
KENDU LEAF CASE REPORT



**MINOR FOREST PRODUCE- RANPUR
ODISHA**

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INTRODUCTION



In Ranpur block, about 19% of the total population belongs to the SC and ST communities. A significant portion of their earning comes from wage labor and from the sale of forest produces. As per the study done by Vasundhara, it was found that almost 60% of the annual income comes from forests, i.e., from KL, firewood, Siali leaves, Aonla, Char, and Mohua. Out of this forest produces KL, in particular, contributes significantly to a poor household's livelihood irrespective of caste during the lean summer season when there are no other employment opportunities.

The study also highlighted the following points;

1. Out of 207 villages, 90 villages are involved in KL collection.
2. KL provides income during the lean summer period when there are no other sources of income.
3. In the absence of a Govt., phadi people sell the leaves to private bidi manufacturing companies at a throwaway price.

(In 2000-2001 govt fixed price was 20 paisa per 20 leaves, while people in Ranpur received 8-10 paisa for 20 leaves from the duping agents of the bidi company.)

4. In the absence of a govt policy for the non-phadi area, people are also harassed by the Forest Department.

Before 1973, two KL phadis existed in Ranpur. However, after the nationalization of the KL trade in 1973, these phadis were abolished on the pretext that the leaves of this region were not up to the standard quality. On the other hand, the government did not formulate any policy for the non-phadi area in the State. These compelled the poor pluckers to sell the leaves at a lower price to bidi manufacturers, resulting in their exploitation.



THE ISSUE

This issue was taken up by the Central Women Committee and backed by the MMJSP (federation), who undertook the following activities to resolve the issue:

1. A status paper, which highlighted the importance of KL as a source of livelihood for the poor people, was prepared.
2. Households involved in KL collection were identified. It was found that about 3000 HHs in 90 villages are engaged in KL collection.
3. Village level interactions were organized where the CWC & MMJSP members discussed with the pluckers on the issues. During the period total of 90 meetings were conducted in the identified villages.

Following :

Village meetings and cluster level meeting interactions were conducted to formulate future strategies for highlighting the issues at the Block and State levels.

During these interactions and discussions, the following activities emerged as a strategic intervention to be taken on the KL issues:

- Information and issue sharing with different individuals, organizations, forest federations, NGOs working in forestry, and individuals working in other parts of the State.
- Postcard campaign to Chief Minister and Govt. officials of the concerned departments intimating them about the issues.
- Mobilization of print media

Due to the government's lack of attention, the CWC decided to take out a mass protest rally in Ranpur. Thus on 3rd April 2001, around 2000 women from 90 villages marched out on a protest rally. The representatives submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister through the Tahasildar and the concerned Forest Range Officer



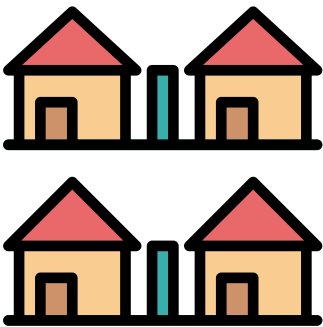
FOLLOWING

The primary demand of the protesters was to set up KL phadis in the area. These representatives also participated in the State level workshop organized by Vasundhara with support from CWS on KL. They raised the issue of the Non-Phadi place in front of the Chief Minister. They also personally submitted a memorandum to the CM highlighting the plight of the poor pluckers and a request to set up KL phadis in Ranpur. It is essential to mention here that the problems of the non-phadi area were raised at the state level for the first time. In continuance, the local MLA raised the same issue in the State Assembly session. As a response, the State Government issued an official order to the DFO of Phulbani KL Division to carry out a potential survey in the Ranpur area. Under the instructions of the DFO, the concerned forest was surveyed along with the MMJSP. According to the preliminary survey report, there is a potential for producing 6000 quintals of KL in the area, and 20 KL phadis would be required to undertake

the whole operation heard from reliable sources. This report was put before the State level Kendu Leaves Co-ordination Committee meeting by the concerned DFO. The State then floated their decision to set up only one Phadi in the entire Ranpur area due to the State's inadequate funds. This future created dissatisfaction among the pluckers of Ranpur.

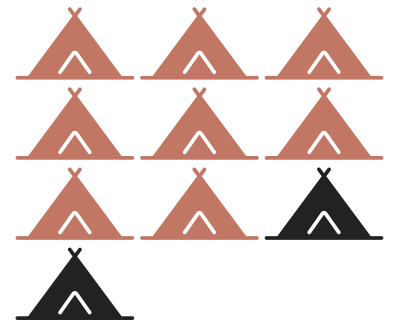
The Parisad has brought this recent development to the notice of the Chief Minister. The CM office has received a positive response that an order has been issued to the concerned Secretary to look into the matter. Meanwhile, a delegate of representatives from CWC and MMJSP met the Forest Secretary, Chief Conservator of Forest (KL wing), the local MLA, and MP on the 7th February 2002 to intimate them about the recent developments and requested them to set up 20 Phadis as proposed initially in the survey report. The State has assured the delegates that it would set up at least 5 Phadnis Ranpur areas at this initial period.

WHAT DID IT LOOK LIKE?



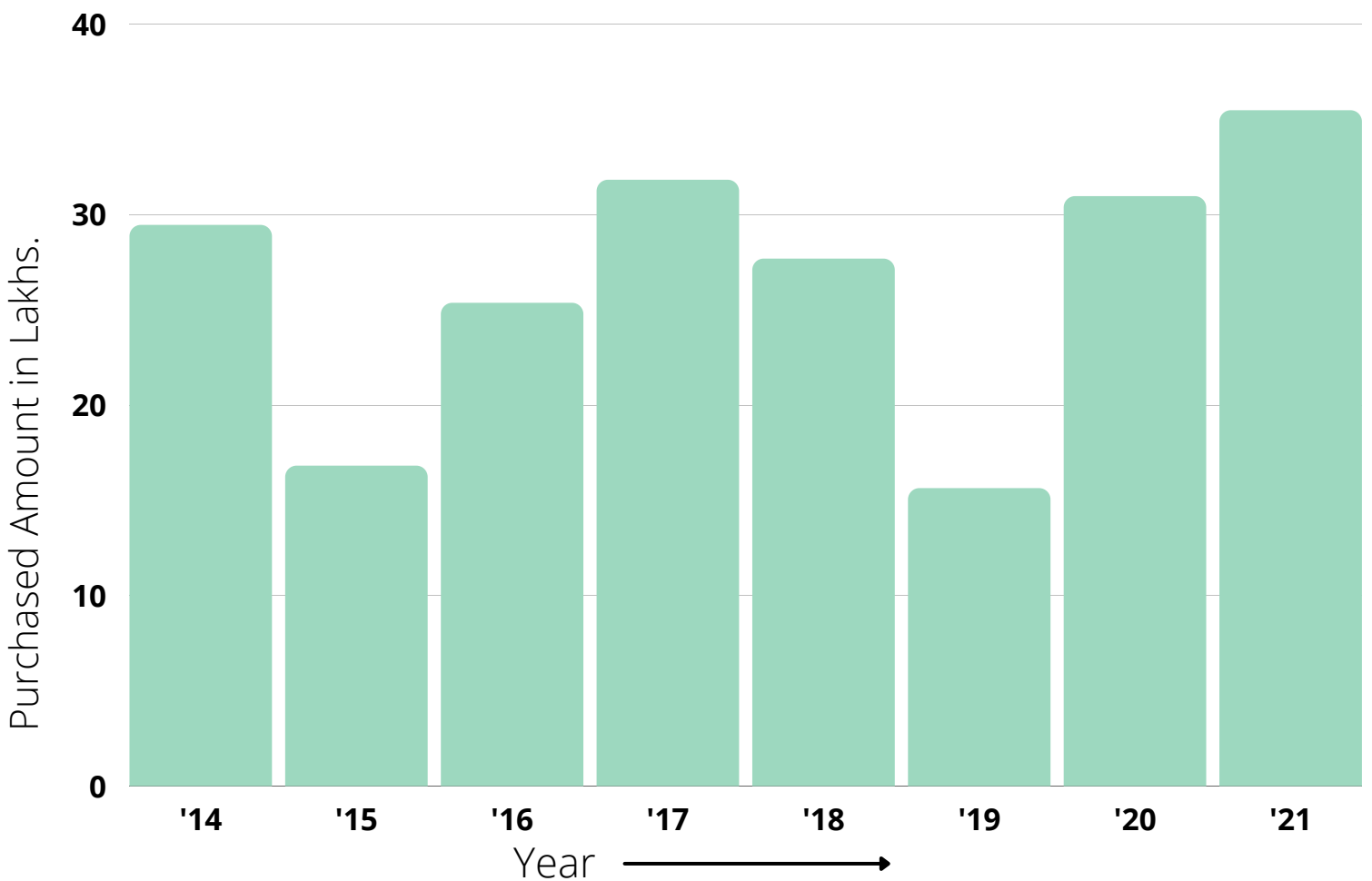
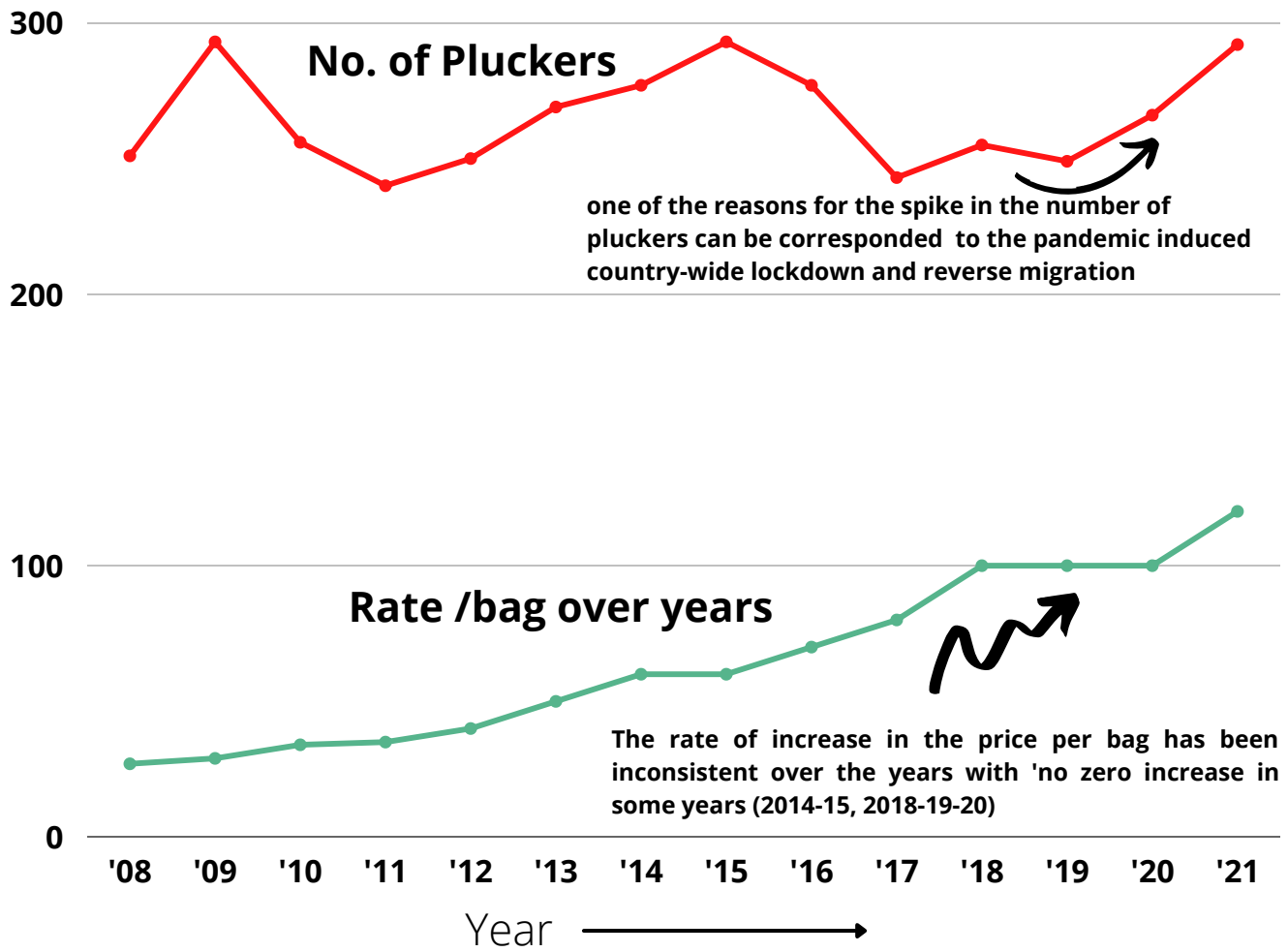
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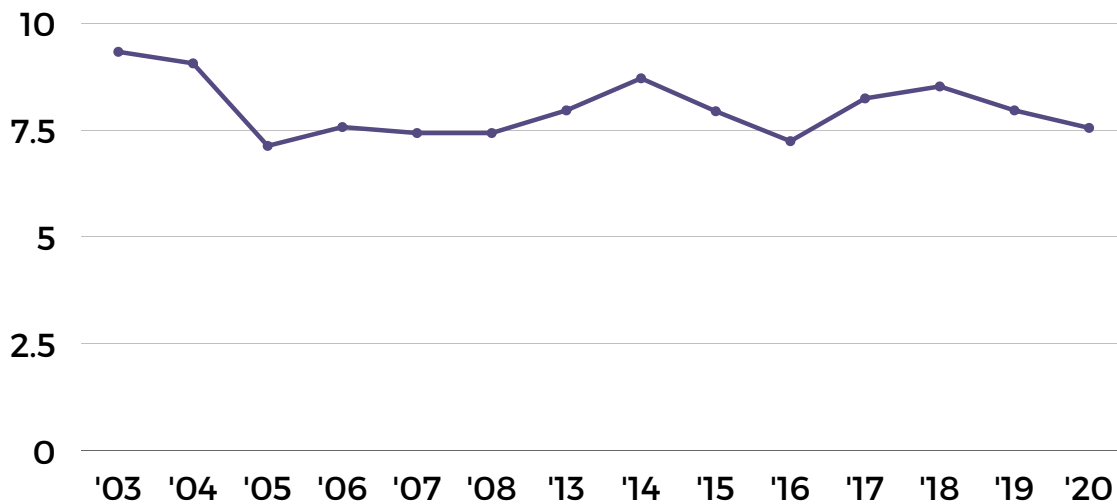


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RANPUR- BLOCK STATISTICS- FROM OUR FIELDS

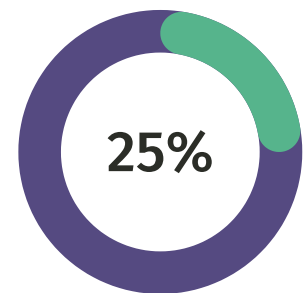


ODISHA STATE STATISTICS

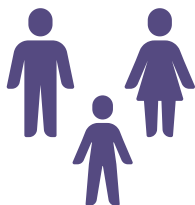


Negative Growth of the number of Pluckers Registered (from year 2003-2008 & 2013-2020)

10-25% of leaves are taken for free or not valued due to gradation



7,50,000



₹ 1,063
PER PERSON



7,98,585



Rs 7.9 lakh is paid to 7.8 lakh collectors, resulting in only Rs 1,063 per person for 40 days of work.

STATE STATISTICS- KENDU LEAF

