

GUIDELINES FOR USING ELEPHANTS FOR RELIGIOUS PROCESSION OR ANY CELEBRATIONS

1. The DFO Trivandrum will be the authority to grant permission for using an elephant for religious procession or any celebrations. The DFO or his nominated nominee will ensure that the elephant in musth shall not be used for festivals or functions. An elephant found sick, injured, unduly stressed or pregnant shall not be used for such occasions. The organizing committee should seek permission from DFO minimum two weeks prior of the event. The DFO will get the certificate for the function from the forest veterinary officer or elephant squad veterinary surgeon. In case of festival season, based on the request of DFO District Collector will provide more veterinary Doctors at the disposal of the DFO. DFO will also check the mahout certification, movement register and other mandatory documents as outline in the Government Circular. DFO will file one copy of permission given, to the District Collector.

2. The concerned police CI or SI will give permission for the use of elephant only after the concerned committee or owner shows the permission given by DFO. Police will give permission for regulating elephant procession, movement, traffic regulation, timing etc. depending on law and order situation. The CI or SI will also ensure that the mahout is not drunk during the procession. If drunk, the concerned CI should file report to the District Collector and the mahout license will be cancelled or suspended for one year.

3. District Collector Control Room can be reached for any complaint regarding cruelty to elephants at: 0471-2730045 / 67. The Executive Magistrates or Tahsildars will conduct surprise checks during procession along with range officers and cases will be booked against owners/organizing committee for any violation of rules as mentioned in Kerala Captive Elephants (Management and maintenance) Rules 2003. Once a case has been booked against an owner or an organizing committee under the Wild Life Act, the permission for future function will be given only by District Collector. At present in the last 5 years, 16 cases have been booked with various Dewaswam Temple authorities be major culprits.

4. There will be a minimum gap of 12 hours for giving permission for the same elephant to take part in processions.

5. The above guidelines will be in force from 1.5.2011.