



## **Man-animal conflict: Forest dept. insurance cover for SC, STs to be expanded**

07 December 2022

Insurance cover for people from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST) who are victims of wild animal attacks is no longer available, Minister for Forests and Wildlife Protection A.K. Saseendran has said.

Replying to questions on the insurance cover provided by the Forest department during the Question Hour in the Assembly on Wednesday, the Minister said that as per a 1995 order, ₹1 lakh was given for accidental death, ₹25,000 for those partially disabled, and ₹5,000 for hospital stay. However, the coverage period had ended.

The Finance department's permission had been sought, as the premium had been hiked. It, in turn, had directed that the Union government project PMJJVY (Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Beema Yojana) be utilised. However, the age of beneficiaries under this scheme was between 18 and 50, and it did not give coverage for hospital expenses.

As the Forest department's insurance was a group scheme that provided coverage to the family without age limit, it would be enhanced and restarted.

The Minister said the increasing instances of man-animal conflict had left the people very apprehensive. Experts pointed to the necessity of preventing animals from coming out of the forests. Ensuring availability of water for animals inside forests, ensuring enough food for them by planting trees they like, preventing animals from straying outside the forests through solar power fences and elephant-proof trenches, and avoiding cultivating on forest fringes crops that attract animals, were some of the suggestions that came up. However, establishing solar power fences or elephant-proof trenches was a costly affair. A project for ₹650 crore had been submitted to the Union government and the Kerala State Planning Board.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/man-animal-conflict-forest-dept-insurance-cover-for-sc-sts-to-be-expanded/article66236038.ece>