WEB-BASED APPLICATION (VAN MITRA APP)

939. SHRI T.N. PRATHAPAN:
   SHRI BALUBHAU ALIAS SURESH
   NARAYAN DHANORKAR:

   Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:-
   (a) the number of claims filed under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest
       Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 since March 1, 2020, till date;
   (b) the number of claims rejected between March 1, 2020 up to present-day;
   (c) whether any claims of persons under the Act are being rejected using findings of a web-
       based application (Van Mitra App) which uses satellite maps, instead of consulting Gram
       Sabhas; and
   (d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

   ANSWER

   MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRIBAL AFFAIRS
   (SMT. RENUKA SINGH SARUTA)

   (a) As per The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest
       Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA in Short), State Governments are responsible for implementation of
       various provisions of the Act. As per information received from State Governments, 1544 claims
       have been filed under FRA since 1st March, 2020 till 31st August, 2020.
   (b) As per information received from State Governments, 3152 claims have been rejected under
   (c) & (d) This Ministry has not received report of any such rejection being made by using
       satellite maps. The satellite imagery are envisaged to be only supplementary information to the
       other evidence to be produced by the Claimants as per Rule 13 of the rules under the FRA,
       2006. This is clearly manifest from Explanation 2 under Rule 12A (11) of the Scheduled Tribes
       and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Rule, 2007 (FR Rules)
       which provides that the satellite imagery and other uses of technology may supplement other
       form for evidence and shall not be treated as a replacement.

   Further, in exercise of power under Section 11 read with Section 12 of the Act, this Ministry
   issued Guidelines on implementation of the Act on 12.7.2012 to the State Governments/UTs. The
   guidelines provide that use of any technology, such as satellite imagery, should be used to
   supplement evidences tendered by a claimant for consideration of the claim and not to replace
   other evidences submitted by him in support of his claims.

   Subsequently, this Ministry also issued communication to States/UTs, who as per FRA,
   2006 are responsible for implementation of the Act, on 28.04.2015 and 27.07.2015 reiterating
   the same position as also stressing the need for ground verification of claims using
   GPS/Android phone etc. to identify genuine claimants.

   Also as per rule 6(b) of FR Rules, district administration in general and the SDLC in
   particular are expected to assist the Gram Sabhas and the FRCs by providing forest and
   revenue maps to them. In this context Geo-referenced maps may be generated and be provided
   to Gram Sabhas.

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