

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-2701
To Be ANSWERED ON- 18/12/2024

CONVERSION OF FOREST VILLAGES INTO REVENUE VILLAGES

2701 SHRI NIRANJAN BISHI:

SMT. SULATA DEO:

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether people in rural areas have encroached upon forest land and built houses, living there for over 50 years;
- (b) whether eviction processes are underway and notices have been served;
- (c) the details thereof, State-wise including Odisha;
- (d) whether proposals have been received from States to convert forest villages into revenue villages;
- (e) the details, State-wise and village-wise including Odisha; and
- (f) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRIBAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI DURGA DAS UIKEY)

(a) to (c): As informed by MoEFCC, the 'land' is a subject matter of the State Government. The forest areas and the legal boundaries thereof are determined and maintained by the concerned State Government. That, inter-alia, being the repository of land records, State Government has the primary responsibility to determine status of any parcel of land, giving due regards to records, provisions under State and Central Acts and rules. The process of identification of and eviction of encroachments is the process of respective state governments as per the provisions of relevant Acts and Rules. The data of such evictions is not maintained at the Central level by the ministry.

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (in short FRA) and rules made thereunder provides rights over forest land to eligible forest dwelling communities. All those found eligible as per Act and Rules are recognized to that extent. And these rights are heritable and non alienable

and So far State Governments have reported to have vested 24 lakh rights(individual and community) over 1.90 lakh acres of forest land.

FRA also provides safeguards to the forest dwellers from eviction through the provisions contained in Section 4(5). Further, Schedule – V provide for safeguards against displacement of tribal population because of land acquisitions etc. Additionally, the Governor of the State having scheduled Areas is empowered to prohibit or restrict transfer of land from tribals and regulate the allotment of land to members of the Scheduled Tribes in such cases.

(d) to (f): Section 3(1)(h) of FRA guarantees rights of settlement and conversion of all forest villages, old habitation, unsurveyed villages and other villages in forests, whether recorded, notified or not into revenue villages. As per FRA and rules made there under State Governments/ UT Administrations are responsible for implementation of various provisions of the Act and the data

Accordingly, State Governments are persuaded from time to time to examine the process for conversion of forest villages into revenue villages as per the said rules/guidelines. Ministry of Tribal Affairs does not receive any proposal from State Governments for converting forest villages into revenue villages.
