

Tribal protests in Maharashtra

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Replying to an unstarred question in Rajya Sabha today the Union Minister of State Shri. Durgadas Uikey said that government of Maharashtra has informed that the reasons for widespread Maharashtra tribal protests in Nashik are as follow:

(i) Issues relating to evidence and approval of claims under Section 4(1), 4(3) and Section 6 of Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (in short, FRA).

(ii) Dispute regarding extent of land recognized under Section 4(6) of FRA.

As per the information received from State Government of Maharashtra, as of the end of January 2026, Maharashtra has a total of 14,726 pending Individual Forest Rights (IFR) cases, comprising 6,158 claims and 8,568 appeals. As per the provisions of the Act, the prescribed processing timeline for each claim is approximately 60 days in cases where the claim is recommended. However, in instances where a claim is rejected at any stage, the overall processing time may extend beyond six months due to the appellate procedures involved. As of the end of January 2026, the rejection rate at the district level stands at approximately 30% of the total claims received at that level.

No, land and its management fall under the exclusive legislative and administrative jurisdiction of States as provided under the Constitution of India (Seventh Schedule- List II (State List)- Entry No. (18). Land acquisition and associated rehabilitation for various projects i.e. for construction of highways, dams and for mining is undertaken by the Central and State Governments under various Central and State Acts. State Government of Maharashtra has informed that no tribal communities have been forcibly displaced or rehabilitated without due process in Sangli, Bhandara, Jalgaon, Nashik, Wardha, Dhule, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Gondia, Satara, and Chandrapur districts.

State Government of Maharashtra has informed that as per Government Resolution dated 28.11.2025, instructions were issued for compensation for CFR land by Tribal Development Department, Maharashtra. As per resolution, Gram Sabhas' consent is mandatory before land acquisition and project approvals as per the FRA.

State Government of Maharashtra has informed that no such matter has been found in Sangli, Bhandara, Jalgaon, Nashik, Wardha, Dhule, C. Sambhajinagar, Godia, Satara, Chandrapur districts.

Section 7 of FRA stipulates that, *“Where any authority or Committee or officer or member of such authority or Committee contravenes any provision of this Act or any rule made thereunder concerning recognition of forest rights, it, or they, shall be deemed to be guilty of an offence under this Act and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees: Provided that nothing contained in this sub-section shall render any member of the authority or Committee or head of the department or any person referred to in this section liable to any punishment if he proves that the offence was committed without his knowledge or that he had exercised all due diligence to prevent the commission of such offence”*. Also, Section 8 of FRA stipulates that, *“No court shall take*

cognizance of any offence under section 7 unless any forest dwelling Scheduled Tribe in case of a dispute relating to a resolution of a Gram Sabha or the Gram Sabha through a resolution against any higher authority gives a notice of not less than sixty days to the State Level Monitoring Committee and the State Level Monitoring Committee has not proceeded against such authority”.

As per FRA and Rules made thereunder, State Governments/UT Administrations are responsible for implementation of various provisions of the Act while Ministry of Tribal Affairs has been issuing directions and guidelines from time to time on various aspects to ensure proper implementation of the Act. State Government of Maharashtra has informed that a meeting of the State-level Monitoring Committee was held on 10th October 2025 wherein Chief Secretary directed all District Collectors to dispose of pending individual and community claims, as well as appeals under the Forest Rights Act, as soon as possible. Additionally, pending matters are being monitored at the TRTI Commissionerate level.

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