

SEPTEMBER 2024

# IN THE LOOP



Vasundhara Newsletter, 6 th October

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## OVERVIEW :

### Habitat rights provided to Mankidia

In a landmark decision, the Mankidia community, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG), was formally provided habitat rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006. The rights were officially conferred during a ceremony in Baripada, attended by Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mohapatra and Forest Minister Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia.

This legal recognition gives the Mankidia tribe legitimate access to their ancestral forests for traditional practices and livelihood activities, marking a significant shift from their previous

status where they were restricted from using forest resources despite their PVTG classification. "The community will now freely perform their traditional and cultural activities in the landscape," noted Y Giri Rao, Executive Director of Vasundhara. The Mankidia becomes the

- Habitat rights provided to Mankidia
- CR/CFR claim making process
- Six-Day State-Level Workshop to Strengthen Rural Initiatives
- Exposure visit to Nepal.
- Celebrated Ozone Day at Saraswati Sishumandir School.
- and oversight to the organization's.



second PVTG in Odisha to receive habitat rights, with four other communities already approved by district-level committees.

The rights were granted under Section 2(h) of the Forest Rights Act, which defines habitat as areas comprising customary and other habitats in reserved and protected forests used by primitive tribal groups and pre-agricultural communities.

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A series of intensive Forest Rights Act (FRA) implementation activities were carried out across multiple blocks in the Mayurbhanj district, marking significant progress in recognizing Community Rights (CR) and Community Forest Resource (CFR) rights.

The district witnessed numerous gram sabha meetings, claim verifications, and Tahasil Level Monitoring Committee (TLMC) sessions from September 2 to 8, 2024. Notable activities included joint field verifications at Pahadpur village in Kusumi Tahasil and claim-making processes in Raibadi village under Lupung GP of Tiring Tahasil.

Several TLMC meetings were conducted across tahasils including Jamda, Bisoi, and Sukruli, where officials discussed CR-CFR claim processing, GPS mapping, and pending Individual Forest Rights (IFR) cases. These meetings saw participation from key stakeholders including Tahasildars, Block Development Officers, Forest Department officials, and FRA coordinators.

Final gram sabhas were completed in multiple villages including Kuldiha,

Sundhal, and Deokundi, where Community Forest Resource Management Committees (CFRMC) were formed. The process involved extensive participation from local authorities, FRA coordinators, community volunteers, and villagers.



**CR/CFR claim  
making process**



## Six-Day State-Level Workshop to Strengthen Rural Initiatives



Vasundhara concluded a significant six-day state-level workshop at the CYSD campus in Bhubaneswar. The workshop, which ran from September 1st to 6th, brought together federation members, staff, and the organization's workforce in a comprehensive capacity-building initiative.

The intensive program focused on developing a unified strategic vision to enhance production efficiency, market competitiveness, and financial stability in rural sectors. Participants engaged in detailed learning sessions and collaborative planning exercises to strengthen their professional capabilities.

"This workshop served as a crucial platform for aligning our team's objectives and establishing a clear roadmap for our future initiatives," said Prashant ku Sahu a senior representative from Vasundhara. The event emphasized the importance of cohesive teamwork and shared goals for sustainable rural development.

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## Exposure visit to Nepal

A 22-member team from Vasundhara visited Nepal for an exposure visit from September 25-29, 2024. The trip provided an opportunity for the team to learn from Nepal's successful community-driven initiatives and exchange insights on sustainable development and forest management. The visit fostered valuable connections and enhanced knowledge-sharing between the two regions.



# Celebrated Ozone Day at Saraswati Sishumandir School



Vasundhara organized an engaging World Ozone Day celebration at Saraswati Sishumandir School in Unit 3, bringing environmental awareness to students of Classes 8 and 9 through interactive learning and creative expression.

The educational program began with a comprehensive session on atmospheric science, focusing on the ozone layer's crucial role in protecting Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation. Students participated in detailed discussions about Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and their environmental impact, demonstrating keen interest in understanding these complex environmental issues.

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# Research Advisory Committee Sets New Direction for Community Development Studies



Vasundhara held its Research Advisory Committee (RAC) meeting today, marking a significant step toward strengthening its research framework for community development initiatives.

Ms. Nivedita Panda inaugurated the meeting, emphasizing the organization's vision to emerge as a leading research institution. The session featured a comprehensive presentation by Prasant Ku Sahu on the organization's achievements and core focus areas.

A key highlight of the meeting was the establishment of dual advisory bodies - the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) and Research Advisory Group (RAG) - designed to provide strategic guidance and oversight to the organization's

research activities. The discussion emphasized studying women-headed households and their role in community development.

"This new framework will enhance our research quality and ensure our studies directly benefit community development efforts," said Ms. Panda. The initiative aims to bridge the gap between academic research and practical community needs, focusing on creating a measurable impact on development outcomes.

The meeting concluded with a clear roadmap for implementing the new research governance structure, setting the stage for evidence-based community development work.