

**Inspection note of the Divisional Forest Officer, Malayattoor on the project of concreting road from Blavanakkadavu to Kunchippara dated 22.08.2019.**

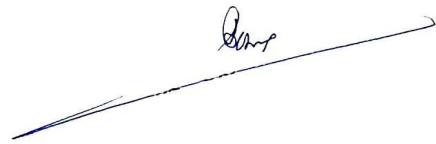
I have inspected the proposed project site on 22.08.2019 along with the Range Forest Officer Kuttampuzha, staff of Pooyamkutty Forest Station, Panchayat Ward Member Smt Kanthi and the local people. The proposed site is a linear feature having GPS readings N 10° 16' 95.5" E 76° 77' 35.2", N 10° 17' 88.7" E 76° 78' 89.5" and N 10° 18' 65.9" E 76° 79' 41.1" in Malayattoor- Idiyara Reserve in Kuttampuzha Range of Malayattoor Forest Division. The user agency District Panchayat, Ernakulam has wrongly named the project as "construction of road". Actual proposal is for concreting 10 small stretches of varying lengths in the existing concrete road from Blavana Ferry to Kallelimedu and Kunchippara Tribal Settlement. 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, only the portions of the road damaged heavily were concreted at that time. Now the remaining portions have developed big dips and ditches all along, making plying of vehicles exceedingly difficult.

The people in the tribal settlements, namely Thalavechapara (85 families), Kunchippara (98 families), 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 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-Thinnakkuthu-Randupuzha-Kodumpirikuthu- Kallelimedu which is about 4 Km longer than this route. That road is usually in use during summer for plying of heavy vehicles, since the Pooyamkutty River need be crossed at Manikandanchal Causeway and a tributary of the same river has to be crossed at Randupuzha. It is virtually impossible to negotiate through this route when the river is in full spate.

The surrounding vegetation comprises of reeds (*Ochlandra travancorica*), Maruthi (*Terminalia paniculata*), Vatta (*Macaranga peltata*), Pezhu (*Careya arborea*), Chadachi (*Grewia tiliaefolia*), Malampunna (*Dillenia pentagyna*) etc. But there is no need to fell any tree or clear under growth, since the proposal is to concrete the gaps in an existing concrete road. The existing road is rugged and undulating with a steep climb from Blavana ferry. Vehicles cross the river at this point with the help of Jenkar service. The length of the proposed road concreting is about 1170 m at a width of 3 m. Hence the extent proposed for diversion is 0.3525 Ha.

Major wildlife species in this area include elephant, tiger, leopard, sloth bear, wild boar, sambar etc. Human-animal conflict issues are rampant in these areas. A kindergarten teacher was killed by a lone tusker a few years back in Kallelimedu area which amply testifies the need for better conveyance facilities.

The proposed diversion of forest land which already is a 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, who are otherwise estranged from the mainstream. Hence I recommend the proposed diversion of 0.3525 Ha of forest land for concreting of the existing road between Blavanakkadavu and Kunchippara, mooted by the District Panchayat, Ernakulam.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'D. S.', is written over a long, thin, slightly curved horizontal line.

Divisional Forest Officer  
Malayattoor