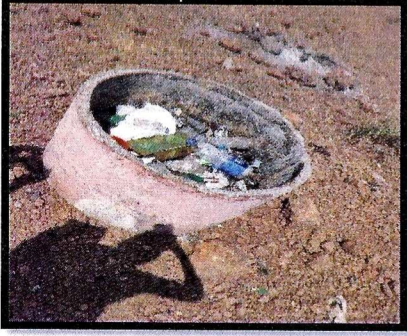
- Entry tickets are mandatory for all the vehicles, the fee is determined by vehicle type and number of occupants. Revenue generated from ticket sales is being used for salaries and developmental activities.
- Night stays, tents, alcohol & fire wood are prohibited within Gudisa grassland.
- All disposable items are affixed with stickers, and a deposit of Rs.10 per item is being collected. Upon presentation of the item at the checkpoint during departure, the deposit is refunded to tourists.
- The plastic waste is collected from Gudisa grassland by employing local villagers, the frequency of which is based on the number of tourists.
- Gudisa village has a population of 105, of which 40-45 individuals have been employed by the Forest Department. These individuals were motivated to cease shifting cultivation practices by providing with alternate livelihood opportunities.
- The employees deployed for various activities are local tribals, many of whom were previously engaged in shifting cultivation before their current employment.
- The grass found on Gudisa hilltop is a unique variety known to thrive particularly during the winter season. During the visit, two prominent tourist attractions were identified; a sunrise viewpoint and a sunset viewpoint. The grassland appeared to be maintained well, with no visible signs of waste dumping. Dustbins were provided at regular intervals. Additionally, from the hilltop, patches of land burnt due to shifting cultivation were visible.
- Further, it was noticed that Maredumilli is the nearest location for tourists to stay with approximately 26 resorts. The Joint Committee conducted an inspection of 'The Woods Resort' at Maredumilli to assess the waste management practices employed by the resort. The resort's key authorities were not present at the resort during the visit, and instead, the staff informed the Committee that waste water is channeled to septic tanks situated near each accommodation unit, while dry waste is transported to Rajahmundry for further segregation and disposal. However, during the site inspection, the Joint Committee observed that plastic and other waste was dumped at various locations, with evident signs of past waste burning. A water channel was made for discharging waste water from washing machines, swimming pool into the nearby stream.
- Later, the Joint Committee visited 'Jalatarangini Waterfalls', which is managed by the Forest Department, where the staff employed are local people. During the visit, the

Committee observed that the staff had diligently collected plastic waste separately. Furthermore, there were no visible signs of waste dumping in the vicinity.

- The Joint Committee observed waste dumped along the roadside while travelling to Rampachodavaram and Maredumilli. Upon meeting with the Mandal Parishad Development Officer (MPDO) of Maredumilli to inquire about waste management practices, the MPDO explained that the responsibility for Solid Waste Management lies with the Gram Panchayat of Maredumilli. Door-to-door waste collection is being done from commercial units and is disposed at a dumpsite in Maredumilli due to absence of allocated land for waste disposal. Due to the dumpsite's proximity to a waterbody, directions have been issued to cease dumping waste in that area. However, Maredumilli lacks suitable plain land for dumping trucks to access the dumpsite. Although a Solid Waste processing center exists, the facility remains non-operational due to lack of machinery, manpower and funds.
- The Joint Committee also noted that the tourists are passing through Rampachodavaram and Maredumilli forest areas, these are revenue areas of Gram Panchayat of Rampachodavaram and Maredumilli. While travelling passengers throw garbage's on both sides of road, the accumulation of plastic wastes along the road confirms the poor waste management by the Gram Panchayats.

PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN DURING THE VISIT





ANNEXURE-3

ANNEXURE – 3

JOINT COMMITTEE VISIT TO PADERU

1.0 Committee Meeting with Divisional Forest Officer (DFO)

The Joint Committee met with Shri. Vinod Kumar, IFS, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Paderu Division, to discuss tourism activities in Paderu. The DFO provided the following information based on available records:

- The prominent tourist location in Paderu is Vanjangi, a hill station located in the Alluri Sitarama Raju district of Andhra Pradesh, which is a part of reserved forest area. The peak tourism season runs from October to January.
- Vanjangi Hills falls under the jurisdiction of Vanjangi VSS (Vana Samrakshana Samithi), established in 1996 and 250 Ha reserved forest area is allotted to Vanjangi VSS for improving forest cover.
- On December 26, 2021, the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, granted permission for the establishment of Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) with the Vanjangi VSS in Paderu (T) range of Paderu division.
- Subsequently, the Paderu Forest Division has set up an entry checkpoint at the entrance of the Vanjangi hills to regulate public access. From January to February 2022, approximately ₹3.4 lakh was collected in entry fees, while ₹3.16 lakh was spent on wages for 25 watchers/guides.
- Further, the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests has sanctioned an amount of 50 lakhs for the development of Vanjangi CBET under the Vanavihari scheme. However, these funds can only be utilized through the Vanjangi VSS (Forest departmental procedure).
- The District Collector of ASR District issued instructions on September 15, 2022, to the Project Officer, ITDA, Paderu to establish a Toll-Gate in the beginning of the Tourist place with all facilities and to arrange Teller machine to collect Toll-fee in a transparent manner by the Project Officer, ITDA, Paderu. The income derived from the Tourism activities shall be shared in between the following Departments/Gram panchayats @ ratio of 25% to PO, ITDA 30% to DFO, Paderu and 15% to Vanjangi Gram Panchayat, 15% to Lagisapalli Gram

panchayat and 15% to Kadeli Gram Panchayat. Staff arrangements and salaries are to be paid by P.O., ITDA, Paderu and DFO, Paderu in proportion to the amount collection.

- DFO emphasized that, according to the Guidelines for establishment of community based Ecotourism in reserved forest areas and protected areas of Andhra Pradesh, the Forest Department (Divisional Forest officer) should be the main implementing Agency. 50% of the revenue realized will be kept in the joint account of the VSS and Forest Department and to be utilized for development of the eco system, balance 50% will be kept in the VSS account and used as decided by the General Body of the VSS.
- DFO informed that instructions from the District Collector, Alluri Sitharama Raju district, Paderu are contradictory to the Forest department guidelines. Hence this issue was communicated to senior officials in 2022, with a request to establish the CBET project in Vanjangi VSS by the Forest department but no action has been taken on this matter till date.

2.0 Field Observations of Joint Committee

On September 25th, the Joint Committee conducted a field visit from Paderu to Vanjangi hilltop. During the visit, the following observations were made:

it was observed that the checkpoint was not in operation.

- The checkpoint was not in operation.
- A minimal amount of plastic was observed along the way to Vanjangi hills. The DFO informed that clean up drives were conducted by temporarily closing tourism activities for a few days.
- A signboard was erected by Forest Department stating that disposing of plastic and other waste, starting fire, and similar actions are punishable offenses.

PHOTOS TAKEN DURING FIELD VISIT

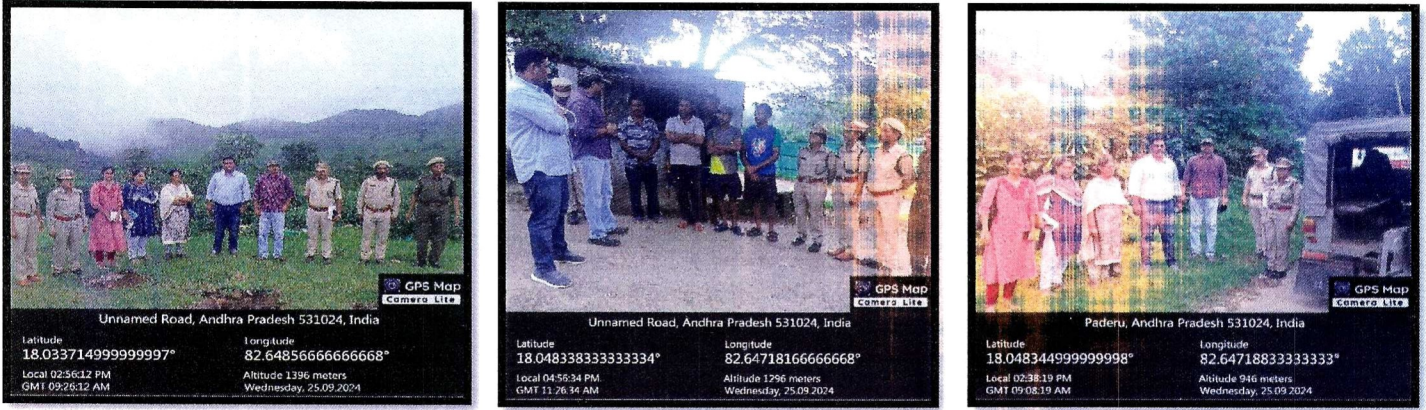


Fig 1-3: Joint Inspection of Vanajangi Hill Station in Paderu

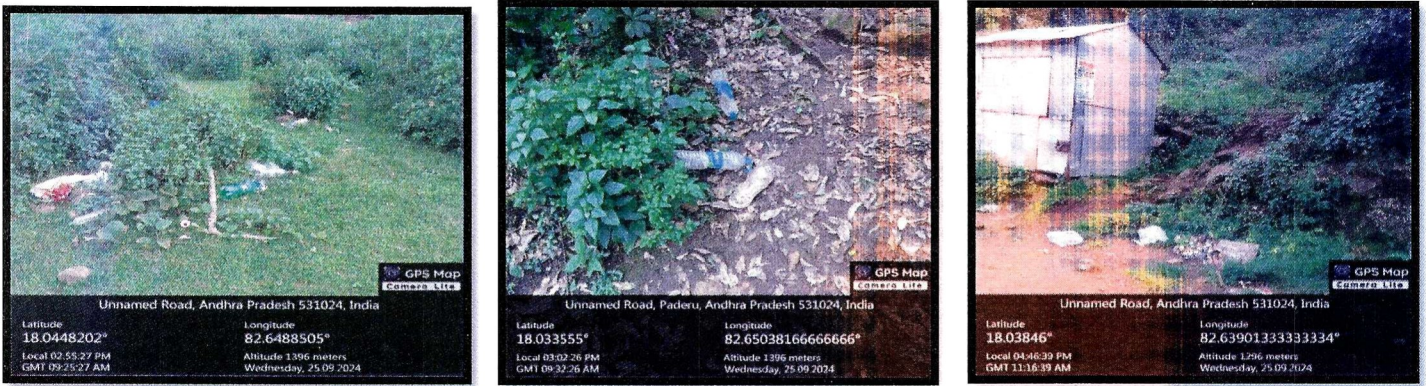


Fig 4-6: Plastic Waste Disposed in and around Vanajangi Hill Station

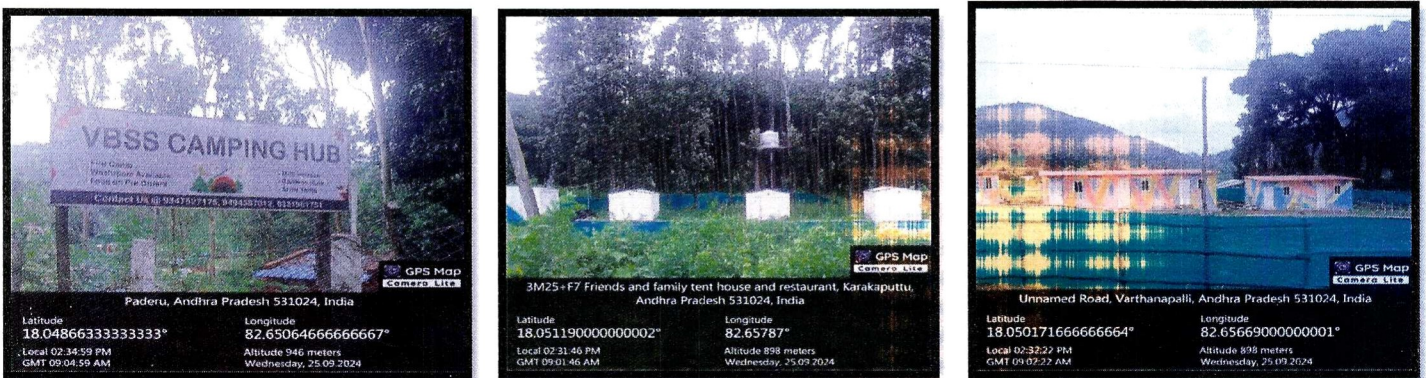


Fig 7-9: Temporary Camps being Prepared for Upcoming Winter Season

ANNEXURE-4

**GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
FOREST DEPARTMENT**

Rc. no.22/5/2021/WL.1 Office of the Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of
Dated:#ApprovedDate Forest Force, A.P, Guntur
#

Sri. N. Prateep Kumar, I.F.S.,
Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF
and
Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests (WL) &
Chief Wildlife Warden(FAC)

Sub: Andhra Pradesh Forest Department - Wildlife - Vanajangi VSS — Request to convert the Vanajangi VSS as Community Based Eco-Tourism (CBET) and permission for the establishment of Eco-Tourism Centre at Vanajangi hills in Paderu Range and Paderu (T) Division — Permission Accorded - Reg.

Ref: CF, Visakhapatnam, Rc.no.2390/2021/TO/A4, dt.27.11.2021.

Under the circumstances reported by the Conservator of Forests, Visakhapatnam in the reference cited and keeping in view the guidelines issued by the GoI, MoEF & CC, New Delhi in F.No.5-2/2017-FC, dt. 28.03.2019 read with F.No.5-2/2017-FC-Part(1), dt.25.10.2021, regarding Ecotourism activities in forest areas vis-a-vis provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, permission is hereby accorded to the Divisional Forest Officer, Paderu for the establishment of Eco-Tourism Centre with the Vanajangi VSS in Paderu Range and Paderu (T) Division with a condition to go for temporary structures for the development of the proposed Eco-Tourism site.

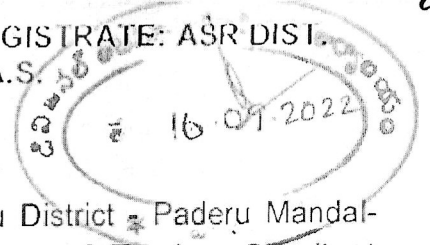
The Conservator of Forests, Visakhapatnam is requested to include the same in the next year's APO of Vanvihari scheme or any other scheme.

N Prateep Kumar Ifs
Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF
and
Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests (WL) &
Chief Wildlife Warden (FAC)

To
The Conservator of Forests, Visakhapatnam.

23

Copy to the Divisional Forest Officer, Paderu for information and necessary action.



Sub:- Tourism- Vanjangi Hills - Alluri Sitharama Raju District - Paderu Mandal- Community based Eco-Tourism- Implementation of Tourism Circuit at Vanjangi in a phased manner with the stake holders of ITDA/Panchayat Raj/ Gram Panchayats- Orders-issued.

PG

Read:-Representation dt.14.09.2022 of the MPTC, Kadeli, Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat, Vanjangi, Lagisipalli and Kadeli Gram Panchayats, Paderu Mandal.

-oOo-

ORDER:

Whereas, the MPTC, Kadeli Gram Panchayat and Sarpanch, Vanjangi, Lagisapalli and Kadeli Gram Panchayats of Paderu Mandal, Alluri Sitharama Raju District have represented before the District Collector, Alluri Sitharama Raju District stating that;

- i) that the Tourists of various States in our country are visiting the Vanjangi Hill for the last two years and due to which, the villagers in their 3 Gram Panchayats are facing lot of problems and they approached the Hon'ble MLA, Paderu, PO,ITDA, Paderu and other Mandal Level officials to streamline and control the situation to safeguard the economical, cultural and social rights of the Tribal Community.
- ii) that the "View Point" actually located on the top of Peda Konda of Lagisapalli village and that the villagers of Lagisapalli are depending for most of their livelihood on the hill and they directly effect environmentally, economically and they being utilized water sources for Drinking/Agricultural operations.
- iii) that all the benefits economically enjoyed by the villagers of Vanjangi only, leaving other villages and community of Vanjangi, Lagisapalli and Kadeli Panchayat with lot of inconvenience.

Among others, the Public Representatives of the above Gram Panchayats requested in developing the Vanjangi Hills as a tourist spot providing all kind of benefits to all the community of three panchayats from the income generate due to tourism and to keep the tourism development of Vanjangi hills and implementation of various schemes in these 3 Gram Panchayats by the ITDA authorities to provide welfare of the villagers of these 3 Gram Panchayats, the income derived from the above tourism circuit may be allocated to these 3 Gram Panchayats for the benefit of the welfare of the villagers/community residing in these 3 Gram Panchayats

Whereas, the District Collector, ASR District visited the village in the month of May, 2022 and interacted with the Public Representatives and village elders of the 3 Gram Panchayats viz., 1. Vanajangi 2. Lagisapalli and 3. Kadeli and discussed about the problems that are being faced by the Public due to unorganized Tourism activities going on in the area.

Whereas, it has come to the notice of the District Collector, ASR District that the Vanjangi Hills which are located in Paderu Mandal are one of the important tourist attractions of Paderu- Araku Tourism circuits and therefore more number of tourists are visiting to the Vanjangi Hills.

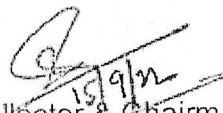
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Whereas, the villagers of these 3 Gram panchayats stated that they are facing Air, sound and water pollution and traffic problems because of the floating of vehicular traffics in the area.

Whereas, the Sarpanches of the Tribal Gram Panchayats and MPTCs have also informed that there is no resolution by PESA Gram Sabhas of these 3 Gram Panchayats to allow unregulated Vehicular movements and because of various coordination issues, the problems are increasing day by day.

In the circumstances mentioned above, the Project Officer, ITDA, Paderu is instructed to conduct a coordination meeting with all the stakeholders and to implement the following instructions for smooth running of tourism activities on Vanjangi Hills subject to the following conditions:

- (i) To establish a Toll-Gate in the beginning of the Tourist place with all facilities and to arrange Teller machine to collect Toll-fee in a transparent manner by the Project Officer, ITDA, Paderu.
- (ii) That the income derived from the Tourism activities shall be shared in between the following Departments/Gram Panchayats @ ratio of 25% to PO, ITDA 30% to DFO, Paderu and 15% to Vanjangi Gram Panchayat, 15% to Lagisapalli Gram Panchayat and 15% to Kadeli Gram Panchayat.
- (iii) That in case, this proposal is not accepted and implemented and violated any of the above conditions, the Tourism activities of Vanjangi Hills will not be allowed in the interest of public from this year.
- (iv) Any staff arrangements may be done and salaries to be paid by P.O., ITDA, Paderu and DFO, Paderu in proportion to the amount collection.
- (v) No plastic, water bottles, chips packets, liquor and other harmful substances to be allowed and SP, ASR district is requested to seize any such vehicle found with it.

This order shall come into force with immediate effect.


15/9/22
District Collector & Chairman ITDA
Alluri Sitharama Raju District.

To

The Project Officer, ITDA, Paderu

✓ The District Forest Officer, Paderu

The Sarpanch, Gram Panchayat, Vanjangi, Lagisapalli and Kadeli

Copy to the Superintendent of Police, Alluri Sitharamaraju District

Copy to the Sub Collector, Paderu for information

Copy to the Tahsildar, Paderu for information.

**GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
FOREST DEPARTMENT**

Rc. no. 674/2021/P6.,
Dated: 24-09-2022.

O/o the Divisional Forest Officer,
Paderu.

From
Sri K. Vinod Kumar,
Divisional Forest Officer,
Paderu.

To
The District Collector,
Alluri Sitharama Raju district,
Paderu.

Sir,

Sub:- A.P. Forest Department – Vanjangi Vana Samrakshana Samithi – Vanjangi Hills – Community Based Eco-Tourism project – Orders issued by the Dist. Collector, Alluri Sitharama Raju district – Report submission of – Regarding.

Ref :- District Collector, ASR District, Rc. no. 282/2022/Coordn. Dt. 15.09.2022.

* * * *

With reference to the above, it is submitted that the District Collector, Alluri Sitharama Raju district has issued certain instructions to the Project Officer, ITDA, Paderu and Divisional Forest Officer, Paderu for running of tourism activities on Vanjangi Hills.

In this connection, it is submitted that the Vanjangi Hills comes under the jurisdiction of Vanjangi VSS, which was formed during 1996 and an extent of 250 ha reserve forest area is allotted to Vanjangi VSS for improvement of forest cover. After formation of Vanjangi VSS, the Forest department has taken up various forestry works like plantations, nurseries, Soil and Moisture Conservation works etc. under various Government schemes like APCFM, RAP, NAP-FDA, CAMPA, GIM etc.

After identifying the Vanjangi Hills as a tourism spot and visiting of tourists from various states in our country, the Forest department has conducted a General Body Meeting with the Vanjangi VSS members on 28.09.2021 and the VSS and Villagers have expressed their willingness to form Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) in Vanjangi VSS to conserve the natural resources and to tap the tourism potential of the areas and accordingly passed a resolution.

Further, it is submitted that the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad had issued certain guidelines for formation of Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) projects in the VSS / reserve forest areas of the state vide Circular no. 02/2007/WL-3, Rc. no. 40355/07/WL-3., dated 31.12.2007 and accordingly the proposals have been prepared and submitted to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Guntur for necessary approval.

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Subsequently, the the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Guntur keeping in view of the guidelines issued by the Govt. of India, MoEF & CC, New Delhi in F.No 5-2/2017-FC, dated 28.03.2019 read with F.No. 5-2/2017-FC-Part(1), dated 25.10.2021 accorded permission to establish the Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) with the Vanjangi VSS in Paderu (T) range of Paderu division vide Pri. CCF., HoFF, A.P., Guntur, Rc. no. 22/5/2021/WL.1., dated 26.12.2021. A copy of the same is submitted herewith for perusal and reference.

On receipt of the approval from the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Guntur, during 2022-23, this division has erected an entry check gate at the entrance of the Vanjangi hills to control the public and collected an amount of Rs. 3.4026 lakh towards entry fee and incurred an amount of Rs. 3.166 lakh expenditure towards wages to 25 watchers / guides from January, 2022 to February, 2022.

Further, an amount of Rs. 50.00 lakh funds were also sanctioned by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Guntur for development of Vanjangi (CBET) under Vanavihari scheme. Action is being taken to execute the Eco developmental activities in Vanjangi (CBET), model drawings and quotations were also obtained from various firms. Unless the works to be taken up through the Vanjangi VSS (Forest departmental procedure), the above released funds can't be spent on Vanjangi (CBET).

As per the guidelines issued in Rule.5 of Circular no. 02/2007/WL-3, Rc. no. 40355/07/WL-3., dated 31.12.2007 of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad for establishment of Community based Eco-tourism in reserve forest areas and Protected areas of Andhra Pradesh, the Forest Department (Divisional Forest Officer) concerned should be the main implementing agency and as per Rule. 4 of Circular no. 02/2007/WL-3, 50% of the revenue realized will be kept in the joint account of the VSS and Forest Department and to be utilized for development of the eco system and balance 50% will be kept in the VSS account and used as decided by the General Body of the VSS.

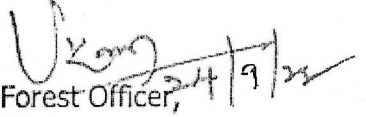
In the reference cited, the District Collector, ASR District has instructed the Project Officer, ITDA, Paderu to conduct coordination meeting with all the stake holders and also shared the income derived from the Tourism activities 25% to PO, ITDA, 30% DFO, Paderu and 15% to Vanjangi Gram panchayat, 15% to Lagisapalli Gram panchayat and 15% to Kadeli Gram panchayat.

Hence, I request the District Collector, ASR district to kindly issue necessary orders in this regard duly following the guidelines issued by the Govt. of India, MoEF & CC, New Delhi in F.No 5-2/2017-FC, dated 28.03.2019 read with F.No. 5-2/2017-FC-Part(1), dated 25.10.2021 and Circular no. 02/2007/WL-3, Rc. no. 40355/07/WL-3.,

dated 31.12.2007 of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad for establishing the CBET project in Vanjangi VSS by the Forest department.

<<<<<<

Yours faithfully,

o/c 
Divisional Forest Officer,
Paderu.

24/9/22

29/9/22
DESPATCHED

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55555/1

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
FOREST DEPARTMENT

Rc. no. 674/2021/P6.,
Dated: 07-10-2022.

O/o the Divisional Forest Officer,
Paderu.

From

Sri K. Vinod Kumar,
Divisional Forest Officer,
Paderu.

To

The Chief Conservator of Forests,
Visakhapatnam Circle,
Visakhapatnam.

Sir,

Sub:- A.P. Forest Department – Vanjangi Vana Samrakshana Samithi – Vanjangi Hills – Community Based Eco-Tourism project – Orders issued by the Dist. Collector, Alluri Sitharama Raju district – Report submission of – Regarding.

- Ref :- (1) Prl. CCF., HoFF, A.P., Guntur, Rc. no. 22/5/2021/WL.1., dated 26.12.2021
(2) District Collector, ASR District, Rc. no. 282/2022/Coordn. Dt. 15.09.2022.
(3) DFO, Paderu, Rc. no 674/2021/P6., dated 24.09.2022.

* * * *

It is submitted that in the reference 1st cited, the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Guntur accorded permission to establish the Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) with the Vanjangi VSS in Paderu (T) range of Paderu division. On receipt of the approval from the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Guntur, during 2022-23, this division has erected an entry check gate at the entrance of the Vanjangi hills to control the public and collected an amount of Rs. 3.4026 lakh towards entry fee and incurred an amount of Rs. 3.166 lakh expenditure towards wages to 25 watchers / guides from January, 2022 to February, 2022.

An amount of Rs. 50.00 lakh funds were also sanctioned by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Guntur for development of Vanjangi (CBET) under Vanavihari scheme. Action is being taken to execute the Eco developmental activities in Vanjangi (CBET), model drawings and quotations were also obtained from various firms for starting the works in Vanjangi (CBET) as the season is getting started from November month onwards.

Further, in the reference 2nd cited, the District Collector, Alluri Sitharama Raju district has issued certain instructions to the Project Officer, ITDA, Paderu and Divisional Forest Officer, Paderu for running of tourism activities on Vanjangi Hills. The District Collector, ASR District has instructed the Project Officer, ITDA, Paderu to conduct coordination meeting with all the stake holders and also shared the income derived from the Tourism activities 25% to PO, ITDA, 30% DFO, Paderu and 15% to

Vanjangi Gram panchayat, 15% to Lagisapalli Gram panchayat ad 15% to Kadeli Gram panchayat.

As per the guidelines issued in Rule.5 of Circular no. 02/2007/WL-3, Rc. no. 40355/07/WL-3., dated 31.12.2007 of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad for establishment of Community based Eco-tourism in reserve forest areas and Protected areas of Andhra Pradesh, the Forest Department (Divisional Forest Officer) concerned should be the main implementing agency and as per Rule. 4 of Circular no. 02/2007/WL-3, 50% of the revenue realized will be kept in the joint account of the VSS and Forest Department and to be utilized for development of the eco system and balance 50% will be kept in the VSS account and used as decided by the General Body of the VSS.

In the reference 3rd cited, the District Collector, Alluri Sitharama Raju district, Paderu was also addressed duly explaining the above facts and the copies of the departmental guidelines on establishment of CBET projects were also submitted to the District Collector, Alluri Sitharama Raju district, Paderu for their reference. Further, it was also informed to the District Collector, Alluri Sitharama Raju district, Paderu that unless the works to be taken up through the Vanjangi VSS (Forest departmental procedure), the above released funds can't be spent on Vanjangi (CBET) and requested to issue necessary orders in this regard duly following the guidelines issued by the Govt. of India, MoEF & CC, New Delhi in F.No 5-2/2017-FC, dated 28.03.2019 read with F.No. 5-2/2017-FC-Part(1), dated 25.10.2021 and Circular no. 02/2007/WL-3, Rc. no. 40355/07/WL-3., dated 31.12.2007 of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad for establishing the CBET project in Vanjangi VSS by the Forest department. The revised orders of the District Collector, Alluri Sitharama Raju district, Paderu are awaited.

The revised action plan for development of Vanjangi (CBET) under Vana Vihari scheme for the year 2022-23 has also been prepared and submitted herewith for kind perusal and approval.

At this juncture, I request the Chief Conservator of Forests, Visakhapatnam to kindly address the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Andhra Pradesh, Guntur for issuing necessary instructions in this regard whether to implement the Vana Vihari scheme on Vanjangi (CBET) or not, as the District Collector, Alluri Sitharama Raju district, Paderu instructions are contradictory to the Forest department guidelines and the season is also to be started from November month onwards.

This is submitted for favour of kind information and necessary further instructions in this regard.

Encl : As above.

Yours faithfully,

Divisional Forest Officer,
Paderu.

7/10/2022

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REVISED ANNUAL ACTION PLAN OF OPERATION UNDER VANA VIHARI SCHEME (ECO TOURISM) AT VANJANGI CBET FOR THE YEAR 2022
2023 IN PADERU DIVISION

S.N	Name of the Component	Unit	Rates	Qty	Units	Amount	Unit Rate	Range	Beat	Location
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
I	Eco Development at Vanajangi (CBET)									
1	Entry gate Arch: Establishment of Entry gate arch size 14 X 14 feet	1	837000			837000	Actuals as per execution	Paderu	Paderu	Vanjangi
2	Establishment of railing: at view point for 150 running meter	1	7000	130	R. M	910000	Actuals as per execution	Paderu	Paderu	Vanjangi
3	Wash rooms: 4 Wash rooms with 1 Septic tank, with room ceiling in bricks and septic tank	1	3500	250	S.Ft	875000	Actuals as per execution	paderu	Paderu	Vanjangi
4	Sitting benches: 18 seating benches (4.5 X 1.5 feet)	24	22000			528000	22000	Paderu	Paderu	Vanjangi
5	Signage boards: 30 Pcs	30	8000			240000	8000	Paderu	Paderu	Vanjangi
6	Dust bins	10	30000			300000	LS	Paderu	Paderu	Vanjangi
7	Hand Pump	1	100000			100000				
8	Formation of path to view point					800000	LS	Paderu	Paderu	Vanjangi
9	Electrical line and electrification works other miscellaneous items etc.,					410000	LS	Paderu	Paderu	Vanjangi
	Total :					5000000				

Vijay
Divisional Forest Officer,
Paderu.
7/10/2022



P. RAM MOHAN RAO, IFS.,
Chief Conservator of Forests
Visakhapatnam Circle

Dear.. *Gurmit Kumar Ji,*

D.O.Lr.no.2930/2021/TO, dt.24.11.2022.

Sub:- APFD - Vanjangi Vana Samrakshana Samithi - Vanjangi Hills - Community Based Eco Tourism: project (CBET) implementing agency of the Forest department based on the guidelines of the PCCF, AP, Guntur - Regarding.

- Ref:-
- 1) DFO, Paderu Rc.no.674/2021/P6, dt.06.10.2021 & 25.11.2021.
 - 2) CCF, Visakhapatnam Rc.no.2930/2021/TO, dt.27.11.2021.
 - 3) Prl. CCF, HoFF, AP, Guntur Rc.no.22/5/2021/WL.1, dt.26.12.2021.
 - 4) District Collector, ASR District Rc.no.282/2022/Coordn., dt.15.09.2022.
 - 5) DFO, Paderu Rc.no.674/2021/P6, dt.24.09.2022.
 - 6) DFO, Paderu Rc.no.674/2021/P6, dt. 07.10.2022.

@ @ @

I would like to invite your attention to the above captioned subject matter mentioned in the references cited and it is to state that in the reference 3rd cited, the PCCF, AP, Guntur has accorded permission to establish the Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) with the Vanjangi VSS in Paderu (T) Range of Paderu Division. Accordingly, the DFO, Paderu has erected an entry check gate at the entrance of Vanjangi Hills to control the public and collected an amount of Rs.3.46 lakh towards entry fee. The expenditure incurred of Rs.3.166 lakh towards wages was paid to the 25 watchers / guides from January, 2022 to February, 2022 from the collection of gate entry fee.

During the year 2022-23, an amount of Rs.50.00 lakhs funds were sanctioned by the PCCF, AP, Guntur for development of Vanjangi (CBET) under Vana Vihari Scheme. In this regard the DFO, Paderu has stated that the action is being taken to execute the eco development activities in Vanjangi (CBET), Model drawings and quotations were also obtained from various firms for starting the works in Vanjangi (CBET).

The DFO, Paderu has reported in the reference 4th cited, that, the District Collector, ASR District has also instructed the Project Officer, ITDA, Paderu to conduct coordination meeting with all the stake holders and **shared the income derived from the tourism activities 25% to PO, ITDA, 30% to DFO, Paderu, 15% to Vanjangi Gram Panchayat, 15% to Lagisapaili Gram Panchayat and 15% to Kadeli Gram Panchayat.**

But, as per the guidelines issued in Rule-5 of Circular no.02/2007/WL-3, communicated in Rc.no.40355/07/WL-3, dt.31.12.2007 by the PCCF, AP, Hyderabad, the forest department (DFO, Paderu) should be the main implementing agency. And also, as per the above Circular no.02/2007/WL-3 in Rule-4, 50% of the revenue realized will be kept in

Vana Vikas Forest Complex, Near R.K. Mission, Visakhapatnam - 530 003.

Andhra Pradesh, India

Phones : Off : +91-891-2563 001, 2559 834, Mobile: 94408 10030

email : cf_apfd_vsppm@ap.gov.in, cfvskp@gmail.com

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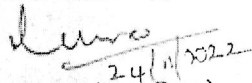
the Joint Account of the VSS and Forest department and to be utilized for development of the eco-system and balance 50% will be kept in VSS account and used as decided by the general body of the VSS / EDC. This fact was already explained by the DFO, Paderu to you in the reference 5th cited in a detailed letter submitted.

In view of the above and as per the above guidelines for establishment of Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) in reserved forest areas and protected areas of Andhra Pradesh, the Forest department (DFO, Paderu) shall be the main implementing agency for taking up of works etc. in Vanajangi VSS.

This is for information and necessary action.

With best wishes,

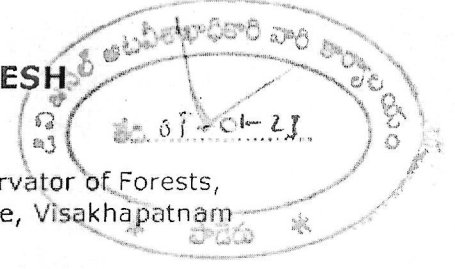
Yours faithfully,


24/11/2022
(P. Ram Mohan Rao)

To,
Sri Sumit Kumar IAS,
Collector & District Magistrate,
ASR District.



**GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
FOREST DEPARTMENT**



Rc.no.2930/2021/TO
Dated:26.11.2022.

674/2021

Office of the Conservator of Forests,
Visakhapatnam circle, Visakhapatnam

From
Sri P.Ram Mohan Rao, IFS.,
Chief Conservator of Forests,
Visakhapatnam Circle.

To
The Prl. Chief Conservator of Forests,
and Head of Forest Force,
Andhra Pradesh, Guntur.

Sir,

Sub:- APFD - Vanjangi Vana Samrakshana Samithi - Vanjangi Hills -
Community Based Eco Tourism project (CBET) - Report submitted by the
DFO, Paderu - Submission - Regarding.

- Ref:-
- 1) DFO, Paderu Rc.no.674/2021/P6, dt.06.10.2021 & 25.11.2021.
 - 2) CCF, Visakhapatnam Rc.no.2930/2021/TO, dt.27.11.2021.
 - 3) Prl. CCF, HoFF, AP, Guntur Rc.no.22/5/2021/WL.1, dt.26.12.2021.
 - 4) District Collector, ASR District Rc.no.282/2022/Coordn.,
dt.15.09.2022.
 - 5) DFO, Paderu Rc.no.674/2021/P6, dt.24.09.2022.
 - 6) DFO, Paderu Rc.no.674/2021/P6, dt. 07.10.2022.
 - 7) CCF, Visakhapatnam DO Rc.no.2930/2021/TO, dt.24.11.2022.

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Kind attention is invited to the references cited.

It is submitted that, in the reference 3rd cited, the Prl.Chief Conservator of Forests, AP, Guntur has accorded permission to establish the Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) with the Vanjangi VSS in Paderu (T) Range of Paderu Division. Accordingly, the DFO, Paderu has erected an entry check gate at the entrance of Vanjangi Hills to control the public and collected an amount of Rs.3.46 lakh towards entry fee. Out of this, an amount of Rs.3.166 lakh towards wages to the 25 watchers / guides from January, 2022 to February, 2022.

Further, it is submitted that, during the year 2022-23, an amount of Rs.50.00 lakh funds were sanctioned by the PCCF, AP, Guntur for development of Vanjangi (CBET) under Vana Vihari Scheme. In this regard the DFO, Paderu has stated that the action is being taken to execute the eco development activities in Vanjangi (CBET), Model drawings and quotations were also obtained from various firms for starting the works in Vanjangi (CBET). The DFO, Paderu has submitted revised action plan duly revising the component of the item of works with the approved funds of Rs.50.00 lakh under Vana Vihari Scheme (Eco-tourism) based on the present essentiality in Vanjangi (CBET) for approval. The details of component wise works, action plan approved and item wise revised action plan under this scheme 2022-23 are herewith submitted for favour of kind perusal.

The DFO, Paderu has also reported in the reference 4th cited, that, the District Collector, ASR District has instructed the Project Officer, ITDA, Paderu to conduct coordination meeting with all the stake holders and **shared the income derived from the tourism activities 25% to PO, ITDA, 30% to DFO, Paderu, 15% to Vanjangi Gram Panchayat, 15% to Lagisapalli Gram Panchayat and 15% to Kadeli Gram Panchayat.**

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But, as per the report of the DFO, Paderu, the Forest Department (DFO, Paderu) should be the main implementing agency based on the guidelines issued in Rule-5 of Circular no.02/2007/WL-3, communicated in Rc.no.40355/07/WL-3, dt.31.12.2007 by the PCCF, AP, Hyderabad. **As per the above Circular no.02/2007/WL-3 in Rule-4, 50% of the revenue realized will be kept in the Joint Account of the VSS and Forest department and to be utilized for development of the eco-system and balance 50% will be kept in VSS account and used as decided by the General body of the VSS / EDC.**

In this connection, it is further submitted that the DFO, Paderu has also submitted the District Collector, ASR District in the reference 5th cited (copy enclosed) duly explaining the above guidelines on establishment of CBET project and stating that unless the works are taken up through Vanjangi VSS (as per Forest department procedure), the released funds cannot be spent on Vanjangi (CBET). But, revised are awaited from the District Collector, ASR District in this regard.

In the reference 6th cited, the DFO, Paderu has that in view of the guidelines issued by the PCCF in circular no.02/2007/WL-3, dt.31.12.2007 of the PCCF, AP, Hyderabad and by GoI ref. F.no.5-2/2017-FC, dt.28.03.2019, requested whether or not to implement the Vana Vihari scheme on Vanjangi (CBET) as the District Collector, ASR District instructions are contradictory to the Forest department guidelines referred above.

A DO letter was addressed to the District Collector, ASR District in the reference 7th cited (copy enclosed) and informed that as per the guidelines issued by the PCCF, AP, Hyderabad for establishment of Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET) in RF areas and protected areas of AP, the Forest Department (DFO, Paderu) should be the main implementing agency for taking up of works, etc through Vanjangi VSS.

Therefore, it is requested to kindly issue necessary instructions to implement the Vana Vihari scheme on Vanjangi (CBET) and approve the revised action plan for the year 2022-23 submitted by the DFO, Paderu and communicate orders at an early date.

A copy of the report submitted by the DFO, Paderu is herewith submitted for favour of perusal.

This is submitted for kind information and necessary action.

Encl:- As above.

Yours faithfully,
Sd/-P. Ram Mohan Rao
Chief Conservator of Forests,
Visakhapatnam.

✓ Copy to the Divisional Forest Officer, Paderu for information.

Copy to A4 Section, O/o the Conservator of Forests, Visakhapatnam for information and necessary action.

///t.c.b.o.///


Manager 26/11/22

Revised annual action plan of operation under Vana Vihari Scheme (Eco-tourism) at Vanajangi (CBET) for the year 2023 in Pader
 Division of Visakhapatnam Circle

Approved APO for the year 2022-23				Revised APO for the year 2022-23					
Sl. no	Name of the component	Unit cost	Approved amount (Rs.in lakh)		Name of the component	Unit cost	Revised proposed amount (Rs.in lakh)		Remarks
			Phy	Fin			Phy	Fin	
1	Establishment of Entry gate with security (with Office room)	Actual as per execution	1	5.00	Establishment of Entry gate arch size 14 x 14 feet	Actual as per execution	1	8.37	
2	Parking areas for 2 & 4 wheelers		2	1.00					
3	Establishment of railing at view point area	6	1	6.00	Establishment of railing at view point area for 130 running meter	0.07	130 RMT	9.10	
4	Borewell with overhead tank with Solar motor	6	1	6.00					
5	Establishment of Cafeteria / Food court	LS	1	10.00					
6	Formation of paths to view point	LS	LS	3.00	Formation of paths to view point	LS	LS	8.00	
7	Arrangement of Dust bins	0.1	15	1.50	Arrangement of Dust bins 10 no.	0.3	10	3.00	
8	Sitting benches or Rock moulded benches at view point & other places	0.5	8	4.00	Sitting benches 24 no. (4.5 x 1.5 sft)	0.22	24	5.28	
9	Construction of washrooms	6	1	6.00	4 Wash rooms with 1 Septic tank, with room ceiling in bricks and septic tank (250 sft)	0.035	250 sft	8.75	
10	Drinking water facilities with RO Unit	1.25	2	2.50	Hand pump	1	1	1.00	
11	Signage boards	LS	6	2.00	Signage boards 30 pcs	0.08	30	2.40	
12	Electrical line and electrification works other misc. items	LS	LS	3.00	Electrical line and electrification works other misc. items	LS	LS	4.10	
	Total:			50.00	Total:			50.00	

It is submitted that, the proposed essential items proposed in the APO to take up works in Vanajangi (CBET) works during the year 2023. Hence, the revised APO submitted by the DFO, Paderu may please be approved.

Sd/-P.Ram Mohan Rao
 Chief Conservator of Forests,
 Visakhapatnam

(Signature)

(Date)

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**BEFORE THE HON'BLE
NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI**

O.A. No. 152 of 2024 (SZ)

IN THE MATTER OF:

Suo Motu based on the news item appearing in 'The Indian Express' dated 12.02.2024 titled, "Andhra Pradesh : Rise in footfall in eco-sensitive areas poses threat to biodiversity and wildlife".

With

Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board
Through its Member Secretary,
Vijayawada and Anr.

...Respondent(s)

**REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEE
FILED BY THE 2nd RESPONDENT**

Y. KAVITHA
Counsel for the 2nd Respondent
Mob. 98415 86629