

GOVERNMENT OF THE
CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR



ADMINISTRATION REPORT
ON THE
FOREST DEPARTMENT
IN THE
CENTRAL PROVINCES & BERAR
FOR THE YEAR ENDING
31ST MARCH 1937

NAGPUR
GOVERNMENT PRINTING, C. P. & BERAR
1937

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GOVERNMENT OF THE
CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR
FOREST DEPARTMENT

Nagpur, the 6th December 1937.

READ—

The report by the Chief Conservator of Forests on Forest Administration in the Central Provinces and Berar for the year ending the 31st March 1937.

RESOLUTION

1. **Financial Position.**—The improvement recorded in the financial position of the department during the previous year was unfortunately not maintained, the gross revenue falling by Rs. 1.76 lakhs from Rs. 49.39 lakhs to Rs. 47.63 lakhs. This fall is due to a decrease of Rs. .77 lakh in revenue from grass and grazing, to the low yield from the coupes in the South Chanda division, and to poorer prices obtained for coupes sold to contractors. In consequence, the surplus fell by Rs. 2.76 lakhs to Rs. 11.24 lakhs. There is, however, every indication that this is only a temporary set-back as the prices obtained for coupes and minor produce leases sold since the close of the year, have shown a marked improvement.

The value of the proper preservation of the forests to people who live in their neighbourhood, is clearly brought out by the fact that concessionaires and free grantees removed produce to the value of Rs. 1 lakh during the year, while the concessions of free grazing or grazing at concession rates granted were worth approximately 13½ lakhs.

2. **Departmental Exploitation.**—The departmental exploitation of the teak forests of the Nimar, Hoshangabad and Melghat divisions again gave very satisfactory results. The volume of timber sold rose by 112,194 cubic feet to 572,960 cubic feet, yielding a gross revenue of Rs. 4,31,899. In the sal forests there was a further expansion of the market for scantlings, 90,000 cubic feet being

sawn against 73,000 cubic feet in the previous year. The number of sleepers supplied to the railways also rose considerably. In Allapilli, on the other hand, there was a fall in sales of more than Rs. 1 lakh, which is attributable to a temporary breakdown of the mill and to more conservative fellings.

3. **Industries.**—The recent rise in the price of kullugum affords an excellent opportunity for the further development of this industry, which has in the past been confined to the Damoh and Saugor divisions. Tapping has now been undertaken on an experimental scale in several other divisions. Another industrial development which will be watched with interest is the establishment at Chanda of a match factory, to which semal trees will be supplied for three years on payment of half the average royalty, under the provisions of the Central Provinces State Aid to Industries Act, 1933.

4. **Raipur Forest Tramway.**—The gross earnings of the Raipur Forest Tramway rose by Rs. 24,503 to Rs. 1,35,507, largely as a result of an increase in the transport of harra and paddy. In consequence of successful efforts to develop a market in the Madras Presidency for the sal timber of this division, the export of scantlings was the highest since the tramway was constructed in 1927, and there are good prospects for a further increase of exports. As a result of these developments and of the sustained effort made to effect economy in the management of the line, the surplus of gross receipts over working expenses rose to Rs. 54,865. Measures for the further development of traffic on the tramway and improvement of its financial position are under the consideration of Government.

5. **Working Plans.**—Excellent progress continued to be made in the preparation of working plans. During the year Government sanctioned the introduction of three new plans, dealing with an area of 3,157 square miles, and the working plan for 932 square miles of the South Chanda division was completed. Since 1926, when the working plan programme was started, new working plans, based on a very detailed stock-mapping of the forests, have been introduced for every division of the province. The silvicultural section of the report describes the satisfactory results that have been obtained by the introduction of systems of conversion to even-aged forest in all the principal teak forests.

6. **Grazing.**—89 per cent of the total forest area remained open to grazing during the year, closures being enforced only where essential for the protection of young woods and for the improvement of the pasture. Nearly three million cattle grazed in Government forests, a small fall as compared with the previous year, and there was a corresponding decrease in the revenue from this source. In order to afford relief to cultivators Government now proposes a general reduction of the privileged grazing rates and is also investigating the possibility of permitting the free removal of fodder grass from suitable areas. The question of reducing commercial grazing rates where revenue from this source has fallen directly as the result of the enhancement of the rates is being examined.

7. **Forest Offences.**—The number of forest offences showed a small decline, being 316 less than in the previous year. There was a satisfactory fall of 1,366 cases under "unauthorized fellings", attributed to greater vigilance on the part of the staff. Cases of unauthorized grazing continued to increase and amounted to 12,875. Of the 391 cases decided by the courts, 325 or 83 per cent resulted in convictions.

8. **Forest Roads.**—The forest department now spends more than a lakh of rupees annually in repairing its network of more than 10,000 miles of forest roads, about 2,000 of which have been constructed during the last ten years. This road system has not only greatly facilitated the exploitation of forest produce but has also been of the greatest benefit to the general public in the more remote tracts by improving communications and by affording useful employment in the work of construction and repairs.

9. **Buildings.**—There was a slightly increased expenditure during the year on the construction of quarters for the subordinate staff, but 884 forest guards are still unprovided with accommodation and are dependent on the goodwill of the local villagers for the shelter of themselves and their families. As stated last year, Government realizes the urgency of the need for more and better quarters and has made such increased provision of funds to meet the requirements of the department in this respect as the general financial position will permit.

10. **Subordinate Service.**—The subordinate staff of the department is frequently subjected to severe criticism, but it is often forgotten under what unhealthy and

uncongenial conditions many of these men live. Forest guards, who have considerable legal powers, receive no regular course of training at present and it is not therefore surprising that they frequently commit irregularities or overstep their powers. That the department is making every effort to check misconduct is evident from the fact that 133 forest guards were either dismissed or removed from service, while no fewer than 341 were fined or degraded. A higher standard of conduct among forest guards can only be expected if their conditions of service are improved and better provision made for their training and Government now proposes to take whatever steps are possible to improve the position. The recent inauguration of the Forest Benevolent Fund should add to the sense of security of the subordinate staff.

11. **Forest Villages.**—The number of forest villages is now 1,108 and their total population 118,422. Although the activities and consequently the revenues of the forest department are largely dependent upon the exertions of these villagers, facilities for education and provision for even the simplest medical facilities are lacking. Several schools were opened in forest villages during the year, largely as a result of the efforts of individual officers. A scheme is being prepared for opening schools in 73 centres and Government hopes to allot funds for the immediate establishment of a large number of these schools.

12. The charge of the department during the year under report was held by Mr. C. F. Bell, who has recently proceeded on leave preparatory to retirement after a long service of 32 years, largely spent in the forests of the province. The Governor wishes to take this opportunity to record his warm appreciation of his long and meritorious service.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Chief Conservator of Forests and to the Conservators of Forests, Central, Eastern and Western Circles, for information and guidance; also that it be published in the *Central Provinces and Berar Gazette*.

By order of the Governor,
Central Provinces & Berar,

C. J. W. LILLIE,

Secy. to Govt., C. P. & Berar,
Forest Department.

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