

District level Coordination meeting-on Forest Right Act 2006 Held at Jeypore on 3rd March 2010

Pragati Koraput in association with NGOs and District administration had organized the 5th District level Coordination meeting on 3rd March 2010 at ITDA Conference Hall, Jeypore for proper implementation of Forest Right Act 2006 in Koraput District. Representatives of 30 NGOs, Line department officials and Peoples' organizations of the District participated in



the forum to discuss on the issues & role of different stake holders in facilitation for community Rights and individual claims over forests and forest lands under Forest Right Act. The meeting was organized at Jeypore which was proposed by the Sub Collector, Jeypore and agreed by all the participants in the previous coordination meeting which was held at Tribal Museum on 3rd February 2010.

Sri Mukunda Kisan, PA, ITDA, Jeypore, Special Officer, ITDA, Jeypore, ADWO Jeypore, ADWO, Koraput, representatives of 30 NGOs working in 14 blocks of Koraput District, representatives of 13 Peoples' organizations and representative from Vasundhara, Bhubaneswar actively participated in the meeting. Reiterating about the objectives of the meeting, Mr. Prabhakar Adhikari, Secretary Pragati said that the collective initiatives of Pragati, District administration, NGOs (who are interested to work for implementation of community rights over forest and forest lands under FRA) and peoples' organization for the cause of facilitating for process of community and individual claims will benefit of the resource poor forest dependent community in

getting their rights and entitlements which would not otherwise be possible by a single agency. He asked the participants to share about the progress in facilitation of Community forest rights and Individual claims over forest lands



under the Forest Right Act -2006 and problems faced for facilitation of claims, so that there can be a concrete plan of action for necessary follow ups with different stake holders.



The NGOs and peoples organizations from different blocks have submitted 64 numbers of community claims to the SDLC from their respective action areas during the month of February 2010 according to decision of 4th District level coordination meeting and receipt of such claims are with the facilitating NGOs in each block. In the mean time the Sub Collectors of Jeypore

and Koraput have issued orders to the BDOs & Tehsildars to conduct Palli sabha and inquiry involving the NGOs working in their respective block areas.

The NGOs and volunteers presented the issues they faced during facilitating process for submission of community claims:

- In Boipariguda block NGOs have previously facilitated and submitted 54 Community claims but there is no information of their present status.
- There is conflict between villages regarding forest boundary.
- Rejection of claim form by Tehsildar for claim of reserve forest area in Jeypore(Mandikutta village in Kebidi Panchayat)
- There are no registers and seal at FRC level.
- In Kumapadar village of Kundra Block forest department has forcibly made plantations under JBIC and now the people have started cleaning forests to convert it to agriculture land.
- Individual land pattas are not given to the beneficiaries in 4 GPs of Bandhugaon block. Representative of RAD from Bandhugaon shared that in 4 GPs of Bandhugaon block(Jaguguda, Kutrabeda, Kumbhariput, Garidi) the pattas are with the RIs and they are asking for money (Rs 300/- per head) to hand over individual patta to the beneficiaries. Similarly in Hanapur village, Gunthaput GP of Semliguda block the RI is asking bribes for individual patta.
- Forest guards in some villages of Semliguda block are discouraging the people to submit claims under FRA with the plea that they already have rights over forests under VSS.



The line department officials have assured that they would take immediate steps to address the issues at their respective level.

Decisions taken:

- The NGOs would facilitate submission of community claims without going through detailed process of Palli Sabha for expediting the process. The administration will ensure the formalities of Palli Sabha and enquiry after submission of claims to SDLC.
- Facilitate the process of Individual claims of Forest land dependent people of the District including other traditional forest dwellers.
- As the FRC members are not aware of their responsibilities and functions, it was agreed to impart Block level training of FRC members.
- It was decided to involve the block level line department officials during the block level federation meetings. The line department officials agreed to issue official orders to attend the federation meetings so that the issues of respective blocks can be solved at block level.
- It was decided to collect details of information of villages and beneficiaries who have not yet submitted claims under FRA.

117 community claims have been completed by the end of February 2010 and it was agreed to submit the claims at SDLC level. Prior to this by the end of January 64 claims have been submitted at Koraput SDLC level. Thus by the end of February 181 community claims under Forest Rights Act are submitted at SDLC Level. Sri Mukunda Kisan, PA, ITDA, Jeypore said that though there are 1890 revenue villages in Koraput District, individuals claims are submitted from only 900 villages which shows that in the rest part of the District people are not aware of the Act. Hence the NGOs can play an active role in this regard. He also said that the District administration is concentrating its effort for sensitization in these areas.



Sri Surendra Mastiv Secretary Koraput Zilla Banabasi Sangha (district level Forest dependent peoples organization), discussed about the preparation of Village profiles of forest protecting areas which is being prepared in collaboration with Vasundhara. Mr. Adikanda from Vasundhara participated in the discussions. By end of February, 65 no. of village profiles are completed.

Mr. Prashant Tripathy of Pragati, Sector Coordinator Networking offered vote of thanks to all the participants.

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