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NCST Puts Odisha On Notice Over Rights Of Tribals

*The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes has issued notice to the Odisha Government to reply to allegations that tribals residing in more than 45 villages bordering four States were deprived of basic human rights and justice, **THE INDIAN TRIBAL** reports*

March 20, 2023





Bhubaneswar/New Delhi

Taking cognisance of a petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer and rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy, who alleged tribals living in the border villages of Odisha were deprived of basic human rights due to the apathy, negligence and attitude of bordering States, the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) has issued notice to Odisha Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena seeking a detailed reply within 15 days.

Odisha has unresolved border disputes with four neighbouring States of Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. The summons were issued on March 14.

Alleging deprivation of basic human rights of tribals living in the border villages due to apathy, negligence and attitude of these bordering States, Tripathy had sought the intervention of the apex constitutional body for tribal rights for a permanent solution.

Tripathy alleged that the tribals continue to suffer in the absence of bare necessities like potable drinking water, communication facilities, benefits of social welfare schemes, education and healthcare.

His petition, filed in November last year, stated that the annual verification, specifically in the villages sharing boundary with neighbouring states, is an important component of revenue administration. The dispute arises as neither such assessment is made by the collectors of bordering districts nor is it properly monitored by the department concerned, it added.

“Odisha does not have proper records of the disputed villages at its border as demarcation is yet to be done. This is a classic case of failure of the state mechanism in acting over the issue,” the petitioner contended.

Tripathy urged the NCST to get the matter investigated in a timely manner so that the sacrosanct right of every individual can be protected. The state government has admitted that the boundaries of over 100 villages could not be determined and a probe report was also not in place.

At A Glance: The Disputed Boundaries

- Andhra Pradesh: Odisha has boundary disputes over 21 villages in Ganjam district, 16 in Gajapati and five in Rayagada
- West Bengal: Odisha has dispute over six villages in Balasore and eight in Mayurbhanj
- Jharkhand: Dispute is over two villages in Mayurbhanj, five in Keonjhar and six in Sundargarh
- Chhattisgarh: Dispute is over four villages in Nabarangpur district and one in Jharsuguda
- As many as 14 of the 30 districts of Odisha share borders with four neighbouring States; eight of them have border disputes
- The boundaries of over 100 villages at Odisha's border could not be determined.

In Numbers

49.4%

Female Literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes

Update

Munda launches new central scheme in Manipur

Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, Arjun Munda, has launched the Ministry of Tribal Affairs' new Central Sector Scheme "Marketing and Logistics Development for Promotion of Tribal Products from North -Eastern Region (PTP-NER)" for the benefit of Scheduled Tribes of North-eastern Region. Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh was also present. Three new products from Van Dhan Vikas Kendras across the State, namely, Cinnamon Rolls (Dalchini) from Kamjong District, Black Rice (Chakhao) from Ukhrul District and Dried Bamboo Shoot were also launched.