

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
(MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS)
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 186
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18.07.2016

COMMITTEES ON FOREST RIGHT ACT

186. SHRIMATI POONAMBEN MAADAM:

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the gram Sabhas in scheduled areas have been deprived from their rights of deciding over forest clearance for non-forest project in their jurisdiction under Forest Rights Act, 2006 and PESA and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (b) whether the Government had constituted High Level Committee on status of Tribal communities in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the said committee has submitted its report to the Government and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the main recommendations made by the said committee and the followup action taken by the Government thereon; and
- (e) the other steps taken/being taken by the Government for strengthening the Forest Rights Act, 2006?

ANSWER

MINISTR OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI JASWANT SINGH BHABHOR)

- (a) No, Madam.
- (b) Yes, Madam. A High Level Committee (HLC) was constituted on 14.8.2013 to prepare a position paper on the present socio-economic, health and educational status of STs and suggest policy initiatives as well as effective outcome-oriented measures to improve development indicators and strengthen public service delivery to STs and other tribal populations. The Committee consisted of the following Members:-
 - 1) Prof. Virginius Xaxa -Chairman
 - 2) Dr. Usha Ramanathan -Member
 - 3) Dr. Joseph Bara -Member
 - 4) Dr. K. K. Misra -Member
 - 5) Dr. Abhay Bang -Member
 - 6) Ms. Sunila Basant -Member
 - 7) Secretary, M/o Tribal Affairs -Member Secretary

- (c) & (d) The Committee has submitted its report on 29th May, 2014, which contains 111 recommendations cutting across various issues being dealt with by different Central Ministries/Departments as well as State Governments viz. (i) Legal and Administration Framework, (ii) Livelihood and Employment Status, (iii) Education, (iv) Health, (v) Land Alienation, Displacement and Enforced Migration, (vi) Legal and Constitutional Issues and (vii) Delivery of Public Goods and Services.
- (e) Steps taken in the Ministry to strengthen Forest Rights Act, 2006, based on the feedback, review and recommendations of various Committees:
- (i) The Ministry has issued guidelines and clarifications from time to time to ensure that the provisions of the Forest Right Act, 2006 are not violated. The close monitoring of implementation of FRA and providing guidance to States has resulted in the conferment of 17,02,846 individual and 43,492 community titles comprising 43.92 lakh hectares of forest land as on 31.05.2016.
 - (ii) In order to expedite recognition and vesting of community rights, the Ministry has issued guidelines dated 23.4.2015 and 22.9.2015, based on experience and feedback from the States and other stake holders. This has resulted in 43,492 community titles being issued thus far.
 - (iii) Attention of low performing States has been drawn to the speedy implementation of Forest Right Act and their progress is monitored through video conferencing and monthly progress reports.
 - (iv) Further, the right holders under FRA are also being linked to the different development programmes of the Central and State Governments for their sustainable livelihood.
