

The Forest rights Act has been in operation for more than four years and despite substantial progress made in the last four years certain lacuna and bottlenecks were observed which were impeding the intended flow of benefits to the forest dwelling communities. Appropriate changes in the Rules have been brought about on 06.09.2012 and guidelines have been issued on 12.07.2012 to ease out the problems and hindrances encountered in the implementation of the Act, and to provide unencumbered access to rights already conferred by the Act. After the amendments in the Rules, the Ministry organized five regional consultations, on Forest Rights Act followed by a National meeting at New Delhi. In the regional consultations and the National meetings, the States Governments were directed to make special efforts to create awareness about community rights so that more claims are filed and recognized. The amendment in the Rules has now empowered the Gram Sabha to issue transit permit for minor forest produce either through a Committee constituted under Rule 4(1)(e) or any other person authorized by it. The amended Rule also makes it amply clear that the ownership of minor forest produce lies with the forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers.

Setting up of Price Fixation Committee for MFP

3074. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no uniformity in fixing the price of Minor Forest Produces (MFP) among the States and if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) the steps taken to set up Price Fixation Committees in all the State comprising member of tribal community to address the anomaly; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to adopt Common Minimum Price for the MFP of the tribals and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI RANEE NARAH): (a) and (b) Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFPs) and their transport etc. come under the domain of the State Governments and each state, depending upon the local needs, formulates its own policy related to collection, marketing and transit of MFP items. Different States have categorised MFP items under nationalized and non nationalized depending upon the availability, importance, quality, livelihood dependence of the gatherers etc. State Governments declare procurement price for nationalized items for which each State constitutes its own mechanism.

(c) At present there is no proposal to adopt Common Minimum Price for MFP.

Primary education in tribal areas

3075. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the percentage of children going to school in tribal areas has not increased as expected in the last five years;

(b) whether the Ministry has any data about the number of children not attending school in different tribal areas;

(c) whether Government has any plan for extra incentives to promote primary education in these areas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI RANEE NARAH): (a) As per information received from Ministry of Human Resource Development, the percentage of ST enrolment at elementary level has increased to 10.92% in 2011-12 from 9.02% in 2005-06.

(b) Ministry of HRD has commissioned two independent studies on out of school children in 2005 and 2009. These reveal that out of school ST children declined from 9.5% in 2005 to 5.6% in 2009.

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is not implementing any specific scheme for primary education for ST students in tribal areas. However, this Ministry has launched a Centrally-sponsored Scheme for Pre-matric Scholarship for needy ST students studying in Classes IX and X *w.e.f.* 1.7.2012 which is being implemented through State Governments and UT Administrations.

As per information received from the Ministry of HRD, SSA provides for opening of new schools, additional rooms and infrastructure like toilets, drinking water, ramps etc., teachers, teacher training, free text books, special training to mainstream out of school children, two sets of uniforms for all girls and children belonging to SC, ST and BPL families, school grants, learning enhancement programme (which includes specific programmes for improving learning level like multi lingual education in early grades, special science and maths inputs etc.) and innovation fund for SC, ST children. SSA has also supported the strengthening of