

■ Govt has sanctioned ₹4.5L for every km to remove rocks from elephant proof trenches

Rocks to be blasted to stop elephants

DC CORRESPONDENT
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The forest department has begun to blast away rocks located in elephant proof trenches (EPT) to stop animals from crossing into human settlements on the forest fringes.

"The government has sanctioned ₹4.5 lakhs for every kilometer to remove the rocks from EPTs. The rocks will be removed in around 45 kilometers of EPT in the Coimbatore district," said Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Gautam Dey, on the sidelines of a workshop on Tree Seed Science and Silviculture at the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB).

Pointing out that man-animal conflict has come

down by almost 40 per cent, Mr Dey said the forest department has created 40 troughs and raised fodder to prevent elephants from straying in search of food and water.

Stressing on the need for adopting scientific management techniques to tackle degradation of forests and improving the tree population, he said that "64 lakh trees were planted in the year 2012 and 65 lakhs last year," he said.

Director of IFGTB, N Krishna Kumar, said that more trees should be domesticated for public use. "There are around 150 domesticated trees, which needs to be increased for the benefit of people," he said. "Besides research on exotic species of plants like eucalyptus and casuarinas,

the IFGTB has also developed 17 clone varieties of trees, which are likely to be released by December this year," he said.

Commissioner of Sericulture, Andhra Pradesh CS, Rama Lakshmi said that private firms should be encouraged to take up seed distribution to increase green cover. "Importance should be given to 'plantation design' while raising trees to avoid cutting them down citing 'disturbance,'" she said.

Chairperson of Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Authority RR Hanchinal said that awareness should be created among farmers to register crops under Intellectual Property Rights Certificate (IPRC).



Gautam Dey, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Gautam Dey, Commissioner of Sericulture in Andhra Pradesh CS Rama Lakshmi and IFGTB Director N Krishna Kumar hold books on seed technology and silviculture released at the inaugural function of Tree Seed Science and Silviculture on Thursday.