



Cutting palm trees will now require permission from Forest dept: PCCF

02 July 2024

BHUBANESWAR: In a bid to strengthen the protective measures against lightning strikes that claim hundreds of lives every year, the state Forest department has now moved to curtail cutting of palm trees that act as natural bolt arresters.

Cutting palm trees will now require permission from the government. Making changes in the Odisha Timber and Other Forest Produce Transit Rules 1980, palm tree has been deleted from the list of trees that do not require any permission for cutting, PCCF and HoFF Debidutta Biswal told *TNIE* on Monday.

“As the palm tree has been withdrawn from the list, it will now require permission for cutting,” Biswal said.

The state government had last year directed the Forest and Agriculture departments to take up large-scale plantations of palm trees as an effective mitigation measure against lightning deaths, especially in rural pockets.

Biswal said the Forest department with the help of special relief commissioner (SRC) office will take up plantation of 19 lakh palm trees in the state. The trees will be planted in all forest blocks of the state for which Rs 7.6 crore will be provided by the Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA).

The plantation will be carried out in 4,479 notified forest blocks spread over 39,671 sq km of boundary lines across all territorial and wildlife divisions.

The total number of boundary pillars in the forest blocks comes to around 4.8 lakh and four palm trees will be planted near each pillar.

Biswal said, the palm trees, being the tallest in their surroundings, act as good natural conductors and lightning arresters. Besides, they will provide good elephant fodder and also protect the forest boundary pillars.

Source: <https://www.newindianexpress.com/amp/story/cities/bhubaneswar/2024/Jul/02/cutting-palm-trees-will-now-require-permission-from-forest-dept-pccf>