

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.-2034
TO BE ANSWERED ON- 11.12.2025

PRESERVATION OF TRIBAL IDENTITY AND COLLECTIVE RIGHTS

2034. SHRI SUKHDEO BHAGAT:

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has not prioritized the protection of community forest titles which preserve tribal identity and collective rights despite the Fact Findings Committee flagging this as a major gap;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the Concrete steps being taken by the Government to fast-track claim verification to address backlog and prevent further marginalization of forest dwelling tribals;

(d) the reaction of the Government to the shifting of FRA nodal authority from gramsabhas to forest departments in Chhattisgarh; and

(e) whether such a move undermines tribal self governance and if so, the steps being taken to Safeguard the spirit of FRA?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRIBAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI DURGADAS UIKEY)

(a) & (b): The Forest Rights Act, 2006 was enacted with the objective of undoing the historical injustices faced by Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers due to the long-standing non-recognition of their rights over forest lands and resources. Section 3(1)(i) of the Act explicitly provides for the “*rights to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any Community Forest Resource which they have been traditionally protecting and conserving for sustainable use.*”

Ministry of Tribal Affairs has issued advisories to State Governments and UT Administrations to ensure the protection and recognition of Community Forest Rights (CFRs) in the true letter and spirit of the FRA, with the aim of safeguarding tribal identity, customary governance systems, and their collective access to forest resources. Further, the Ministry has issued detailed Guidelines for Conservation, Management, and Sustainable Use of Community Forest Resources in 2023 to facilitate effective CFR governance.

In addition, necessary financial support has been extended to State Governments under the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DA-JGUA) for strengthening Gram Sabhas and Community Forest Resource Management Committees, including for the preparation and implementation of community-led forest management plans.

(c): The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has consistently engaged with State Governments and UT Administrations through periodic review meetings to monitor the implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) and to expedite the disposal of pending claims. States with high levels of pendency have been specifically directed

to undertake special drives for accelerated backlog clearance. Further, the Ministry has repeatedly advised State Governments to ensure the regular convening of Gram Sabhas, Sub-Divisional Level Committees (SDLCs), and District Level Committees (DLCs) for the timely scrutiny and disposal of claims. The State Level Monitoring Committees (SLMCs) have also been urged to proactively review and address grassroots-level issues to facilitate effective and efficient implementation of the Act.

(d) & (e): The matter was related to the State Government of Chattisgarh and has been resolved. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is fully committed to safeguarding the spirit of the Forest Rights Act, 2006. Regular advisories and review meetings are held with State Governments and UT Administration to ensure FRA is being implemented. Time and again several Capacity-building programmes, technical support, and advisories are issued to the States. The Ministry also monitors progress and supports States through targeted interventions under schemes like DA-JGUA.
