

F. No. 5-28/2003-PT (Part I)  
Government of India  
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change  
National Tiger Conservation Authority  
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Dated 25.04.2017

**OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**Sub: Summary record of the Meeting held at NTCA, HQrs, New Delhi regarding the implementation of Sabarimala Master Plan on 25.04.2017 – 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 25.04.2017 under the chairmanship of ADG (PT) & Member Secretary (NTCA) for kind information and necessary action.

Encl: As above.

*Nishant Verma 25/4/17*  
**(Nishant Verma)**  
Deputy Inspector General (NTCA)

**Distribution:**

1. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden, Kerala.
2. The Commissioner & Member Secretary, High Powered Committee, Travancore Devasom Board, Kerala.
3. The Inspector General of Forest, NTCA, Regional office (Southern zone), Bengaluru.
4. The Chief Conservator of Forest & Field Director, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kottayam, Kerala.
5. The Assistant Inspector General of Forest, NTCA, Regional office (Southern zone), Bengaluru.

**Copy also to:**

1. The PPS to ADG (PT) & Member Secretary (NTCA).
2. The IGF, AIGF, NTCA, HQ.

**Summary record of the Meeting held at NTCA, HQrs, New Delhi regarding the implementation of Sabarimala Master Plan on 25.04.2017**

A meeting of the committee regarding the implementation of Sabarimala Master Plan was held on 25.04.2017 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 Appendix I. At the outset, Shri P. S. Somshekar, IGF, NTCA, Regional office, Bengaluru welcomed the members of the committee and briefed about the status of Master plan implementation at Sabarimala. He informed the Chair that the master plan details out the development vision for short term and long term activities at Sabarimala. Further, the Chair was apprised regarding the email received on 24/04/2017 late evening from Commissioner & Member Secretary, TDB, High Power Committee expressing their inability to attend the meeting due to prior engagements.

During the discussions, it was found that Phase I of the master plan contained a layout 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 Sannidanam 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 discussions & 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 implementation of Sabarimala master plan. After these visits, the inputs related to factual status were discussed threadbare and the following issues have emerged during the meeting.

SI No	Current status	Master plan prescriptions
1	<p><b>Nilakkal base camp:</b> This base camp was provisioned for decongesting Sannidanam and Pamba</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area made barren by removing tree cover.</li> <li>• Parking lots without shade trees / demarcation.</li> <li>• Buildings do not conform to design guidelines.</li> <li>• Attempts made to sub lease base camp area by the TDB</li> <li>• No development works carried out in Erumely, Vendiperiyar and Satharam base camps.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing &amp; initiating layout plan as per Master plan</li> <li>• Alternative base camps to be developed as per the Master plan for decongestion of Sannidhanam and Pamba areas.</li> </ul>
2.	<p><b>Pamba:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hap- hazardous development on massive scale</li> <li>• Insufficient toilet facilities</li> <li>• Non-functioning Sewage Treatment Plant (STP)</li> <li>• Temporary shabby structures.</li> <li>• Government hospital construction was a deviation from plan.</li> <li>• No proper drainage and sewage directly let into Pamba.</li> </ul>	Not in conformity with the prescriptions/ guidelines given in the Master plan.
3	<p><b>Sannidanam Route:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional route from Pamba to Sannidhanam is 4 km in length</li> <li>• Pathway leading to Sannidhanam has been covered with roof looking like massive industrial sheds</li> <li>• Long stretches of fixed railing with MS angles and channels disrupting wildlife movement.</li> <li>• Signages not as per guidelines</li> </ul>	Not prescribed in the master plan.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pathway all along the traditional route shabbily stone paved creating much difficulty for pilgrims</li> </ul>	
4	<p><b>Swami Ayyappa pathway:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total surface is concreted</li> <li>Heavy steep cutting of pathway sides making trees dangerous to pilgrims.</li> <li>Concrete underpass created at Marakuttam.</li> </ul>	As per Master plan 2.2.4 (c), continuous concrete paving of the trek route is not allowed.
5	<p><b>Sannidanam:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No layout plan as per master plan prescription at Sannidanam</li> <li>Haphazard constructions in and around sanctum sanctorum.</li> <li>Solid waste accumulation at Sannidanam.</li> <li>Overall poor sanitation conditions.</li> <li>Old buildings yet to be phased out as per master plan.</li> <li>Bare overhead electrical lines not replaced with underground cable</li> <li>Deprived tree cover (50 % tree cover prescribed in MP)</li> </ul>	As per 3.4.4.3 point of Sabarimala Master Plan, provision is made for underground cable supply line rather than depending of overhead line in Sabarimala where the frequent disruptions of supply occurs due to breaking line.
6	<p><b>Infrastructure module:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partially Completed But the design does not comply with master plan guide lines, without any public amenities, fully covered, concrete flooring, restriction on Animal movement</li> <li>No EIA has done.</li> <li>Widened the trek route as unsuitable surfacing (concreting with RCC, the entire route at a thickness of more than 45 cm).</li> <li>The side wall concreting with RCC the reinforcement is jutting out, which prevent the movement of wildlife.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of fully fledged queue complexes between Marakoottam &amp; Saramkuthy.</li> <li>Advocates carrying out EIA if the proposed design cover more than 30 % of canopy</li> <li>National Competitive Bidding for Eco- Friendly design solutions</li> <li>Development of trek path and facilities therein with suitable surfacing in consultation with forest department</li> <li>Pampa – Marakoottam trek path widened to 12 m</li> <li>Chandranandan Road – 7 m</li> <li>Swamy Ayyappan Road – 5 m</li> <li><b>(Master Plan in Para 2.2.4c vision document and development)</b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resting areas with small kiosks have not been developed so far.</li> <li>Developed some unscientific open areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of resting areas along traditional route with small kiosks</li> <li>Development of Makara jyothi view points</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steep cuts made to concrete the Swamy Ayyappan and Chandranandan Road severs the natural movement corridors of the Wildlife.</li> <li>Fencing is provided along the traditional route from Marakoottam to Sannidhanam, This is as well as the railings erected along traditional route is not usually taken away and stacked during off –Season. If left without stacking, these obstruct the free movement of animals, especially herds of elephants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of Makara jyothi viewpoints.</li> <li>Master plan in Para 4.4.4.1 (C) of Landscape Module records that, Animal crossing that have been observed near Appachimedu – cardiologyh Centre, Swamy Ayyappan Road – Charalmedu, Madukka, and Urakkuzhi</li> </ul>
7	<p><b>Solid waste management &amp; Water and Sanitation sub modules</b></p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Started working but not in full swing. The success of the plant yet to be certified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solid waste treatment plant at Sannidhanam</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large Number of Solid waste accumulated near the incinerator, temple premises and along the trek route.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not done</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sewer line from Marakootam to STP at Sannidhanam</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not done</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equalization chamber &amp; Pump house at Marakootam</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The area has been exposed to unnecessary commercial exploitation much against of constitutional status of that area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permissive use of land 6 Kiosks/ Shops along Swamy Ayappan Road by EDCs/TDB Only small Kiosks are prescribed</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overhead power supply cable has not been replaced with underground cable supply. Still bare conductors are being using for power supply.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replacing overhead supply to that of underground cable supply line in Sannidhanam and trek routes</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing signages are not in proper form.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of proper signages.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The shops along the trek route from Pampa-Sannidhanam Auctioned by TDB and there is no proper mechanism of waste disposal more over the EDC's are not involved in any of the service.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limit the number and type of shops at Pampa &amp; Sannidhanam Shops along the trek route should be within resting bay Additional facility if needed should be maintained by EDCs/ Volunteer</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not complied</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restoration of regional character of the temple to mitigate ill -planned and unchecked building activity</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not Complied, at present the Sannidhanam is a concrete Jungle and most of the constructions look like Industrial sheds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demolition of Age old, anaesthetic structures at Sannidhanam</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not complied with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No trees should be felled except standing dangerous</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entire stretch of trek route fully concreted with RCC more than 45 cm thickness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No continuous concreting of trek routes except where there is a gradient of 1:2</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The path leading to Sannidhanam has covered with roof disturbing the environment and traditional trekking experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No structures over the trek route except specific structures for resting</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The entire area packed with unscientific constructions without any layout and without any tree cover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum 50 % of the total area given Sannidhanam, Pampa &amp; Nilackal shall be under green cover. At least 100 tress/ Ha have to be planted, out of which 50 % shall be evergreen species</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marakootam which is the most important animal crossing area, massive RCC side walls and an under pass effectively, cuts of all kinds of Animal movement. In all probability, concreting was carried out for enabling fast plying of tractors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Canopy to be ensured above congregating pilgrims at Marakootam</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed guidelines have been given in the master plan.</li> <li>Responsibility of solid waste management is with the TDB</li> <li>Necessary steps to be taken for deploying</li> </ul>

		adequate labour and strict supervision of solid waste disposal.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toilets created on ad-hoc basis and open defecation by pilgrims continues.</li> <li>Toilet and kitchen waste drains into forest area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Installing proper drainage and waste treatment system. These activities are part of phase I of plan.</li> </ul>
8	<p><b>Transportation of goods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently goods are transported using tractors.</li> <li>Intensity of tractor movement is quite high.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of rope way as the only alternate for tractors</li> </ul>
9	<p><b>Administrative mechanism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No working committee has been constituted for implementation of master plan.</li> <li>Lack of interdepartmental coordination.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For implementation of master plan, 'Working committee' needs to be constituted.</li> </ul>

During the deliberations, the Chair enquired about the composition of High Power Committee and the presence of MoEF&CC/ NTCA representative for overseeing the implementation of master plan prescriptions. It was informed that at present there is no representative of either MoEF&CC or NTCA in the HPC. In view of this, it was suggested to have a MoEF&CC/ NTCA representative in the HPC for monitoring the implantation of master plan.

Since the members of HPC could not attend the meeting, it was decided to hold the meeting again in the month of May, 2017 and the details of which shall be communicated well in advance to all the members. The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair.

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