

# Appoint more staff if needed to check man-animal conflict, Collector tells Forest dept.

Meeting in the wake of two forest-related tragedies that took place in two days

Published - May 08, 2024 08:46 pm IST - PALAKKAD

THE HINDU BUREAU

District Collector S. Chithra has asked the Forest department to appoint more staff if needed to prevent the human-animal conflict and elephant fatalities on the tracks.

Dr. Chithra made the request at an emergency meeting of forest officials held at her chamber here on Wednesday in the wake of two forest-related tragedies that took place in two days.

Mathrubhumi News cameraman A.V. Mukesh was killed by an elephant while he was shooting pictures in the forest fringes at Malampuzha on Wednesday morning.

A 25-year-old she-elephant was killed after it was hit by a train near the Kanjikode railway crossing on Monday night.

Palakkad Divisional Forest Officer Joseph Thomas said that watchers were actively monitoring the movements of elephants even at night.

## **‘Maintain vigil‘**

Dr. Chithra asked the people, particularly media persons, to maintain vigil when entering forest zone and also to maintain a good distance from elephants.

Mr. Thomas said that Railways, in an emergency meeting held on Tuesday, agreed to reduce the speed limit of trains from 45 kmph to 35 kmph between Kottekkad and Kanjikode, the forest stretch where maximum elephant presence was reported.

Walayar Range Forest Officer Mohammed Ali, Palakkad tahsildar Rajesh C.S., District Information Officer Priya K. Unnikrishnan, District Emergency Operation Centre (DEOP) hazard analyst Lekha Chacko, junior superintendent Bharat N.G., and senior clerk Dhanya V. took part in the meeting.