

**Site Inspection Report of Chief Conservator of Forests for Diversion Proposal
for Concreting of Blavana Kudi Kunchipara Road**

I have inspected the proposed project site on 04/03/2020 along with the Range Forest officer, Kuttampuzha, staff of Pooyamkutty Forest Station, District Panchayat Ward Member, Kuttampuzha Panchayat Ward Member and the local people. The proposed site is located in Mayayattoor- Idiyara Reserve in Kuttampuzha Range of Malayattoor Forest Division. The Proposal is for concreting 7 stretches of varying lengths of the partially concrete road from Blavana Ferry to Kallelimedu and Kunchipara. These stretches, where concreting is proposed, are measured as (1) 30m (2) 147m (3) 90m (4) 508m (5) 20m (6) 27m (7) 353m totaling to 1175m of length. The concreting is proposed for existing width of the road i.e. 3m. The user agency has proposed for diversion an area of 0.3525 Ha which is necessary for carrying out this work. It is understood from local enquiry that the existing road from Blavana Kadavu (ferry) to Kunchippara and other tribal settlements like Thera, Thalavechapara and Variyam was concreted in discrete stretches a few years back through diversion U/s 3(2) of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006. Owing to the ceiling on extent of forest area which could be permitted under that act, only the portions of the road which were damaged heavily were concreted at that time. Now the remaining portions have developed exposed rocks and big potholes all along, making plying of vehicles exceedingly difficult.

The people in the Tribal settlements, namely Thalvechapara (85 families), Kunchipara (98 failies), Variyam (77 families) and Thera (27 families) use this road principally. There are more than 1000 tribal people mainly comprising of Muthuvan tribe from these 287 families, who are the major beneficiaries of the proposed diversion. About 400 people belonging to other categories residing at Kallelimedu enclosure also use this road. Officials of the Forest Department also

depend on this road for forest protection activities. The only alternate road is Manikandanchal Thinnakkunthu- Randupuzha- Kodumpirikuthu- Kallelimedu which is about 4 Km longer than this route. The road is usable during summer for plying of vehicles, since the Pooyamkutty River need to be crossed at Manikandanchal causeway and tributary of the same river has to be crossed at Randupuzha. It is virtually impossible to negotiate through this route during rains when the rivers are in full spate.

The surrounding vegetation is of moist deciduous forest and no tree felling is required for the completion of the work as the work involves only concreting of the left out stretches of the existing road.

Major wildlife species in this area include elephant, tiger, leopard sloth bear, wild boar, sambar etc. No disturbance to the wildlife is envisaged by this work. The area is not part of any protected area and sanctuary and no protected monument/ defense establishment exists in the area. Human animal conflict issues are rampant in this area. A kindergarten teacher was killed by a lone tusker a few years back in Kallelimedu, which amply testifies the need for better conveyance facilities.

The proposed diversion of forest land which already is an existing road concreted in discrete patches with gaps of kacha road in between is indispensable for smooth commutation of a group of tribal people between their respective tribal settlements and the nearest town at Kuttampuzha. The better road connectivity will also help the forest department to carry out better patrolling and effective protection of the areas. Hence I recommend that proposed diversion of 0.3525 Ha of forest land for concreting of the existing road between Blavanakkadvu and Kunchipara, proposed by the District Panchayat, Ernakulam may be favourably considered.



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