

to these modalities, only those proposals which have been recommended and justified by the concerned State Government/Union Territory Administration and concurred with by the Registrar General of India (RGI) and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) are to be considered for amendment of legislation. The proposal has been processed as per the prescribed modalities. RGI has not supported the proposal, stating that “the said communities do not fulfil the criteria set forth for granting the status of Scheduled Tribe”.

Production of Kendu Leaves

2814. SHRI A. U. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Odisha is the only State to produce processed Kendu Leaves (KL) approximating about 3.7 lakh quintals on a yearly basis, capable of generating net earning worth ₹35 crores to KL workers in the State, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government is aware that such mass production of KL provides employment and income to thousands in the State; and

(c) whether under pressure from Government the Nabarangpur and Malkangiri districts were forced to deregulate Kendu Leaf trade in the State as per the provisions of Forest Right Act, 2006, if so, the details thereof and reasons and implication of the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MANSUKHBHAI DHANJIBHAI VASAVA): (a) As per information received from the Government of Odisha, it produces about 4.4 lakh quintals of Kendu Leaves (KL) annually which includes 3.5 lakh quintals processed KL, 0.81 lakh quintal of Phal and 0.1 lakh quintals growers KL. The number of KL pluckers is of the order of 8 lakhs, who are paid around ₹131.00 crore.

(b) About 20,000 skilled manpower are engaged annually for processing and binding of the KL and are paid about ₹36 crores as wages. Annually, an amount of ₹ 18.26 crores is paid for bush cutting operation which generates about 10.70 lakh mandays.

(c) As per information received from the State Government the decision to deregulate the Kendu Leaf Trade in Nabarangpur and Malkangiri has been taken on experimental basis. Gram Panchayats have been empowered to issue transit permits in respect of Kendu Leaves purchased by traders as per the provisions of Forest Rights Act, 2006.