

No. 1-16/93-PT (Part-I)

Dated the 12th August, 2010

To,

Chief Wildlife Warden(s),
All Tiger Range States.

- Ref:**
- 1. Directive of the Hon'ble Apex Court dated 25.11.2005 in I.A. No.1220 (Interim Report of CEC in I.A. No. 548) and I.A. No. 994 in W.P.C. No. 202/1995.**
 - 2. Section 38V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.**
 - 3. Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and the Rules / Guidelines issued therein.**
 - 4. Letter No. PS-MS(NTCA)/2009-Misc. dated 22.4.2009.**
 - 5. Guidelines of CSS-PT No. 3(1)/2001-PT dated February, 2008.**
 - 6. Guidelines for preparation of Tiger Conservation Plan, Technical Document : NTCA/01/07.**

Sir,

Reference is invited to the directive of the Hon'ble Apex Court, and the statutory provisions contained in the Acts alongwith advisory/guidelines cited above.

In this context, the following is stated:

- (i) The patrolling camps / chowkis / watch towers inside a tiger reserve (core as well as buffer) should not be used for accommodating tourists or facilitating tourism. As these structures have been constructed under Project Tiger, for the sole purpose of accommodating the frontline field staff (at places with wireless), it needs to be ensured that they are solely used for patrolling / antipoaching work.
- (ii) Tourists should not be allowed to patrol the core / critical tiger habitat owing to the risk involved vis-à-vis the intensive legwork in a formidable terrain with wild animals. Further, exposing tourists to sensitive patrolling routes / paths / spatial presence of animals,

besides the patrolling strategy would make the habitat vulnerable by exposing such details which may be confidential for apprehending the offenders / poachers. Besides, there can be no method by which a poacher entering a wildlife habitat under the garb of a tourist can be identified. Likewise, there is no mechanism available to ensure that sensitive information pertaining to wildlife protection is not advertently/inadvertently passed on to miscreants / poachers. The frontline staff would also be burdened with the task of acting as “caretakers” for the tourists, besides attending to their possible health related emergencies. Needless to point out, patrolling is effective and successful only if it is organized discretely. Patrolling is a technical / specialized task requiring considerable physical fitness and a knowledge of a terrain which by and large, is done at odd hours. While the tourists would not be in a position to undertake this task, there is also a risk of patrolling strategy and related details getting exposed to poachers.

- (iii) Under no circumstances forest produce material should be used for making a temporary / permanent construction to facilitate tourists in the core / critical tiger habitat.
- (iv) It is reiterated that provisions under section 38V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 should be implemented in letter and spirit for ensuring the inviolate status of the core / critical tiger habitat.
- (v) The guidelines / advisories issued from the Project Tiger/NTCA may be strictly followed for organizing intelligence based patrolling in tiger reserves.

Yours sincerely,

(Dr. Rajesh Gopal)

APCCF & Member Secretary (NTCA)

Copy to:

- 1. APS to MEF.
- 2. PPS to Secretary (E&F).
- 3. PPS to DGF & SS, MoEF.

Copy for information to:

- 1. PS to Chief Secretary(s) of all tiger States.
- 2. Additional Chief Secretary(s)/ Principal Secretary(s) of all tiger States.
- 3. PCCF(s) of all tiger States.
- 4. Field Director(s), All Tiger Reserves.