

CIRCULAR 4/2006

Sub:- Implementation of Participatory Forest Management (PFM) Programme and National Afforestation Programme (NAP)- decision to include achievements in the ACRs of officers and staff-orders issued.

National Afforestation Programme (NAP) is a 100% Centrally Assisted Scheme being implemented by the Forest Department since 2001. Increasing area under Forest/Tree cover and improving living conditions of the forest dependent communities are the two major objectives of the scheme.

The scheme is implemented through Vana Samrakshana Samithies (VSS) and Forest Development Agency (FDA). So far the Department has established about 350 VSS and 24 FDAs. Under NAP the grant sanctioned from GOI so far is Rs.47.67 crores. Expenditure upto February 2006 is only Rs. 5.27 crores. Thus there is a great mismatch between the target and the achievement.

Late starting of the scheme, poor response of the local people to PFM, non-availability of degraded forest area, low wage rate now being given than that was included in the project, shortage of trained staff etc, are some of the general reasons put forward by the officers for poor performance of the scheme. However, these reasons have to be whetted against the following facts

(1) Though NAP is a 100% Centrally Assisted Scheme the sanction for the State was made on a project prepared by the State Forest Department. Therefore any slackening on its implementation will not be appreciated at any level. Any surrender of fund will be interpreted as an unwillingness of the Department in implementing a people- centric afforestation programme.

(2) Involving people in afforestation of degraded forests (Participatory Forest Management) is a government policy and all staff and officers of the Department are duty bound to ensure it.

In order to encourage that all staff and officers in implementing the scheme and to monitor it systematically it is decided to assess the performance of staff and officers in this scheme through their Annual Confidential Reports.

The following directions are issued with the above objective.

- (1) All officers (including IFS Officers) and staff (both field & ministerial) while submitting their Self Assessment (ACR) to the reporting officer shall necessarily include their special achievements in PFM/NAP programme. This shall include details of physical and financial target as well as achievements.
- (2) The reporting officer shall assess the performance of each employee in implementing PFM programmes in general and NAP in particular.
- (3) The reviewing officer shall critically evaluate the attitude and aptitude of the employee reviewed upon in implementing PFM and NAP. Any grading of and above "very good" shall be justified by the performance of the officer in PFM/NAP.

It may be noted that successful implementation of PFM programmes and NAP is not the duty of VSS Secretaries alone but it will be the duty and responsibility of all staff, Range Officers, DFOs, and CFs.

All reporting, reviewing and accepting authorities are directed to follow the above directions for the ACRs of 2005-06 onwards.

Receipt of this circular may be acknowledged by return of post.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests