

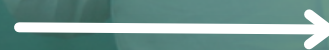


# VASUNDHARA

***Did you know?***

***For the first time in the country, Community Rights (CR) & Community Forest Rights (CFR) titles were distributed to OTFD's in Odisha on 22nd November, 2021***

**Learn More**



# PLIGHT OF THE OTFDs

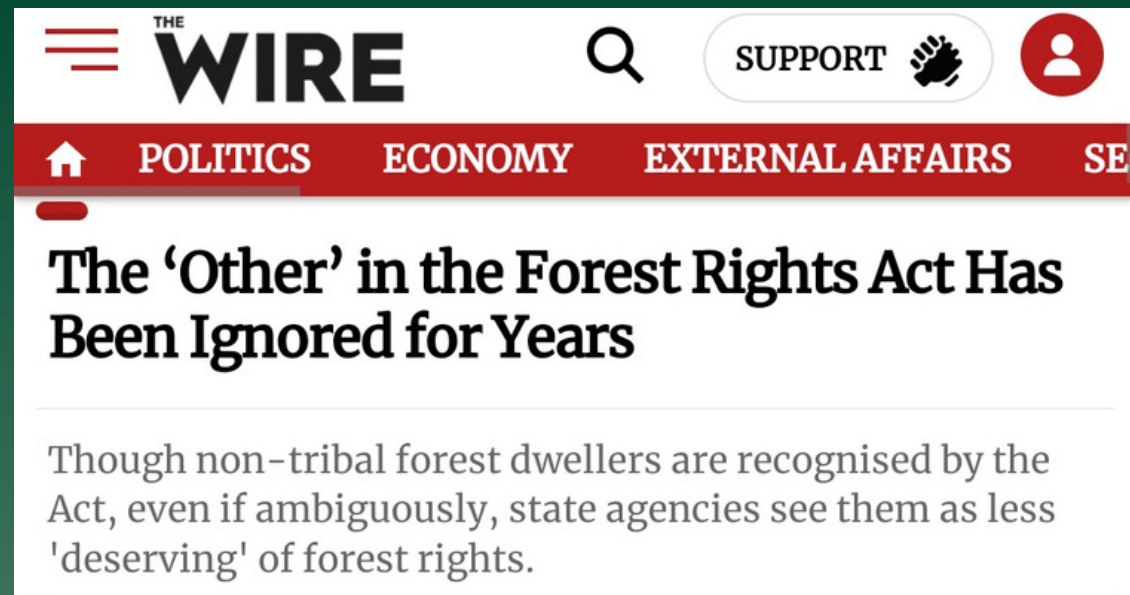


Though the Other Traditional Forest Dwellers, which include Scheduled Castes (SC) and Other Backward Classes (OBC), are eligible for Forest Rights, they have been ignored since the inception of the act.

One of the major limitations of the FRA is the differentiated eligibility of ST and OTFD claimants, which, compounded by the ambiguity in the wording of the Act, has disadvantaged the latter severely.

The prejudice against OTFDs in the FRA has roots in the initial disagreements over their inclusion.

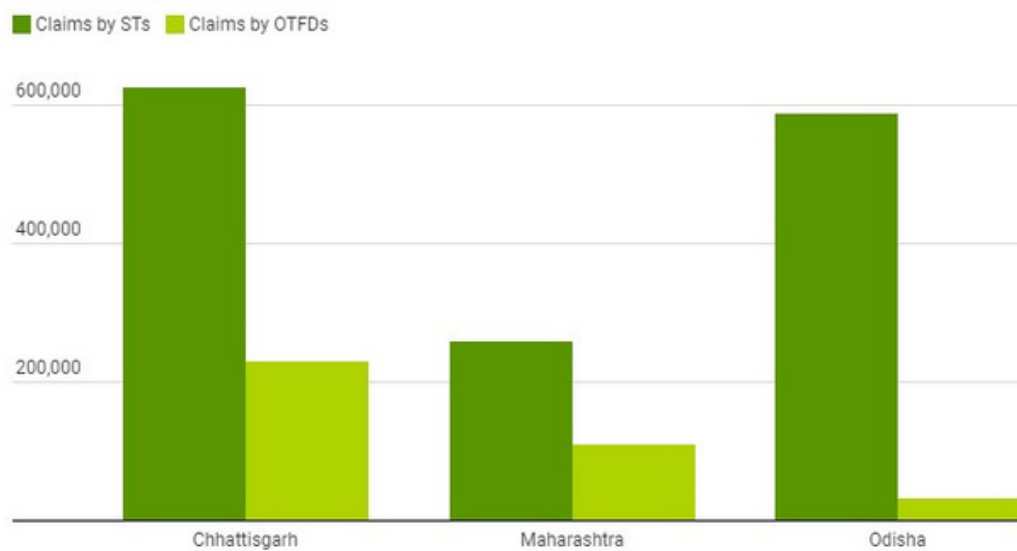
# PLIGHT OF THE OTFDs



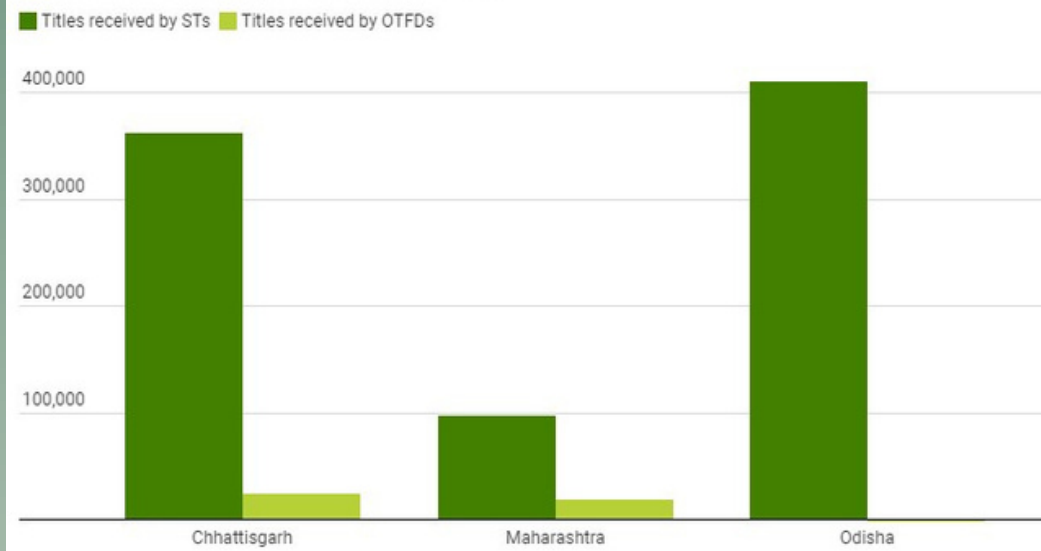
The overall percentage of claims by OTFDs is very low, at 27%, 30% and 2% of the total claims for Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Odisha respectively.

The scenario is bleaker when we note the actual number of titles received by OTFDs.

Claims by STs and OTFDs



Titles received by STs and OTFDs



# HOPE FOR A Change?



On 2nd November 2021, the District Administration of Nayagarh, Odisha distributed 14 CR and CFR titles to 24 villages out of which 21 were OTFD villages.

The state of Odisha has set precedence with regards to the distribution of forest rights by granting these claims to non-tribal communities.

The block level Forest Protection Committee of Ranapur, Nayagarh, Maa Maninag Jangal Suraksha Parishad in association with Vasundhara have constantly advocated the inclusion of OTFDs and have played a pivotal role in facilitating the process.

# Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFDs) granted CR CFR titles for the first time in India

*By Rohit Mukerji, Program Officer: Research, Communication & Documentation, Vasundhara Nayagarh, Orissa*

In an event that saw 14 Community Rights and Community Forest Rights being distributed to 24 villages, OTFDs (non-tribals) were granted Community Forest Rights (CFR) for the very first time in the history of Community Forestry in the country.



## The Plight of OTFDs

Though the Other Traditional Forest Dwellers, which include Scheduled Castes (SC) and Other Backward Classes (OBC), are eligible for Forest Rights, they have been ignored since the inception of the act. One of the major limitations of the FRA is the differentiated eligibility of ST and OTFD claimants, which, compounded by the ambiguity in the wording of the Act, has disadvantaged the latter severely. The prejudice against OTFDs in the FRA has roots in the initial disagreements over their inclusion.

The overall percentage of claims by OTFDs is very low, at 27%, 30%,<sup>1</sup> and 2% of the total claims for Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, and Odisha respectively. The scenario is bleaker when we note the actual number of titles received by OTFDs. (1)

## Hope for Change

On 2nd November 2021, the District Administration of Nayagarh, Odisha distributed 14 CR and CFR titles to 24 villages out of which 21 were OTFD villages. The state of Odisha has set precedence with regards to the distribution of forest rights by granting these claims to non-tribal communities.

The block-level Forest Protection Committee of Ranapur, Nayagarh, Maa Maninag Jangal Suraksha Parishad in association with Vasundhara have constantly advocated the inclusion of OTFDs and have played a pivotal role in facilitating the process.

The District Collector of Nayagarh said in a statement made to Vasundhara, "It is extremely important to recognize the forest rights of the communities that have been involved in the protection and management of their forests"

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<sup>1</sup> The 'Other' in the Forest Rights Act has been ignored for years by Asavari Raj Sharma in "The Wire"