

6-3-13

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MEMORANDUM

From:

Sri Kishore Kumar Parichha,
Vice-President, Odisha Kendupatra Karmachari Sangha,
At/po-Patnagarh, Dist-Bolangir, Odisha-767025.
Mobile:-9437210107

To

Sri Jayram Ramesh Ji,
Hon'ble Minister, Rural Development,
Govt. of India,
New Delhi. Camp at Narla, Kalahandi (Odisha)

Sri V. Kishore Deo Ji,
Hon'ble Minister, Tribal Affairs,
Govt. of India,
New Delhi.

Sir,

This is a proud privilege for me to bring to your kind notice about the plights of kenduleaf workers and the role of the State Govt. in view of The Scheduled Tribe and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act.2006 here in after called as F.R.Act.2006 and the provisions of Pachayats(Extension to the Scheduled areas) Act. 1996 here in after called as PESA Act. 1996.

The Odisha is a good qualities kenduleaf producing state in the country. It produces around 4,50,000 quintals kenduleaf in every year. The Kenduleaf Control & Trade Act. 1961 regulate the kenduleaf business. As per the provision of this legislation, the State Govt. fixed the piece rate wages for collection of kenduleaves. To save the workers from exploitation and ensure proper wages, the Govt. nationalized the Trade from 1973 and a separate kenduleaf wing was created to manage the Trade. The 50% profit was distributed amongst the Panchayats for their developmental work and the rest was taken to State Ex-Chequer without paying any thing to the workers/ pluckers towards their share in the profit.

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Now, after enactment of PESA Act. and F.R.Act, the entire system has to be changed. Because the ownership of the item has been shifted from State to Panchayats and the forest dwellers. Out of 314 Blocks of the entire State, 118 Blocks are covered under PESA. So, the ownership of the product is now laying on those 118 Blocks as well as the forest dwellers in their respective areas and in rest Blocks, the forest dwellers are the real owner of the product. The State Govt. has no right to take away the profit from Kenduleaf Trade directly to the State Ex-Chequer. So, the kenduleaf workers are entitled to the profit accrued from this trade from 2006 onwards.

The peculiarity of kenduleaf is that, it involves some process before coming to the market. These process are bush cutting, plucking of leaves, proper drying, storage and then bundling and bagging. Under the circumstances, a systematic organization is required to get the finished product for market. So, the Odisha Kendupatra Karmachari Sangha (Odisha Kenduleaf Workers Union) a recognized union of workers demanded that, after enactment of PESA and F.R.Act, the Kenduleaf Control & Trade Act. 1961 should be repealed and the State should come forward to manage the Trade as usual and at last the profit be distributed amongst the owners i.e forest dwellers and Gram Panchayats. But unfortunately, the Govt. has adopted dilly dally tractice to comply the provisions of the law.

I would therefore request you kindly to intervene in the matter and impress upon the State Govt. to comply the provisions of F.R.Act. and PESA Act. in the interest of justice to the poor workers.

Yours faithfully

Kishore Kumar Parichha
(Kishore Kumar Parichha) 3.3.2013
Vice-President, OKKS