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"Solar fencing, digging of moats planned to check man-animal conflict"

Staff Reporter

250 km of reserve forests to be covered soon: Minister

HOSUR: With a view to prevent man-animal conflict, the State government has decided to erect solar fencing and digging of moats for a length of 250 km along the reserve forests in the State, N. Selvaraj, Forest Minister, said here on Wednesday.

Speaking at a function to distribute compensation for the crop loss to farmers in the district at Dinnur near Hosur, the Minister said that the State government is taking all efforts to prevent man-animal conflict in the vicinity of the reserve forests.

Erection of 250 km of solar fencing and digging of moats will be taken up in Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri, Salem, the Nilgiris and other districts soon. Of this, 50 km of moats will be dug up along the reserve forests in Krishnagiri district.

Already, solar fencing was erected up to a length of 1,267 km along the reserve forests.

The population of elephants in western and eastern ghats in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka account for 50 per cent of the national population of 24,000. It was estimated that there are about 4,000 elephants in State's reserve forests. Of this, 200 elephants are in Hosur Forest Division alone, Mr. Selvaraj said.

The Minister appealed to the public to cooperate with the Forest Department officials to send back wild animals, which stray into human habitations, into the forests.

The State government has sanctioned Rs. 32 lakh as compensation to the crop loss suffered by farmers. It was distributed to 669 farmers in Hosur Forest Division, Mr. Selvaraj said.

Some farmers were also given powerful torch lights to chase away the elephants.

Bangalore-based NGO Kenneth Anderson Natures Club sponsored uniforms and shoes to 25 watchers in the Anti-Poching wing of the Forest Department.

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