

**TN forest dept for awareness among farmers on electric fencing in farms**

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The forest department of Tamil Nadu is creating awareness among farmers and other settlers, who live near the forest areas, on electric fencing to wade off wild animals.

The forest department will be conducting a division-wise awareness programme among the farmers on why they should not install solar fences that leads to the death of wild animals including elephants and wild boars. The main point to be highlighted during the awareness programme is the voltage to be passed through the fence.

The action by the department came following the death of three female elephants in the Dharmapuri district due to electric shock while crossing farmland.

The farmer Murugan was arrested but the damage was done and on questioning, he feigned ignorance on the voltage to be passed through the fence that could have just given a minor shock to wade off the elephants from entering into the farmland.

The department is concentrating on educating the farmers not to use illegal connections from the Tangedco overhead lines which have become a practice in several rural areas of the state after night. These illegal connections are removed during daytime.

Tangedco officials have also been directed by the state electricity department to clearly monitor and track the overhead lines in the areas adjoining to the forest to prevent farmers from taking illegal connections to be passed through the fences during night.

An environmentalist while speaking to IANS said, "It is indeed a grave situation and the forest department should have stringent monitoring. The scene of two elephant calves aged around 9 months near the dead bodies of the three female elephants who were electrocuted through illegal electric fencing was indeed heart-wrenching. This was a clear human error and the failure of both the forest department and Tangedco and measures has to be taken not to repeat this in the future."

He also said that the awareness programme of the forest department must be regularly conducted and stringent monitoring by the Tangedco officials has to be done to prevent any illegal connections.

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