

F. No. 1-10/93-PT (Part)
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
National Tiger Conservation Authority

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Dated: 22.10.2018

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Sub: Summary record of the meeting held at NTCA, Hqrs, New Delhi regarding the implementation of Sabarimala Master Plan on 09.10.2018– reg.

Please find enclosed herewith the copy of the summary record of the meeting held at Conference Hall of NTCA, Hqrs, New Delhi regarding the implementation of Sabarimala Master Plan on 09.10.2018 under the chairmanship of ADG (PT) & Member Secretary (NTCA) for kind information and necessary action.

Encl: As above.

Nishant Verma 22/10/18
(Nishant Verma)
Deputy Inspector General of Forests (NTCA)

Distribution:

1. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden, Kerala.
2. The Principal Secretary (Dewasom), Govt. of Kerala.
3. The Chief Conservator of Forest & Field Director, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kottayam, Kerala.
4. The Chief Engineer (General) TDB & Member Secretary High Powered Committee, Travancore Devasom Board, Kerala.
5. The Commissioner & Member Secretary, High Powered Committee, Travancore Devasom Board, Kerala.
6. The Deputy Director, Periyar Tiger Reserve (West Division), Kottayam, Kerala.

Copy also to:

1. The PS to ADG (PT) & MS (NTCA).
2. The Inspector General of Forests / Assistant Inspector General of Forests, NTCA, HQ.
3. The AIGF, NTCA, RO, South Zone, Bengaluru.

Summary record of the meeting held at NTCA, Hqrs, New Delhi regarding the implementation of Sabarimala Master Plan on 09.10.2018.

A meeting of the committee regarding the implementation of Sabarimala Master Plan was held on 09.10.2018 at the Conference Hall, of NTCA, HQrs. New Delhi under the Chairmanship of ADG (PT) & Member Secretary (NTCA). The details of the participating officers are placed at Annex. I. At the outset, the Chair welcomed the participating officers and briefed about the importance of Master Plan implementation at Sabarimala. The Chair briefed that the master plan details out the development vision for short term and long term activities at Sabarimala. It was also informed that a meeting was held at NTCA HQrs. on 25.04.2017 to discuss the implementation of the master plan.

During the discussions, it was brought to notice of the Chair that Phase I of the master plan contained a layout out plan for base camp at Nilakkal along with immediate interventions for water supply, sanitation, solid waste management, parking and road facilities at Nilakkal, Pamba and Sannidhanam prior to pilgrimage season. The phase II of master plan prepared by M/s Eco Smart Ltd has a perspective of 50 years vision projecting all aspects of site specific requirements. The master plan is divided into various modules viz. regional, infrastructure, landscape, built fabric analysis, including the disaster management plan to deal with natural/manmade disaster. The master plan aims to manage the Sabarimala temple complex and the surrounding region in a complimentary and eco-friendly manner so as to provide satisfactory experience to pilgrims visiting the holy shrine. In the meeting, during discussion & deliberations, it was informed to the Chair that several supervisory visits by the different committees of MoEF&CC, agencies and officers of the State Government of Kerala had been conducted to review the implantation of Sabarimala Master Plan. The observations regarding the implementation of the provisions along with the action points decided are summarized as under:

SL No	Status as on 25.04.2017	Master Plan Prescriptions	Current status	Action Points
1	Nilakkal base camp: This base camp was provisioned for decongesting Sannidhanam and Pamba		Nilakkal base camp is not yet developed in accordance with master plan prescriptions. The vehicular movement beyond Nilakkal was permitted up to the last season.	The Commissioner TDB briefed the Chair about the action taken for compliance of Master Plan Prescriptions and submitted a note. After discussions, it was decided that Kerala Forest Department shall ensure the compliance to be made by Travancore Derasom Board (TDB) as per the Master Plan prescriptions (site wise) and submit compliance report to this Authority.
	Area made barren by removing tree cover	Developing and initiating lay out plan as per master plan	The process of developing parking facility by cutting of trees is still continuing. Layout plan for Nilakkal development is not yet prepared.	
	Parking lots without shade trees / demarcation	Alternative base camps to be developed as per the master plan for decongestion of Sannidhanam and Pamba areas	Parking areas are still left open without any tree cover. High level of soil erosion has been noticed in the area which has been de-forested for development of parking facility.	
	Buildings don not confirm to guidelines		New buildings including drivers' shelter, dormitory and hotel complex etc. were constructed without considering master plan prescription.	
	Attempts made to sublease base camp area by TDB		Presently there is no attempt to sublease the base camp area.	

Asst. Secy 22/10/18

	No development works were carried in Erumely , Vandiperiyar and Sathram base camps		Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
2	Pampa		
	Hap-hazardous development on massive scale	Not in conformity with the prescriptions / guidelines given in the master plan	Buildings including commercial establishments were constructed with in the 50 m distance of Pampa River. The buildings which were very close to the river stream were washed out during the recent flood.
	Insufficient toilet facilities		Bio- toilets were recently established in Pampa. But the number of bio- toilets is quite insufficient.
	Non Functioning Sewage treatment plant		Sewage treatment plant at Pampa is not yet fully developed and is non-functional Though the sewer network from toilet blocks are connected to STP, the solid waste treatment system of the plant is an utter failure. Hence black colored waste water containing human waste from Pampa STP runs to Pampa River through Njonangar. The same fact is revealed from scientific studies done by state pollution control board.
	Temporary Shabby structures		
	Government Hospital Construction was a deviation from plan		The green zone area in front of the government hospital was also removed recently. Large scale earths were removed and area is developed as a parking zone.
	No proper drainage and sewage directly let in to Pampa		The Pampa STP is not under operational in its true sense and hence the untreated human waste water still directly discharging to Pampa River. The recent flood also damaged the sewer pipe lines at Pampa.
3	Sannidhanam Route		

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	Traditional route from Pampa to Sannidhanam is 4 km in length Pathway leading to Sannidhanam has been covered with roof looking like massive industrial shed s.		Roof covering over the Neelimala trek route is still continuing as a shabby structure.
	Long stretches of fixed railings with Ms Angles and channels disrupting wildlife movement	Not prescribed in the master plan	The barricades which were destructing the free movement of wildlife were removed on 08.05.2017 and a case was registered against the TDB officials. Further the Hon'ble High court of Kerala has ordered to replace the permanent barricades along the trek rout at 7 places with removable temporary barricades.
	Signages not as per guidelines		Most of the existing signages are not in accordance with master plan prescription.
	Pathway all along the traditional route shabbily stone paved creating much difficulty for pilgrims		Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
4	Sway Ayyappa Pathway		
	Total surface is concreted	As per master plan 2.2.4 (c) continues concrete paving of the trek route is not allowed	Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
	Heavy steep cutting of pathway sides making trees dangerous to pilgrims.		Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
	Concrete underpass created at Marakootam		Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
5	Sannidhanam		
	No layout plan as per master plan prescription at Sannidhanam	As per 3.4.4.3 point of Sabarimala master plan provision is made for underground cable supply line rather than	Layout plan is not yet prepared by the high power committee/ TDB
	Haphazard constructions in and around sanctum sanctorum		Instead of reducing the volume of concrete buildings at Sannidhanam, 2 heavy concrete structures were erected during last years. 1. Annadhanamandapam

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		depending of overhead line in Sabarimala	(3Storey), 2. Darsan complex (4 Storey).
	Solid waste accumulation at Sannidhanam	were the frequent disruption of Supply occurs due to breaking line	Huge heap of waste including plastic is still left open at Sannidhanam (near incinerator). Wildlife used to consume this waste material along with plastic. There is no proper mechanism to separate the plastic waste.
	Overall poor Sanitation conditions		The overall sanitation condition at Sannidhanam is extremely poor.
	Old buildings yet to be faced out as per master plan		Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
	Bare overhead electrical lines not replaced with underground cable		Though the overhead electrical lines are not replaced with underground cables, most of the lines are presently covered with Aerial Bunched Cables (ABC)
	Deprived tree cover (50% tree cover prescribed in MP)		Presently the tree cover in leased/diverted land at Sannidhanam is less than 20%.
6	Infrastructure Module		
	Partially completed but the design does not comply with Master plan guidelines without any public amenities , fully covered concrete flooring restriction on animal movement	Development of fully fledged queue complexes between Marakoottam and Saramkuthy Advocates carrying out EIA if the proposed design cover more than 30% of Canopy	The constructed Queue complex looks like massive industrial sheds. Since the police department is not satisfied with the existing queue complex system, it does not serve its purpose. During last pilgrim season also the 6 numbers of queue complexes were not opened for pilgrims and it is remaining as mere concrete structure, which block the free movement of wildlife.
	No EIA has done	National competitive bidding for Eco- friendly design solutions	Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
	Widened the trek route as unsuitable surfacing (Concreting with RCC , the entire route at a thickness of more than 45 CM)	Development of trek path and facilities there in with suitable surfacing in consultation with forest department	Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.

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	The side wall concreting with RCC the reinforcement is jutting out which prevent the movement of wildlife	Pampa Marakoottam trek path widened in 12 m Chandrananth an road 7 m Swamy Ayyappan road 5 m (Master plan in Para 2.2.4 c vision document and development)	Because of the removal of barricades, the wildlife movement at Marakoottam is now restored. But steep cutting along Chandrananthan road due to heavy RCC work is still an obstacle for free wildlife movement.
	Resting areas with small kiosks have not been developed so far	Provision of resting areas along traditional route with small kiosks	Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
	Developed some unscientific open areas	Development of Makara Jyothi view points	Due to the heavy pilgrim inflow more areas are getting opened by the pilgrims for seeing Makarajothi.
	Steep cuts made to concrete the Swamy Ayyappan and Chandrananthan road servers the natural movement corridors of the wildlife		
	Fencing is provided along the traditional route from Marakoottam to Sannidhanam, this is as well as railings erected along traditional route is not using usually taken away and stacked during off season if left without stacking these obstruct the free movement of animals especially herds of elephants	Master plan in Para 4.4.4. 1 (C) of Landscape records that animal crossing have been observed near Appachimedu cardiology centre, Neelimala , Swami Ayyappan road Charalmedu, Madukka and Orakkuzhy	As per the Hon'ble Kerala High court order the railings at animal crossing areas were removed. The movement of wildlife through these locations is now restored and is evident from the indirect wildlife signs.
	Solid Waste Management & water and Sanitation sub modules		
	Started working but not in full swing .The success of the	Solid waste treatment plant at Sannidhanam	The Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) at Sannidhanam was commissioned during 2012 itself. But presently the STP

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	plant yet to be certified		is not functional and scientific test reports from state Pollution Control Board reveals the fact that the present processing mechanism is an utter failure. Due to the STP failure, the untreated water is directly discharge into Pampa river via Kumbalamthodu and Njonangar
	Large number of Solid waste accumulated near the incinerator, temple premises and along the trek route		The incinerator premises become a dumping yard and heavy heap of plastic waste is left open without any fencing. Every year the heap size is getting enlarges and now it is almost saturated.
	Not Done	Sewer Lines from Marakootam from STP at Sannidhanam	Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
	Not Done	Equalization Chamber and Pump House at Marakootam	The space prescribed by the master plan (Map 6) for the construction of equalization chamber is presently occupied by a hotel, auctioned by TDB.
	The area has been exposed to unnecessary commercial exploitation much against of constitutional status of that area	Permissive use of land. Six kiosks / Shops along Swami Ayyappan road by EDCs /TDB. Only small kiosks are prescribed	In anticipation of the upcoming pilgrim season, TDB has auctioned 220 nos commercial items. The commercial items even include photo studio, CD shops etc.
	Overhead power supply cable has not been replaced with underground cable supply still bare conductors are being using for power supply	Replacing overhead supply to that of underground cable supply line in Sannidhanam and trek routes	Overhead lines are now insulated with Aerial Bunched Cables (ABC)
	Existing signages are not in proper form	Development of proper signages	Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
	The shops along the trek route from Pampa Sannidhanam auctioned by TDB and there is no proper mechanism of waste disposal more over the EDCs are not involve in any of	Limit the number and type of shops at Pampa and Sannidhanam shop along the trek route should be within resting bay additional facilities if needed should	Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.

22/10/18

	the service	be maintained by EDC/ volunteers	
	Not complied,	Restoration of regional character of the temple to mitigate ill – planned and unchecked building activity	Not complied yet.
	Not complied, at present the Sannidhanam is a concrete jungle and most of the construction look like industrial sheds	Demolition of old age , anesthetic structures at Sannidhanam	Without demolishing old structures, TDB continuing its haphazard development activities. A new VIP guest house namely Punydarsan complex is proposed to construct at Sannidhanam and administrative sanction for the same has already given by the State Tourism department.
	Not complied with	No trees should be felled except standing dangerous	Recently trees were removed for the construction of Annadhanamandapam and Darsan complex.
	Entire stretch of trek route fully concreted with RCC more than 45 cm thickness	No continues concrete of trek routes except where there is a gradient of 1:2	Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
	The path leading to Sannidhanam has covered with roof disturbing the environment and traditional trekking experience	No structures over the trek route except specific structures for resting	Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
	The entire area packed with unscientific construction without any layout and without any tree cover	Minimum 50% of the total area given Sannidhanam, Pampa and Nilakkal shall be under green cover at least 100 trees have to be planted out of which 50 % of shall be evergreen species	Except 5 numbers of trees planted at Sannidhanam (Temple premises), TDB is not carrying out any replanting activities at leased out areas.
	Marakootam which is the most important animal crossing area, massive RCC side walls and underpass	Canopy to be ensured above congregating pilgrims at Marakootam	Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.

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	effectively cuts off all kind of animal movements in all probability concreting was carried out for enabling fast plying of tractors		
	For managing the solid waste generated along the trek route, the TDB employs few labours who dispose the solid waste into the forest area adjoining the trek route	Detailed guidelines have been given in the master plan Responsibility of solid waste management is with the TDB Necessary steps to be taken for deploying adequate labour and strict supervision of solid waste disposal	Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing.
	Toilets created and ad-hoc basis and opened defecation by pilgrims continuous Toilet and kitchen waste drains into forest area	Installing proper drainage and waste treatment system these activities are part of phase 1 of plan	Though the number of Bio-toilets has increased, the toilet facility is insufficient.
8	Transportation of goods		
	Currently goods are transported using tractors	Development of rope way as the only alternate for tractors	No EIA study is so far conducted with respect to rope way. Preliminary survey for rope way was started but not yet finished.
	Intensity of tractor movement is quite high		Presently more than 60 numbers of tractors are plying in Sabarimala itself.
9	Administrative Mechanism		
	No working committee has been constituted for implementation of master plan	For implementation of master plan, working committee needs to be constituted	Status as on 09.10.2018 is continuing. As per the GO (Rt) no2326/2005 RD dated 23.04.2005. An apex level committee and a working committee were constituted by the State government for effective implementation of master plan. A representative from MoEF was a member in the committee but as per the Hon'ble Kerala High court order dated 02.04.2009 in DBP no 5 and 15 of 2009 the

Report No 22/2010

			apex level committee and working committee as per the Government Order virtually scraped and a new High power committee was constituted. Representative of MoEF&CC was not included in the high power committee constituted by the Hon'ble court.	
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During the deliberations, the Chair stressed for the inclusion of the NTCA representative in the composition of High Power Committee. It was decided that the Member Secretary, High Power Committee shall carry out the needful in this regard for overseeing the implementation of master Plan prescriptions.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair.

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List of Participating Officers:

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4	Sh. Nishant Verma, DIG, NTCA HQrs.	dig2-ntca@nic.in	NTCA HQrs., New Delhi
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6	Sh. Sankaran Pok., Chief Engineer General, Travancore Devasom Board	tdbceg@gmail.com	Chief Engineer General, Travancore Devasom Board; 9495973747
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