

Summary of key developments till date since NTCA ordered relocation of 64,801 families residing in the CTH of Tiger Reserves on June 19, 2024.

19 June 2024

National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) issues a [letter](#) to the state governments of 18 Tiger States to expedite the process of relocation of forest dependent communities from the core areas of TRs in their respective states.

What does the NTCA say in the aforementioned letter?

- Village relocation is very slow and poses a grave concern to Tiger conservation.
- Directs the state governments to take up village relocations on a priority basis and to frame a timeline for carrying out smooth relocations from the critical tiger habitat areas.
- 591 villages comprising of 64,801 families are residing in the core areas of the Tiger reserves.
 - State governments should intimate NTCA with action plans on relocation and provide a regular review of progress made.
- 257 villages comprising a total of 25,007 families have already been relocated from the notified core since the inception of Project Tiger.
- Refers to section 38 (V) (5) of WLPA, 2006 and the Voluntary Guidelines of relocation. Makes no reference to FRA, 2006 and LARR, 2013.

7 September 2024

Forest Rights campaign and sangathans, affected gram sabhas, civil society groups and citizen's forum make a [collective petition](#) to NTCA, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, [NCST](#), NCSC and NHRC demanding the immediate withdrawal of the NTCA's June 19th 2024 order. The submission is available in English, Hindi and Telugu.

Key points raised in the petition:

1. NTCA order is in violation of constitutional legal rights of the adivasi forest dwellers and is violative of Wildlife Protection Act- 2006, Forest Rights Act – 2006, LARR- 2013 and NTCA guidelines of 2010 on voluntary relocation from core areas of Tiger Reserves.
2. Promotes false and mis-interpreted reading of the word “inviolable” by purposefully omitting out the part **“without affecting the rights of the Scheduled Tribes or such other forest dwellers”** as elaborated in the Section 38 (V)(4)(i) of Wild Life Protection Act 2006
3. Continued interference with forest rights by NTCA amounts to violation of Section 38 (o) of WLPA – 2006. FRA unambiguously prohibits any 'removal' of forest dwellers from forest land 'till the recognition and verification is complete' in section 4(5) of FRA. Interference with the forest rights or evicting people from their land is also a punishable under Section 4(2) and Section 7 of FRA and 3(1)(g) of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities), 1989.
4. Gross under reporting and mis-representation of the data on villages located inside the Tiger Reserves, villages and population relocated till date and villages and populations proposed to be relocated.

7 September 2024

The *Van Gujjar Tribal Yuva Sangathan*, highlighting the grievances of Van Gujjars, their role in conservation and the legal violations involved in the NTCA letter, [issued a statement](#) against the NTCA order of relocations.

9 September 2024

[Submission](#) made to NTCA, MoTA and other authorities against the NTCA relocation order by Kalpavriksh and others highlighting legal violations.

19 September 2024

National Alliance for Justice, Accountability & Rights (NAJAR), an initiative of the National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM), collectivizing progressive legal professionals for democratic causes submits a [letter of objections to NTCA](#) regarding its order of relocations.

22 September 2024

NCST takes cognizance of the collective submission made on September 7, 2024 and calls for an internal meeting to discuss the matter. Delegate meets with NCST.

25 September 2024

All India Kisan Sabha and *All India Agricultural Workers' Union* organized a Parliament March and Dharna with the slogan of 'Protect Farmers from Wild Animal and Stray Cattle Menace and Stop Evictions in the Name of Elephant Corridors, Tiger Reserves & Wildlife Protection.' The demands can be read [here](#).

3 October 2024

Community Network Against Protected Areas (CNAPEA) [issues a statement](#) on NTCA's 19th June order to expedite evictions in the name of conservation.

3 October 2024

Thirty-three affected families of Rantalodhi village approach MoTA seeking priority intervention and relief against the forceful displacements. Representation submitted by them highlights the illegalities of the relocation process executed forcibly, against the consent of people and in violation of FRA 2006 and WLPA 2006.

21 October 2024

MoTA [writes](#) to the Maharashtra's Tribal Development Department, the NTCA and Chandrapur District Collector to address the petition sent to it by 33 families of the Rantalodhi village, located inside the core area of the Tadoba Andhari TR and address their complaints of "non-recognition of forest rights and forced eviction".

Forced evictions are halted in Rantalodhi, after MoTA intervenes.

23 October 2024

MoTA issues an [Office Memorandum](#) to DIGF- NTCA and MoEFCC taking cognizance of the letters issued by NTCA, the collective petition submitted on September 7, 2024 and the petition submitted by affected community members from Rantalodhi on Oct 3 2024.

MoTA reiterates that NTCA must ensure compliance with Section 38(V) of WLPA and Section 4(2), 4(5) and 3(1)(h) of FRA.

12 December 2024

* Gram Sabha representatives from Rani Durgawati TR and Forest rights groups from Madhya Pradesh approach MoTA demanding priority intervention on the following issues affecting the recognition of their forest rights and related to the forced evictions:

- Forced Evictions of 52 villages from the Rani Durgawati Tiger Reserve violates FRA 2006, WLPA 2006 and LARR, 2013. The ongoing displacement and proposed relocations are against the consent of the community who do not want to relocate and violate their forest rights.
- Prevention of Community from using and accessing common forest resources inside TR boundaries.
- Ban on basic development activities and welfare schemes citing proposed relocation for tiger reserve as the reason is in violation of the legal provisions.
- Denial of forest rights claims citing villages proposed under relocation and Tiger Reserve area as the reason.
- The use of Van Mitra App as a medium for claim making and review of rejected claims is in violation of the law and has impeded the FRA implementation.

23 December 2024

MoTA [writes](#) to the Chief secretary of the Madhya Pradesh Tribal Department, NCST and the concerned District Collectors to take all necessary actions to mitigate the challenges faced by the communities of MP as highlighted in their petition. Key points from the letter:

- conditions laid out in FRA & WLPA are not being met.
- FRA explicitly empowers Forest dependent communities by legally recognizing their rights, protecting them from unlawful eviction and ensuring that resettlement is carried out with informed consent and participation.
- State government must ensure Gram Sabhas have the option to make their claims based on the options convenient to them and no insistence on making claims through online submission be made.

24 December 2024

26th [meeting of the NTCA](#) is held under the Chairmanship of Bhupender Yadav, Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change on December 21, 2024 in Dehradun. Key points from the meeting concerning relocations from the Tiger reserves:

- **Madhu Verma** [NTCAmember]

Package for voluntary village rehabilitation may not be appealing to all communities living in core/ critical tiger habitats. Leveraging carbon markets to further incentivise the available relocation package needs to be thought of.

- **Roop Narayan Mandwe** [NTCAmember]

Package for voluntary village relocation should be periodically revised based on inflationary trends so as to make it more attractive. People being relocated out of forest areas are usually reluctant to any change which needs to be factored in while incentivising voluntary village rehabilitation through adequate capacity and skill upgradation.

- **Rajan Sehgal, representative of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment**

Schemes of Social Justice & Empowerment Ministry can be dovetailed with tiger conservation efforts in context of addressing the needs of communities living in fringes of tiger reserves.

- **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**

Ministry received several representations from organizations after the NTCA letter asking States to expedite voluntary village relocation was circulated.

- **Chief Wildlife Warden, Rajasthan**

Land in respect of voluntary village rehabilitation is not available as per requirement for which there is a need to enhance the cash package available in the existing policy.

- **Chief Wildlife Warden, Chhattisgarh**

People residing in core/ CTH of tiger reserves in Chhattisgarh are not willing to be relocated on forest land. Suggested that NTCA conduct a workshop on best practices in tiger reserves so that experiential learning takes place.

- **Chairman, NTCA**

Voluntary relocation of the villages from core/critical tiger habitats of the tiger reserve, which is backed with statutory provisions, should be taken on priority so that a win-win situation for tiger conservation and inclusive growth can be achieved and people living inside forest areas can be brought into main stream.

For Green Growth, the core/ critical tiger habitat should be made inviolate as per the principles of the tiger management.

The genuine needs of forest dwellers should be taken care of while executing voluntary relocations.

10 January 2025

Ministry of Tribal Affairs writes to secretaries of tribal departments of all state governments to ensure necessary compliance of the provisions of FRA 2006 and WLPA 2006 in matters pertaining to eviction/relocation of forest dwelling communities.

The State Tribal Development Department along with the concerned Forest Department should provide the ministry a compiled report stating the following details:

1. Details of Tiger Reserves, Name and No of Villages and population residing in the Tiger Reserve
2. Details of Tribes and Other Forest dwelling communities dwelling in such villages?
3. Village wise details from each Tiger Reserve:-
Details of FRA claims received, Nature of rights, FRA Claims which has been vested or rejected (with reasons).
4. Whether Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) of the Gram Sabha is obtained?
Mechanism of FPIC for each Tiger Reserve whether it includes all the adult members of the villages/habitations inside the Tiger Reserve?
5. The process for compensation and the amount of compensation likely to be given to the relocated families?

29 January 2025

PCCF(WL) and CWLW of MP forest department (includes the State Tiger Strike force) [issues an alert](#) concerning tiger poaching ordering for increased surveillance in forest circles of Narmadapuram, Seoni, Chhindwara, Betul, Bhopal, Jabalpur and Balaghat. The authorities give directions to various functionaries and authorities of the department to

1. conduct search operations with the help of nearest dog squads at the homes of nomadic tribes (Ghumakkad Jatis).
2. question and gather information about the movements of these denotified and nomadic groups which should be recorded in the nearest police stations.
- 3) carry strict surveillance on people belonging to denotified tribes/outside, especially those selling items made of plastic, bedsheets & blankets, herbs & plants and eatables (raisins & dry dates) in tiger bearing areas.
- 4) To get details (name, phone number, address, aadhar card, vehicle no., etc) and share it with the officials of state tiger strike force (mob. No. 9424797059, 9424797031) immediately on whatsapp which can be then cross checked in the database.

31 January 2025

NCST acts on the collective petition of September 7, 2024 and issues notice to Secretary, MoEF and ADGF (Project Tiger), NTCA informing them the commission will be investigating the matter and requests the authorities to submit the facts and information on the action taken on the said allegations/matters within 7 days of the receipt of the Notice.

Commission emphasizes that in the absence of reply from the concerned authorities; it may exercise powers of Civil Courts conferred on it under Article 338 A of the Constitution and summon the concerned authorities for physical appearance.

01 February 2025

Wildlife Crime Control Bureau issues a 'Most urgent' Office Memorandum titled [Red Alert](#) about the threat of Poaching asking the Field directors of tiger reserves to immediately intensify the patrolling and surveillance; to identify sensitive areas and nomadic people as preventive measure. A detailed advisory on the same from 2023, was also attached titled surveillance of wanderer, nomadic and hunting communities involved in Tiger Poaching. The 2023 advisory targets and discriminates against the nomadic communities such as the Bawaria Community from Rajasthan and Punjab, Sapera Community, Gujjars from Uttarakhand, Pardhi Community from MP by referring to them with the frame of poachers, habitual offenders and criminalizes them.

13 February 2025

NTCA issues [clear directions](#) to the chief wildlife wardens of all tiger range states and field directors of all tiger reserves to ensure the 'voluntary' feature and 'informed consent of Gram Sabha' in the voluntary village relocation process. The letter mentions that the section 38 V (5) of the WLPA, 1972 prescribes:

1. Village rehabilitation is a completely voluntary relocation process.
2. Informed consent of the GS and of the people is obtained prior to undertaking village rehabilitation

3. That an incentivised resettlement package has been made available since 2012 which was revised in 2021.

The [letter](#) further directs that **action in accordance with WLPA read with the FRA-2006 may kindly be ensured.**

14 February 2025

NTCA submits its [response](#) to the petition of September 7, 2024 to the NCST. In its response, NTCA claims that:

1. all the contentions/apprehensions raised in the petition are devoid of any merit as the relocation of villages /villagers are purely on 'Voluntary basis'.
2. it has not acted in violation of recognition of the forest rights of the forest dependent people and the forest rights act or any other relevant law.
3. Makes no direct reference or response to the issues pertaining to non-implementation of LARR 2013.
4. There is no under reporting or misrepresentation of the data regarding voluntary village relocation by the authorities as the data mentioned in the letter is only for the core areas and is as per the information provided by the concerned Tiger Reserves.

20 February 2025

Munda Adivasi community of the Jamunagarh Village of Similipal Tiger Reserve submits a petition to the MoTA highlighting several issues and concerns regarding non-compliance to FRA such as:

- Similipal TR authorities have illegally and arbitrarily restricted villagers from entering their Community Forest Resource (CFR) areas vested under FRA 2006, put enclosures around sacred graves, abodes of the deities and sacred burial grounds in their CFR areas.
- Villagers were arbitrarily evicted from Jamunagarh without their consent in 2015 and 2022

6 March 2025

MoTA, takes cognizance of the Similipal petition, [writes](#) back to PS - Tribal Department of Odisha, asking the State government to abide by the concerned provisions of FRA, the SC order in Orissa Mining Corporation vs MoEFCC and to provide the GS access rights as conferred under FRA 2006. Also asked the state government to undertake a review of the faulty eviction process conducted in 2015 and 2022 and to ensure that the resettlement process has followed the due process of FRA 2006 and WLPA 2006.

26 March 2025

NCST writes back to the petitioners to submit the rejoinder to the commission in response to the reply submitted by NTCA to NCST and to inform whether they're satisfied with NTCA's response.

31 March 2025

Representation sent by Umrahan Gram Sabha, Panna Tiger Reserve to MoTA regarding the unofficial raid and loot, intimidation and injustice perpetrated upon two Gond Adivasi women and the violation of the forest rights and the misuse of power by the forest department officials and tiger reserve authorities. The

village has already been forcibly relocated in violation of the law even while their forest rights claims are still under process.

15-17 April 2025

MoTA conducts [State Review meetings and its report](#) on key action points explicitly highlights the grievances received from tiger reserves such as MP (regarding Rani Durgavati Tiger reserve, Panna Tiger Reserve), Odisha (Simlipal Tiger Reserve), Maharashtra (Tadoba Tiger Reserve etc), Uttarakhand (Van Gujjars FRA process and conversion of forest villages to revenue villages etc) where several Gram Sabhas and other civil society organisations have alleged that the relocation from the core of Tiger Reserve is being done without following due procedures detailed under FRA and WLPA. MoTA advised that compliance with the provisions of FRA is a statutory requirement, and its provisions must be implemented in both letter and spirit. Rehabilitation should only take place with the free, prior and informed consent of each affected family. Additionally, it is essential to ensure that rights under FRA are duly recognized and vested within National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries. Furthermore, the conversion of forest villages into revenue villages must be expedited in accordance with the FRA and relevant guidelines. This is crucial to ensure that households residing within these protected areas have access to basic infrastructure and services such as roads, schools, drinking water, and other essential amenities.

17 April 2025

Criminal Justice and Police Accountability Project, CPA- Bhopal makes a [collective representation](#) along with delegation representing organizations, lawyers and collectives working on forest rights, civil liberties and human rights, in response to the alerts issued by WCCB and PCCF Bhopal, submitting the unconstitutional basis of these alerts/order and its implications for the rights of individuals for these communities. The submission highlights following points:

1. The alert/advisory is unconstitutional as it violates the right to equality, against discrimination and the right to privacy
2. The extensive surveillance and monitoring authorized by the order is violative of the right to privacy
3. Principles of forest governance and criminal justice are vitiated by the advisory.
4. The order can be held liable against the ingress of inviolable rights accorded to tribal communities

18 April 2025

27th [meeting](#) of the NTCA is held and key points are:

1. Rajiv Pratap Rudy, MP Lok Sabha demands for enhancing the budgetary allocation of Project Tiger, citing that voluntary village relocation itself would require a sum of 9000 crores which needs to be provided in a phased manner for relocation of 600 villages with 6000 families.
2. Roop Narayan Mandwe an expert member mentioned that formalities under FRA need to be completed before notification of TRs.
3. Key focus of the meeting was on discussing the project Tigers Outside Tiger Reserves (TOTR), a program announced by PM and the Cheetah Conservation possibilities and plans for MP, Rajasthan and Gujarat.
4. Regarding the Tigers Outside Tiger Reserves programme:
 - CWLW of TN suggests the Nilgiris landscapes, CWLW of Orisaa suggests the Similipal Landscape, APPCF (WL) from Uttarakhand suggests that many forest divisions are like tiger reserves and can benefit from the TOTR programme, CWLW of CG suggests development of WLS for ToTR programme.

- Many members suggested the refining of tiger corridors, pro-active management of human-tiger conflicts, need for refining SOP on translocation of tigers, and enhancing budget for ToTR.

5. w.r.t Cheetah conservation,

Representative of CWLW Rajasthan mentions that Rajasthan and MP are going to sign a MoU. Need to refine corridors for Cheetah conservation. Need to develop new cheetah based in RJ, MP and Gujarat.

6. A continued point from previous meetings was the rise of LWE in Kanha TR and surrounding area from the core areas of Balaghat District to the Mandla district. This was raised by Dr H . S Negi, an expert member.

25 April 2025

MoTA [writes back](#) to the Principal Secretary of Tribal Welfare department, NCST division, DG Forest-MoEFCC and DC Panna regarding the Panna Atrocity case and asks to take appropriate actions to address the serious concerns of alleged atrocities, injustice and violation of rights committed by the forest department.

6 May 2025

CNAPA issues a [press release](#), calling for withdrawal of all forces [from Karnataka Forest Department, Karnataka state police and the Karnataka State Tiger Protection Forces (STPF)] from inside Nagarhole forests who are currently forcefully trying to drive out around 150 (52 families) Jenu Kuruba Adivasi women, men and children from their ancestral village Karadikallu Hatturkolle Haadi from inside the Nagarhole forest.

Claims were filed by the people of Thundumundage Kolli Gadde Haadi, Kanturu Haadi (Brahmagiri pura), KaradikalluHatturkolli Haadi and Balekkovu haadi for recognition of IFR, CFR and CFRR rights inside Nagarhole forests. Jenu Kurubas of Karadikallu have filed their IFR, CFR ad CFRR claims in 2021 but the forest department has obstructed the process of their rights recognition and now forcibly displacing them, against the law and their duly vested rights.

8 May 2025

Survival international [writes](#) to MoTA to ensure that the Forest Rights of the Jenu Kuruba people in Karadi Kallu (Nagarhole forest) are fully recognized; that they are allowed to stay permanently in the village that they were illegally evicted from and that the intimidating security presence and roadblock be immediately withdrawn. This comes in the context that 52 families of Jenu Kuruba tribals of Karadi Kallu Atturukolli Haadi village returned to their ancestral village. On May 5 and May 6 2025, Forest guards and security personnels dismantled the temporary shelters build by the community, blocking the media access and denial of forest rights of the communities.

15 May 2025

MoTA issues [directives](#) to the Principal Secretary of Tribal department of Karnataka regarding the pending forest rights claims filed by the Jenu Kuruba Tribals in Nagarhole forest, blocked access and the dismantling of the shelters of the Jenu Kurba by the security personnel and the illegal eviction of the tribals in the Nagarhole TR.

MoTA restates the sections 4(5) and 4(2) of FRA and refers to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities Act), 1989, establishes an offence of atrocity if a member of a Scheduled Caste or

a Scheduled Tribe is wrongfully dispossessed from his land or premises or interferes with the enjoyment of his rights, including forest rights. MoTA in its letter asks the SLMC to monitor the process of recognition and vesting of forest rights and to resolve all such field level issues.

16 May 2025

[Rejoinder submitted to NCST](#) and NTCA against NTCA's response that voluntary relocations undertaken by NTCA are in compliance of laws and do not violate forest rights of forest dwellers. NTCA's response to the letter No. NCST/DEV-4280/MENV/1/2025-RU-II dated 31.01.2025, is legally untenable, irresponsible, and misleading as the NTCA:

1. Has consistently been issuing directions approving the notification of tiger reserves (TRs), tiger conservation plans and sanctioning the allocation of funds without abiding by the due process and in violation of forest rights.
2. Makes no reference to and compliance with the LARR 2013 while carrying out relocations and preparing resettlement package thus leading to a faulty and incomplete resettlement and rehabilitation. NCST had already taken cognizance of this and directed NTCA in 2018 to ensure the implementation of LARR, 2013. NTCA has however continued to intentionally omit LARR, 2013 from its reference as evident in its response to our petition as well as the letter dated June 19, 2024.
3. violated the framework of Voluntary relocations from core areas as prescribed in the WLPA, 2006 and the NTCA guidelines by not fulfilling the process of recognition and determination of forest rights, and not complying with the three levels of informed consent and mutual agreement as mandated in Section 35 V (5) of WLPA.
4. Not complied with the mandate and framework of Forest Rights Act, 2006 -interfered with the rights of forest dwellers, particularly Scheduled Tribes, particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs), pastorals and scheduled castes, denied the recognition of rights in core areas, relocated without recognition of rights, violated and undermined the authority of GS and powers given under Section 5 of FRA- in most of the cases as evident from the evidence provided in the rejoinder as well as from the multiple representations made to MoTA and NCST. All these amounts to a violation of Sec.38(O)(2) and is an offense under the Forest rights Act and an atrocity as defined in section 3(1)(g) of the SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989.
5. Not provided genuine and verified data and information on villages and forest dwellers inside core areas. The data provided by NTCA in its June letter does not match with its own reporting in other documents and shows lack of accountability and responsibility.

16 May 2025

NCST [issues notice](#) to District Collector Panna, Superintendent of Police- Panna and the Field Director of Panna tiger reserve on the subject of the alleged violence, injustices and rights violation of two Adivasi forest dwelling Gond women residing inside the Umraivan village of Panna TR committed by the officials of forest department. NCST informs it has taken the investigate the matter and asks the concerned officials to submit the proceedings undertaken in this matter and in response to the alleged complaints within a period of 15 days of receiving this notice from NCST.

