

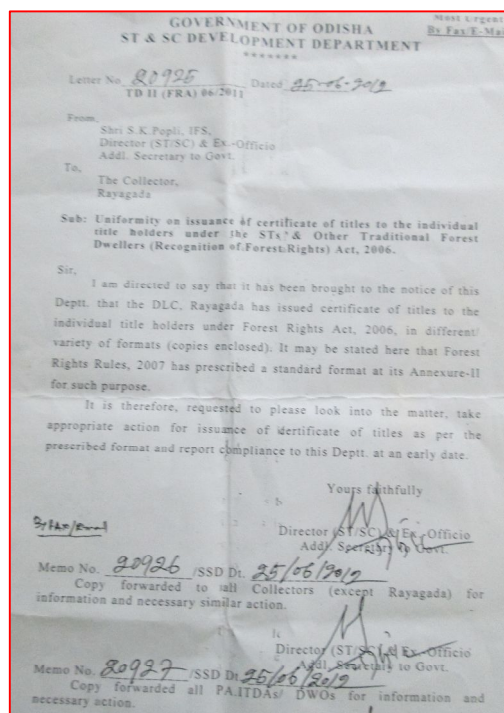
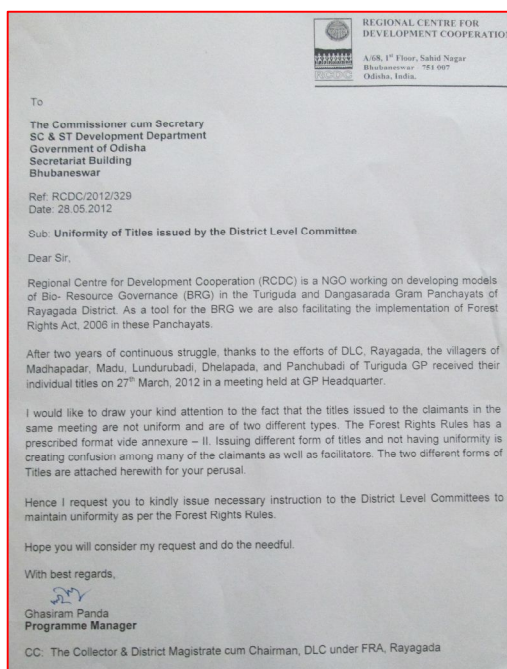
Uniformity in Titles: End of Discrepancy in Sight

Incidents of discrepancy in the issuance of land titles under the Forest Rights Act came to the fore when after two years of continuous struggle, supplemented by the efforts of District level Committee (DLC), Rayagada, the villagers of Madhapadar, Madu, Lundurubadi, Dhelapada, and Panchubadi of Turiguda Gram Panchyat (GP) received their individual titles on 27th March, 2012 in a meeting held at GP Headquarter. A total of 37 households received the titles in this meeting. However it was observed that the titles distributed to the claimants in the same meeting were not uniform but were of two different types.

The formats of the titles distributed were not in accordance with that provided in the annexure of Forest Rights Rules. They were different both in structure and content. There was also a condition imposed that these titles conferred temporary rights. This violated the spirit of the Act.

It is not the only incident of this nature. Prior to this, DLCs of the other different districts distributed titles in their own way. This is despite the fact that the Forest Rights Rules has a prescribed format as given in Annexure – II. Issuing different form of titles and not having uniformity is creating confusion among many of the claimants as well as facilitators.

Taking this as an important issues Regional Centre for Development Cooperation (RCDC) drew the attention of the ST & SC Development Department, the nodal agency for implementation of the Forest Rights Act, 2006 in the state vide its Letter No RCDC/2012/329 Dated 28th May, 2012 for issuance of



necessary instruction to the DLCs to maintain uniformity as prescribed in the Forest Rights Rules.

After persistent follow up with the Department, this time they responded to RCDC's letter and issued an Office Order no 20925 TD II (FRA) 06/2011 Dated 25th June, 2012 to the Collector and District Welfare Officers of the entire 30 districts along with all the Project Administrators of Integrated Tribal Development Agency.

It is hoped this letter will streamline the approach of the DLCs in issuing individual titles in the state and put an end to the discrepancy.

Meanwhile, reacting to the intervention by RCDC, Sri Sadana Pidika, a Tribal leader from Bandhugaon, Koraput, welcomed the move saying that it removed the condition imposed that the right was temporary in nature. He also hoped that bringing uniformity in the format of the titles would make them more acceptable and help in their recognition.

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