

Collector. While providing the details, DC has confirmed the same is based on documents as per Thandaper Registers available in the two villages. It is reported that the list is exhaustive with none left out. With these details, it is now necessary to verify each holding through a laid-down process. The process should consist of issuing notices to each Thandaper holder. Each land holder is to be present in person before an identified authority. Neither legal representation nor Power of Attorney representation may be permitted. The land holder should be present with the documents available with the party to prove his/her title and possession. Based on the above, dedicated teams need to verify these documents with Number I and Number II Registers and Land Assignment and/or Pokkuvaravu files, case by case.

4. The above activities should have been performed by the Settlement Officer 7 years ago who was empowered under Section 18B of the Wildlife [Protection] Act, 1972. Even after extension of time, the authority has failed not only to complete the work but even to take the work to a reasonably advanced level. Various reasons and excuses for this were given by the Settlement Officers since 2007, the reported reason being the alleged non-co-operation from the patta holders and the possibility of a law and order situation. This shows the lack of will on the part of the Government officials in managing and completing the land-related activities. The problem becomes even more widespread as no action is ever taken against such officials. In the instant case, in order to pre-empt any possible hurdle to the work and since the issue has acquired wider ramification, this is a fit case where the work should be formally assigned to the Commissioner of Land Revenue (CLR) by the Revenue Dept. Moreover, the CLR is empowered under the Kerala Land Assignment Act, 1960 as well. CLR's duty will be to verify the records as detailed in Recommendation 3 above and to co-ordinate the field verification. The work should be and can be