

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/forests/chhattisgarhs-invocation-of-scientific-forest-management-thinly-veiled-attempt-to-sabotage-gram-sabha-autonomy-and-indigenous-knowledge>

Forests

FRA implementation: Experts fear eviction of tribal families as review of rejected claims not implemented yet

Over 17 lakh tribal families face eviction ahead of the Supreme Court hearing on the case challenging the Forest Rights Act due to lack of intervention from MoTA

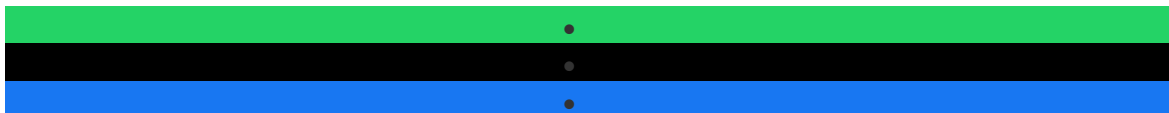


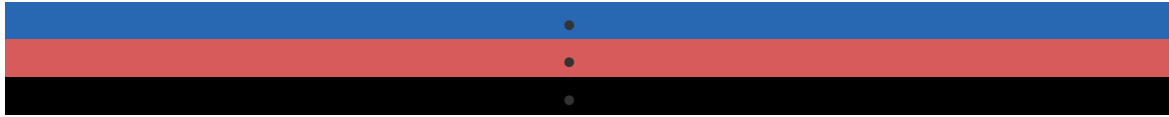
According to an analysis by Land Conflict Watch, a research consultancy, land conflicts involving the FRA is 117 impacting 611,557 citizens in India. Photograph: iStock

Himanshu Nitnaware

Published on:

01 Apr 2025, 7:12 pm





Ahead of the crucial hearing of the Supreme Court on the Forest Rights Act, 2006, researchers and campaigners fear that the government may have not conducted the review process of rejected claims.

The apex court, on February 13, 2019, had ordered eviction of 1,700,000 tribal families by stating that their individual rights under the FRA were rejected. However, the order was put on hold after mass protests across various parts of the nation.

The Supreme Court had also directed the state governments to review the rejection of claims.

The law recognises traditional forest dwellers adivasis or indigenous tribal communities including Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFD) and enables them to apply for claims to forest produce and land which they have been dependent on for generations.

Tushar Dash, a researcher working on forest rights and governance issues said that on March 20 the central government during the parliamentary budget session, said the number of rejected claims of FRA continue to be around 1,80,000.

“It shows that despite the directives of the SC, no review of the rejected claims have taken place which could have reflected in change in numbers,” he added.

Dash said that his interactions with people from various gram sabhas across India has revealed that necessary guidelines have not been provided to the states to conduct review of rejected claims.

In March, as many as 36 organisations alleged the review is plagued with the same issues of illegal rejections and that the central and state governments should have made concerted efforts to implement the law.

Interestingly, the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) in a letter dated January 10, urged state governments to establish a mechanism for effective compliance of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 in response to complaints about illegal evictions of forest dwellers after the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) in June 2024 issued eviction notices to expedite evictions of forest dwellers in tiger reserves.

More than 100,000 people have been displaced on demarcation of protected areas and the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) recently relocating 64,801 people from core tiger reserve areas.

The letter also directed the states to establish grievance redressal framework to ensure transparency in handling the cases.

The ministry has directed the state tribal and forest departments to guarantee effective institutional mechanisms for upholding the rights of forest dwellers, recognise their

rights as mandated under the FRA provisions and other relevant laws, especially with growing complaints on unlawful evictions from tiger reserves.

According to an analysis by Land Conflict Watch, a research consultancy, land conflicts involving the FRA since 2016 are 117, impacting 611,557 citizens in India.

Out of these total cases, the primary legal and procedural issues in these conflicts are pertained to non-implementation or violation of key provisions of the FRA impacting 88.1 per cent of the cases.

“Additionally, 49.15 per cent of cases involve a lack of legal protection over land rights. While 40.68 per cent involve forced evictions and dispossession of land,” the datasheet shared by LCW mentioned.

The demands of these affected communities are to have legal recognition of land rights amounting to 60.2 per cent of the cases. Complaints regarding procedural violations in land transactions amount to 52.5 per cent of cases.

[Forest Rights Act 2006](#)
[forest rights](#)