

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH  
FOREST DEPARTMENT

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Office of the Chief Conservator of  
Forests, Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.

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Chief Conservator of Forests.

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CIRCULAR NO: 26/31/E2.

Sub:- Seedlings raised under N.R.D.I./D.P.A.P. Social Forestry etc - Species composition - Checks on number and size of seedlings - School Nursery and Beneficiary oriented programmes - Regarding.

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Very large number of seedlings (mostly as bag plants) are being raised in almost all divisions every year now, either for use in departmental plantation raising (under various Social Forestry and other production forestry programmes) or for distribution to the public. The number of seedlings proposed to be raised during 1981-82 as above (including Teak planted as stumps) will be about 1300 lakhs which is almost a 300% increase over 80-81. The programmes under which the seedlings are being raised also vary as funds are being provided under different schemes like 'Make India Green' (under Social Forestry) National Rural Employment Programme, Farm Forestry (under DPAP), I.R.D.P. and the Rural Fuelwood Plantation Programme. Apart from the above, in certain divisions seedlings are also being raised with funds placed at the disposal of the Divl. Forest Officers by organisations like Scheduled Caste Finance Corporation, for delivery of the seedlings raised, to specific beneficiaries as indicated by those organisations.

In order to ensure that the large number of seedlings being raised for distribution to the public are available to the people within short distances from their villages, a number of new nurseries are proposed to be developed in each of the divisions, so that there will be generally one nursery located in each Panchayat Samithi Block. The State Government have already issued instructions to the Collectors that in every Panchayat Samithi Block a 4 Ha. nursery site should be developed by the Samithi organisation for raising seedlings for distribution to the public. The Divl. Forest Officers can also utilize nursery sites if any developed as above by the Samithi's, for raising departmental nurseries also. For this purpose they should get in touch with the Block Development Officers of the Samithi's concerned, to locate nurseries if any already developed and use them to raise departmental nurseries if required, from this year only.

Inspections of a number of nurseries raised in a large number of divisions during 1980, for distribution of seedlings during 1981, has revealed that adequate attention has not been paid by the Divl. Forest Officers concerned, in raising these nurseries as the nursery maintenance is generally well below the mark. The choice of species for raising seedlings and the number of seedlings raised specieswise is also not generally related to the likely needs from public. In several cases the number of seedlings actually raised and maintained is also found

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short of the number of seedlings actually stated to have been raised and for which expenditure is booked. A large number of polythene bags are also found empty in every nursery, but mixed up with bags containing seedlings all arranged in the form of beds. The only reason for all these happening could be that the Divl. Forest Officers after fixing targets for raising nurseries in each range do not appear to take much interest in actual raising of nurseries particularly concerning the number of seedlings specieswise raised in each nursery, keeping in view the actual requirements both for the departmental planting and for distribution to the public, which mainly depends on the choice of species by the public. Instructions do not appear to have been issued on above to the Range Officers in most cases, nor does it appear that most Divl. Forest Officers even issued any personal instructions to the Range Officers during their frequent inspections of those nurseries during the year, and taken action to set right matters wherever found not upto mark. The only inference that can be drawn, is that such inspections of most Divl. Forest Officers are very casual and brief, without any indepth examination of matter to set right defects and deficiencies present, or issue of written or perhaps even oral instructions to the Range Officers and his staff and to pull up erring subordinates for continued neglect. The net result of all this is, nurseries which are not well maintained with shortages of seedlings and with large number of seedlings of species which are unlikely to be made use of fully by the public, for which purpose only they are actually raised. Such indiscriminate raising of large number of seedlings of certain species, appears to be the result of leaving the choice of species and the number of seedlings to be raised of each such species, mostly to the lower subordinates who are incharge of these nurseries. All this is generally resulting in a large number of seedlings of such species not being utilized and going waste. The Divl. Forest Officers are, therefore, requested to personally decide and indicate to each Range Officer the number of seedlings of each species to be raised in each nursery in their charge commencing from this year, for 1982 planting, depending on the likely requirements of the seedling of different species by the public. The Divl. Forest Officers should also issued suitable instructions to their Range Officers for raising nurseries in time after making arrangements for collection of the seeds of different species as required immediately, if not already done.

All this appears very elementary and on the face of it looks like unnecessary involvement by the Head Office, as the Divl. Forest Officers are supposed to take care of such simple matters themselves or atleast the Conservators of Forests may look to these. The above instructions are however being issued from the head office, because inspection of a number of nurseries during last few months in different divisions has shown that there is gross neglect by most Divl. Forest Officers even on this important aspect of nursery planning, timely execution and later maintenance. Apparently most Conservators of Forests did not also bother to set right the position.

Neglect of timely planning of the nursery operations and their execution in time has resulted in the seeds being sown



in the bags in several nurseries as late as in March-April last, for use of seedlings in rains of this year only, with the result that most such seedlings are below 15cm tall, and are definitely not suitable for planting during this rains. Instances have been noticed where upto 50% of bags in each bed do not have seedlings at all, or have undersized seedlings which are not fit for planting along with the other well grown seedlings. Thus the number of seedlings actually available for planting or for distribution to the public, is some times as low as 50% of what has actually been planned to be raised and paid for also, resulting in either use of undersized seedlings or not reaching the departmental planting targets or shortages in distribution of seedlings to the public with complaints around. The only reason for such state of affairs to persist, is that the bag seedlings in the beds are not shifted at regular intervals, but the expenditure is incurred. Even if bags are shifted occasionally to prevent rooting during such shifting empty bags or bags with undersized seedlings are not sorted out, and kept separately, so that a proper count of seedlings actually available for planting is known. Since such beds with bag seedlings of all sizes fully mixed up are noticed in almost every nursery inspected, it can only be presumed that the Divl. Forest Officers and even the Conservators of Forests during their frequent inspections of such nurseries do not consider these aspects and see that the seedlings are sorted out to get a correct estimate of seedlings available in each nursery for planting or distribution to the public. The Divl. Forest Officers and the Conservators of Forests are, therefore, requested to see that the seedlings are sorted out at regular intervals atleast from March onwards, so that well before the planting season starts, every one is fully aware of the number of seedlings species-wise of proper size that are actually available in each nursery, for planting or for distribution.

Action should be initiated against the Range Officers and the staff concerned in charge of these nurseries, if they fail to do the shifting and sorting at regular intervals and also recover the expenditure incurred for watering, weeding shifting for all the seedlings, even though a substantial number of such bags do not contain seedlings at all. The only way to improve the situation which is resulting in substantial reduction of seedlings available for planting or for distribution to the public in each nursery, is to take drastic action against all the staff concerned for not implementing the instructions issued by the Divl. Forest Officers during their inspections, provided the Divl. Forest Officers of course themselves take adequate interest in this work. The Conservators of Forests are also requested to see that disciplinary action is initiated against recalcitrant Range Officers and even Divl. Forest Officers for non compliance of these instructions to be followed scrupulously in future, as this is found to be one of the most serious deficiencies in nursery raising which is adversely influencing the production of seedlings in each of these nurseries.

The Divl. Forest Officers are requested to issue a definite time-table for raising nurseries for each of the



species, proposed to be raised in any nursery, to be scrupulously followed by their staff. Such time-table should consist of date by which the seed should be collected, seed should be sown either in primary beds or directly into bags after pretreatment, dates by which the seedlings are to be pricked into bags or into secondary beds etc., to obtain optimum size seedlings (about 50 cms. tall) by planting them. Instructions are being issued to prescribed time-tables as above not because the Range Officers and the staff do not know the same, but because in actual practice it is noticed that the lower staff do not observe the time-table strictly, resulting in production of undersized seedlings by planting time, in a large number of cases.

An important aspect of nursery raising from now on, would be to raise adequate number of seedlings of certain species for use in avenue and canal bank plantation raising, as avenue and Canal bank plantation raising programmes, are expected to be taken up in a big way from 1982 onwards either as a part of the existing Social Forestry Programmes, or in the proposed C.I.D.A., aided Social Forestry project. For avenue plantation raising the choice of species for all parts of the State is limited mainly to 'Neem' and 'Tamarind' each of which can form about 40% of the nursery stock, and the balance 20% will comprise of Rain tree, Dirshanam, Polioforum, Gulmohar, Sisso etc., Shade giving and flowering trees of the above fairly fast growing species will be planted on roads on either side of the villages only (upto) 200 mts. on either side and the rest of the roads length will be planted with Neem and Tamarind only at one Km. for each species, on both sides of road in alternating stretches. For 1982 Avenue planting the minimum size of the seedlings of all species to be planted should be 2 (two) metre in height grown in mud plots. For 1983 and subsequent years planting, we should evolve a nursery technique to produce about 3 mt. tall seedlings in proper sized mud pot containers.

Seperate instructions are being issued for avenue plantation raising including nursery raising for this purpose, which also covers raising of Canal Bank and Railway line plantations. But the above is also mentioned here, because nurseries which are being developed now for raising seedlings for other departmental Social Forestry and other programmes or for free distribution to the public would only be used for raising seedlings for avenue and canal bank planting, with one part of the nursery site set apart for raising seedlings for avenue, canal bank etc., plantations.

Instructions have been issued in the past that seedlings raising for Social Forestry purposes should be the extent possible through the involvement of the School Children (School nursery programme) and through individual beneficiary oriented programmes, involving Weaker Sections (people below the poverty line). It is how however, noticed that very rarely were any nurseries raised so far in the Division utilizing these two agencies. Several reasons



are given for this, by the Divl. Forest Officers, but most of them do not appear convincing. The most important reason for our failure to implement such nursery raising programmes appears to be indifference, lack of motivation and an extension approach with the lower staff, who are primarily responsible for implementing such programmes, and lack of adequate control and involvement by Range Officers and Divl. Forest Officers and Divl. Forest Officers at the division level.

All the Divl. Forest Officers are requested to ensure that atleast from this year's nursery season, as large a number of schools as possible are associated with nursery raising, so that atleast a few schools in each Panchayat Samithi Block are thus associated. The help of the extension staff of the Panchayat Samithis should be fully utilized for selecting the schools in each block for this purpose, fixing the number of seedlings to be raised in each school, which may generally vary between 5000-10000 for a year. Similarly, individual beneficiary oriented programmes for raising nurseries should also be implemented adequately from this year. Even in the departmental nurseries where the entire infrastructure is provided by the department, raising about 40,000 bag plants could be allocated to each beneficiary family (land less labour) who could be made responsible for all aspects of nursery raising from filling bags, sowing of seed, and pricking of seedlings, watering, weeding, shifting and general maintenance of these bags, and they be paid the rates provided for the same in the Department estimates which may work out to about 10 paise per seedling for a 6 month nursery season, (say January to June), excluding the cost of polythene bags, soil, manure diesel oil etc., supplied by the Department. Thus each beneficiary family would be capable of earning about Rs. 4,000/- during the nursery season lasting about six-eight months through raising and maintaining about 40,000/- seedlings, utilizing the infrastructure available with the department in those nurseries. Thus in a nursery where about 2 lakh bag seedlings are to be raised 5 beneficiary families can be thus associated and brought above poverty line through such nursery raising activity alone. The entire bag seedlings raising nursery programme in each division under different Social Forestry Programmes from this year onwards, need be made beneficiary oriented. The Conservators of Forests and the Divl. Forest Officers are, requested to see that from this year onwards, the entire bag plant nursery raising programme of all species, is only done with individual beneficiary oriented approach using families of weaker sections (landless-labour) specially identified for the purpose in consultation with the Block Development Officers and other Extension staff of the block.

Receipt of this Circular letter should be acknowledged at once.

Sd/- A. L. RAO,  
ADDL. CHIEF CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS  
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