

STANDING ORDER NO.42.

CHAPTER NO. IX

Dated: 14, March, 1966.

**Subject: Forest Offence Cases – Need for
 Promptitude in their disposal.**

It has come to light that quite often the Forest Offence Cases are not promptly inquired into and pursued to their end with the desired expeditiousness, as a result of which it becomes difficult to establish the guilt on the offenders as also to recover the dues from them. Cases have come to notice in a certain Division where it took as many as three to four years to finalise the offence cases and another equal period to lodge the cases in the Court of Law when it was found that the offender was not willing to compound the offence. With the inordinate lapse of time between the detection of the offence and its decision the evidence in the case tends to become tenuous, the desired witnesses do not come forth readily and if available, are not in a position to recollect the facts of the case and to deposit their evidence correctly and precisely. Consequently the cases fail in Court of Law giving rise to a sense of triviality towards and recidivism in forest offences.

2. It has, therefore, become imperative to join strict adherence to a time schedule right from the stage of detection of forest offences to their final disposal. The following instructions are issued in this behalf.

- (i) The Forest Guard on detection of the offence must within 24 hours thereof, dispatch a copy of the First Offence Report to the Divisional Forest Officer direct and copy to his Round Officer / Range Assistant.
- (ii) The Round Officer / Range Assistant on receipt of the First Offence Report complete the enquiry as speedily as possible

and in any case not later than 15 days on receipt of the first Offence Report and submit the inquiry papers complete in all respects to the Forest Officer.

- (iii) On receipt of the inquiry papers, the Range Forest Officer shall forward them together with his specific recommendations to the officer competent to decide the same within a maximum period of 15 days from the receipt of the inquiry papers from the Round Officer / Range Assistant.
 - (iv) The Officer competent to decide the case should pass orders thereon within a fortnight at the latest and return the case papers to the Range Forest Officer promptly for necessary further action.
 - (v) The Range Forest Officer should act swiftly on the orders passed in the case and submit his final report to the competent authority within one month positively from the date of receipt of the final orders by him.
 - (vi) Wherever the cases are required to be lodged in the Court of Law in the event of the offender not willing to compound the case, this should be done within 15 days from the date of receipt of orders to that effect from the competent authority.
3. It will thus be seen that a forest offence should at the latest be decided within a period of 75 days or so from the date of its detection. Any departure from this time schedule would be answerable except under unavoidable circumstances for which reasons should be specifically recorded in writing.

Sd/-
(S.S.Buit)
For Chief Conservator of Forests,
Maharashtra State.

To,

The Conservators of Forests (All).

The Divisional Forest Officers (All) and

The Independent Sub-Divisional Forest Officers (All)