

To,
The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)
B-1 Wing, 7th Floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan,
CGO Complex,
New Delhi-110 003.
India

Dt: 9th September, 2024

Sub: Concerns regarding the letter by the Addl. DGF (Project Tiger) and Member Secretary (NTCA), dated 19 June, 2024, asking states to take up relocation of villages from Tiger Reserves

We, as individuals and representatives of diverse social, environmental and conservation organisations, adivasi/tribal peoples, pastoral & other traditional local communities are writing to express our grave concern over the letter by the Addl. DGF (Project Tiger) and Member Secretary (NTCA) dated 19 June 2024 (Attached as **Annexure I** in this statement), to the Chief Wildlife Wardens (CWLW) of the 19 tiger range states asking that the "...issue of relocation may be taken up on priority basis and also timeline may be framed for the smooth relocation of villages from the Core/Critical Tiger Habitat of Tiger Reserves..."

This official letter is yet another reminder of the complete disregard and disrespect for the customary, democratic, and constitutional rights of the adivasi and other traditional forest dwellers by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and National Tiger Conservation Authority ("NTCA"). Additionally, as **explained below in detail**, the letter is in complete violation of national laws, in particular, the Scheduled Tribe and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 ("FRA"), and the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act 2006 ("WLPA"); and International conventions that the country has signed, in particular, the Convention on Biological Diversity ("CBD").

We also want to highlight that the letter of such significant consequence, although has been conveyed to the CWLWs, has not been made public even on the websites of the NTCA and came to the notice of the public only through newspaper reports! This goes against the principles of transparency and accountability and violates the democratic ethos of the nation.

Detailed Critique of the NTCA letter D.O. No. 15-3/2008-NTCA

A) Violation of the requirements to be fulfilled before considering relocation from Critical Tiger Habitats and Critical Wildlife Habitats under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, and The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, .

1. **Requirement that the process of recognition and vesting of rights as specified in section 6 of the Forest Rights Act is complete.**

We want to draw your attention to the poor implementation of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, primarily in areas designated as Protected Areas, including National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, and Tiger Reserves. While the Ministry of Tribal Affairs publishes monthly progress reports on individual and community claims filed and titles distributed in all forest areas, there are no status reports, nor has there been any data published on the FRA implementation status in PAs by any of the government institutions.

2. **Requirement of establishing that the activities or presence of the rights holders is sufficient to cause irreversible damage and threaten the existence of said species and their habitat.**

Point number 4 of the letter states that there are *“591 villages, inhabiting 64,801 families still residing in the core areas. The progress of village relocation is very slow and it poses grave concern in light of Tiger conservation”*. This statement is completely unfounded and false as there have been no official studies, reports or supporting arguments to the statement that all 591 villages pose a threat, and statements of such nature undermine the scientific tenor of the institution and the sanctity of the law. If indeed studies have been carried out for each of the Tiger Reserves, they need to be publicly available clearly stating who were involved in such studies and whether or not the local community members are part of such studies. On the contrary, Tiger census reports suggest an increase in the **number of tigers in the country, in the past decade and a half, despite the presence of 591 and more villages in the CTH of the tiger reserves**. This includes Biligiri Ranganathaswamy Temple Tiger Reserve, where tiger populations have increased and concurrently the rights of the resident Soliga adivasis have been recognised and exercised *inside* the Tiger Reserve under the FRA.

3. **Requirement that the State Government must conclude that other reasonable options, such as co-existence are not available.**

There is no evidence from any of the TRs of any attempts towards either recognizing the pre-existing customary ways of being of the adivasis and local communities as co-existence or establishing dialogues through free prior informed consent towards building co-existence norms or strategies. Section 3 (1) (i) and Section 5 of the FRA, and Rule 4 (e) & (f) of the FRA Rules 2007, provide for recognition of conservation, management, and sustainable use rights of the adivasis and other traditional forest dwellers over their traditional

territories; constitution of gram sabha committees for the conservation of wildlife, natural and cultural heritage; formulation of self-determined conservation and management strategies & plans; and their incorporation into the strategies and plans for the Tiger Reserves. Although, in several Tiger Reserves, including Biligiri Ranganathaswamy Temple TR, Melghat TR, Amrabad TR, Simlipal TR, and others, Community Forest Resource Rights (“CFR”) have been recognized inside the CTH, there is no evidence of the above provisions being followed to arrive at coexistence processes. On what evidence can it then be said that co-existence is not possible for communities which have not only co-existed but have co-evolved with, nurtured, and continue to nurture the ecosystems they inhabit? If indeed certain activities of local communities are causing damage, the first option should be to discuss possible changes in these activities with these communities, rather than jumping to a conclusion that complete relocation is needed. Indeed there is evidence from across India attesting to the fact that, communities themselves modify behaviour to sustain their ecosystems and the wildlife populations in them, such as in Community Conserved Areas.

4. Requirement for relocation to be voluntary and on mutually agreed terms and conditions.

The NTCA letter, while quoting Section 38V (4) (i) of the WLPA, has left out the sub-section 38V (5) which states *“Save as for voluntary relocation on mutually agreed terms and conditions, provided that such terms and conditions satisfy the requirements laid down in this sub-section, no Scheduled Tribe or other forest dwellers shall be resettled or have their rights adversely affected for the purpose of creating inviolate areas for tiger conservation unless...: the process, as laid down under sub-section (i-vi) including rights recognition and acquisition, is completed.* Point 4 and 5 in the letter, call on the Chief Wildlife Wardens of the respective tiger states to expedite the relocation process of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers on a priority basis. The letter assumes that all the above necessary steps have been carried out and all the concerned communities have consented to relocation and packages being offered, and by doing so, has attempted to override the processes as laid down under the Act.

Letters of this nature are one of the main reasons why relocations, despite being termed ‘voluntary’ have not at all been voluntary. Displacement of adivasis from Achanakmar Tiger Reserve in Chhattisgarh, Van Gujjars from Corbett and Rajaji Tiger Reserve, Jenu Kuruba adivasis from Nagarhole, and Scheduled Tribes and OTFDs from other tiger reserves have raised serious concerns about the gross violation of human rights in seeking consent as well as *‘package and facilities’* that have been provided at a new place after uprooting them. The Van Gujjars from Rajaji and Corbett, who were relocated between the late 1990s and early 2000s, and 2013-14, are yet to receive their entitled relocation package. The case is ongoing in the Nainital High Court in PIL No. 140 of 2019, where the High Court, on 15 Dec 2021, had ordered the state government to provide the package to the families as per the law. This is yet to be complied with. There have been reports of families being kept in rehabilitation camps for months after being displaced from Achanakmar Tiger Reserve, Chhattisgarh. In Melghat Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra, the poor

relocation and post-relocation package led to many communities moving back to their original land in desperation but facing the bullets from the police force. In Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, Manas Tiger Reserve, Nagarhole Tiger Reserve, Orang National Park and Tiger Reserve and many others, the so-called “voluntary relocation” has in fact, been **brutal evictions that** has led to **severe injuries and even death** of many, including women and youth. We also want to highlight that in several instances, adivasis and other forest dwelling communities have been coerced to move out by the forest officials. We point to the manner in which rights to access and manage forests have been restricted and basic facilities to live with dignity have been denied to the communities, and therefore which has forced them to accept the relocation option displayed in front of them. This indeed is not “voluntary relocation” but coerced or induced relocation.

Land status from forest to revenue where villages have been relocated-

There are cases where communities have been rehabilitated in forest lands, outside Protected Areas, however the status of land has not been converted, despite a Supreme Court Order. There has been no effort from the administration to fast-track such processes, and many villages, even decades after their relocation, continue to remain under legally designated ‘forest land’, which has prevented them from accessing welfare schemes and other facilities that were originally supposed to be provided to them.

B) Discrepancies in the relocation related data shared by NTCA over the years

We would also like to point out the core discrepancies in the data provided by the NTCA over the past years regarding the status of relocation from the core areas of tiger reserves. We refer to the list provided by the DGF as Annexure 1 of the letter, attached in this statement as **Annexure II**, and the list provided by the NTCA to the Central Empowered Committee in its report (No. 50 of 2018) to the Supreme Court in I.A. No. 3924/2015 in WP (Civil) 202/1995 regarding the status of forest land to revenue land in case of voluntary relocation, attached as **Annexure III**. We would like to highlight some of the differences in the data shared by the Assistant Inspector General (NTCA), and the Addl. DGF (Project Tiger). Firstly, the state of Andhra Pradesh has only one Tiger Reserve, namely the Nagarjunsagar Srisailem Tiger Reserve. In its letter to the Member Secretary, CEC, the list had highlighted that one village had been relocated to revenue land, with no additional information provided. Subsequently, in the recent letter, the NTCA has highlighted that there are 17 villages in the CTH of Nagarjuna Sagar Tiger Reserve, and none have been relocated as of 27.05.2024. Similar is the case for Pakke Tiger Reserve as well, wherein earlier the NTCA had highlighted that there was one village in the CTH and it had been rehabilitated, while in the recent letter, it has shown that there are no villages inside, and none have been rehabilitated till date. There are similar discrepancies in the data provided for other tiger reserves including Corbett Tiger Reserve in Uttarakhand, one of the first nine tiger reserves under Project Tiger. In its 2019 letter, the NTCA had listed four villages that were relocated from the tiger reserve, but the recent list shows that there are no villages and none have been relocated until now. We would also like to point out that 181 Van Gujjar families were relocated from the

Sonanadi Wildlife Sanctuary, which forms a part of the CTH of Corbett, between 2013-14, and this data is not reported in both the lists. Instances like these, and many more have led us to question the authenticity of the data provided by the NTCA, and how it has been collected.

C) Violation of the Convention of Biological Diversity and the Global Biodiversity Framework

Finally, this letter is also in gross violation of several international commitments that India has signed which obligates the government of India to adhere to the principles of 'Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)' vis-à-vis Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities ("IPLCs") when taking any decision pertaining to lands they occupy and rights they enjoy over the said lands. Chief among these is the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and related instruments under it including, the Global Biodiversity Framework. Under Article 8 (j) of the CBD, parties are required to "*respect, preserve, and maintain the knowledge and practices of indigenous and local communities pertaining to conservation and sustainable use of biological resources*". The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) under the CBD, particularly, addresses FPIC concerns through several of the 2030 targets set under the framework. Target 3 of this framework requires parties to ensure that at least 30% of all its terrestrial, inland water and coastal and marine areas and ecosystems are conserved and protected by the year 2030. In doing so, countries ensure the protection of "*....well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories...*". Under Target 22, the involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities in decision-making, access to justice and information related to biodiversity as well respect towards their "*cultures and their rights over lands, territories, resources, and traditional knowledge*" is mandated.

The KMGBF acknowledges the important roles and contributions of IPLCs as custodians of biodiversity and as partners in its conservation, restoration and sustainable use. It emphasises that the Framework's implementation must ensure that the rights, knowledge (including traditional knowledge) associated with biodiversity, innovations, worldviews, values, and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities are respected, documented, and preserved. This must be done with their free, prior and informed consent, including through their full and effective participation in decision-making, in accordance with relevant national legislation, international instruments, like the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and Human Rights Law. In this regard, nothing in this framework may be construed as diminishing or extinguishing the rights that indigenous peoples currently have or may acquire in the future;

The NTCA letter is in direct conflict with the spirit of the KMGBF.

In light of these violations, we demand that:

1. **Immediate withdrawal of the letter:** The letter dated 19-06-2024 from the ADGF (Project Tiger) and Member Secretary (NTCA), is withdrawn immediately.
2. **Implementation of FRA in Tiger Reserves and other PAs:** The process for claiming and recognizing the full range of rights provided under the Forest Rights Act and Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act 1996 be expedited in all Protected Areas, including Tiger Reserves.
3. **Recognise, acknowledge and include in tiger conservation strategies conservation contributions and leadership of adivasi and other traditional forest dwellers:** The Government recognizes and acknowledges that many TRs have healthy ecosystems and wildlife populations precisely because of the continued presence, worldviews, traditional knowledge systems, and cultural practices based on those knowledge systems of the Adivasi and other traditional communities living in and around these PAs. The same needs to be reflected and incorporated in tiger conservation policies and practices. This is also provided for in Section 38 V (4) of the WLPA, which states that ‘the State Government needs to ensure that the Tiger Conservation Plans incorporate the agricultural, livelihood, developmental and other interests of the people living in tiger bearing forests or a tiger reserve.’
4. **Implementation of FRA towards coexistence in Tiger Reserves:** With full prior informed consent of the concerned adivasi and other traditional forest dwellers, provide all necessary support towards the implementation of the provisions of recognising Community Forest Resource (CFR) rights under Section 3 (1) (i), along with Section 5 of the FRA and Rule 4 (e) & (f) of the FRA Rules, to support rights-holding communities to develop their own conservation and management plans for TRs, and where applicable support the federations or collectives of community institutions to integrate these plans at the landscape scale.
5. **Conduct an independent review of already carried out displacement/relocation:** The list of villages in Tiger Reserves, and those that have already been relocated, their current condition and to what extent the promises made to them have been fulfilled is made publicly available. An independent review is conducted for all the displacements that have been carried out thus far and their socio-cultural, economic, and ecological impacts.
6. **Complete all unfulfilled promises made to already displaced communities:** Fulfil all the unfulfilled promises made to the villages that have been displaced from TRs and other PAs so far, including, appropriate livelihood options as chosen by them, appropriate compensation at the market rate, availability of commons, completion of all the basic public amenities such as hospitals, schools, roads, electricity, and the conversion of land status from forest to revenue where villages have been relocated (as per Supreme Court order of 28th January 2019).

7. **Make public all efforts that have been carried out towards ensuring co-existence and how they have not worked:** Any studies that have been carried out, including the methodology and indicators, to prove the non-possibility of co-existence in Critical Tiger Habitats of Tiger Reserves, should be made public and conveyed to the Gram Sabhas.
8. **Formulate better science and traditional knowledge-based democratic policy and practice for Tiger Conservation:** Re-envision the tiger conservation model to ensure that the presence, rights, management and governance systems, cultures, traditions, and ecological knowledge of adivasi and other traditional forest-dwelling communities are recognised, included and respected, instead of being violated and displaced. Till such time no more Critical Tiger Habitats are declared.

Cc:

1. Hon Minister Shri Bhupendra Yadav, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.
2. Hon Minister Shri Jual Oram, Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
3. Shri Antar Singh Arya, Chairperson National Commission for Scheduled Tribes.

Signatories¹:

1. Akshay Chettri- Kalpavriksh Environment Action Group, Pune
2. Neema Pathak Broome- Kalpavriksh Environment Action Group, Pune
3. Purnima Upadhyay, KHOJ Amravati
4. Mohamad Meer Hamja- Van Gujjar Tribal Yuva Sangathan, Rajaji National Park, Uttarakhand
5. Meenal Tatpati- Lawyer and Researcher
6. Aito Miwu- Idu Mishmi Cultural & Literary Society - Sub Committee on Community Rights and Protected Areas Issues (SCRPAI)
7. Aman Singh- Oran Forum/KRAPAVIS, Rajasthan
8. Sharachandra Lele- Ashoka Trust For Research in Ecology And The Environment (ATREE), Bengaluru
9. Saloni Bhatia- Ashoka Trust For Research in Ecology And The Environment , Bengaluru
10. Aparajita Datta- Nature Conservation Foundation

¹ Affiliations are provided for information purposes and may not reflect the point of view of the institutions.

11. Pranab Doley- Member, Community Network Against Protected Areas (CNAPA), and Convener, Greater Kaziranga Land and Human Rights Protection Committee
12. Rajaraman- Member, Community Network Against Protected Areas (CNAPA)
13. Sharanya Nayak- Member, Community Network Against Protected Areas (CNAPA)
14. Pradyumna- Member, Community Network Against Protected Areas (CNAPA)
15. Shivu, JA- Jenu Kuruba Community Leader, Nagarhole. Member, Community Network Against Protected Areas (CNAPA)
16. Telanga Hasa- Munda Community Leader, Simlipal. Member, Community Network Against Protected Areas (CNAPA)
17. Madhusudan, MD- Independent Researcher
18. Nityanand Rai- Vasundhara, Odisha
19. Ashish Kothari- Kalpavriksh Environment Action Group, Pune
20. Esha Joshi- Kalpavriksh Environment Action Group, Pune
21. Ishika Patodi- Kalpavriksh Environment Action Group, Pune
22. Bhanumathi Kalluri, Dhaatri Trust, Hyderabad
23. Anindya "Rana" Sinha, NIAS and the University of Trans-Disciplinary Health Sciences and Technology
24. Samira Agnihotri, the University of Trans-Disciplinary Health Sciences and Technology
25. Madhuri Ramesh- Azim Premji University
26. Sagarika Phalke- University of Hong Kong
27. Vidyadhar Atkore, Member- IUCN's WCPA Biodiversity & Protected Areas
28. Pia Sethi, Independent Researcher and Ecologist
29. Iravatee Majgaonkar, Ashoka Trust For Research in Ecology And The Environment (ATREE), Bengaluru
30. Sahil Nijhawan, Independent scholar
31. Ghazala Shahabuddin, Ecologist and Senior Adjunct Fellow, ATREE
32. Madhu Ramnath
33. Salam Rajesh, Manipur Nature Society
34. Tilu Linggi, Independent Scholar
35. Srishti Saxena, Independent Researcher



Annexure - I

राष्ट्रीय ब्याघ्र संरक्षण प्राधिकरण
NATIONAL TIGER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
(पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार के अर्न्तगत सांविधिक निकाय)
(Statutory Body under Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of India)

डॉ. जी. एस. भारद्वाज
Dr. G. S. Bhardwaj

अतिरिक्त वन सहायक (ब्याघ्र परियोजना)
सदस्य सचिव (प्र. ब्या. सं. प्र.)
Addl. DGF (Project Tiger) &
Member Secretary (NTCA)

B-1 Wing, 7th Floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan,
CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003
Tel : 011-2436 7835
E-mail : ms-ntca@nic.in

New Delhi, June 19, 2024

D.O. No. 15-3/2008-NTCA

Respected Malkede Sir

With reference to the above subject, it is to mention that, Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and further amendment in 2006, section 38V (4)(i) stipulates that "the core or critical tiger habitat and the process of its notification have been explained as 'core or critical tiger habitat areas of National Park and Sanctuaries, where it has been established, on the basis of scientific and objective criteria, that such areas are required to be kept as inviolate for the purposes of tiger conservation,'.

- Under the WPA, 1972, as amended in 2006, requirements have been laid down for voluntary relocation of people on 'mutually agreed terms and conditions', for the purpose of creating inviolate areas for tiger conservation.
- Further, Protocol/Guidelines have been issued vide F. No. 15-4/2010-NTCA (Part-III) and enhancement in the village relocation package issued vide F. No. 15-3/2018-NTCA (Vol-III) Part dated 8th April, 2021. The status of Village relocation of all Tiger Reserves has been compiled and enclosed at **Annexure I**. If there is any correction / update please communicate.
- It has been observed that, around 591 no. of Villages comprising 64801 families are still residing in the core area. The progress of village relocation is very slow and it poses grave concern in light of Tiger conservation.
- It will be highly appreciated, if the issue of village relocation may be taken up on priority basis and also time line may be framed for smooth relocation of the villages from the Core/Critical Tiger Habitat Areas of the Tiger Reserves under your jurisdiction.
- I would also request you to kindly intimate this authority about your action plan and thereafter the progress may be reviewed regularly.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Dr. G. S. Bhardwaj)

Encl: As above.

Shri Subhash K. Malkede,
Chief Wildlife Warden,
Govt. of Karnataka.

Annexure - II

Status of village relocation from Tiger Reserves as on 27.05.2024								
Sl. No.	State	Name of Tiger Reserve	No. of Villages in the notified Core (CTH)	No. of Families in the notified Core (CTH)	No. of Villages relocated from the notified Core (CTH) since the inception of the Project Tiger	No. of Families relocated from the notified core (CTH) since the inception of the Project Tiger	No. of Villages remaining inside the core (CTH)	No. of Families remaining inside the core (CTH)
1	Andhra Pradesh	1	17	1232	0	0	17	1232
2	Arunachal Pradesh	3	8	450	0	0	8	450
3	Assam	4	7	1085	0	0	7	1085
4	Bihar	1		0	0	0	0	0
5	Chhattisgarh	3	132	10599	6	249	126	10350
6	jharkhand	1	35	5070	0	0	35	5070
7	Karnataka	5	113	7003	32	1175	81	5828
8	Kerala	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Madhya Pradesh	7	165	18626	109	9058	56	9568
10	Maharasshtra	6	83	12310	62	8590	21	3720
11	Mizoram	1	2	463	1	452	1	11
12	Odisha	2	14	468	5	325	9	143
13	Rajasthan	4	111	15045	17	2918	94	12127
15	Tamilnadu	5	63	4701	6	588	57	4113
16	Telangana	2	50	3370	0	0	50	3370
17	Utttar Pradesh	3	16	4369	0	0	16	4369
18	Uttarakhand	2	18	1420	17	1410	1	10
19	West Bengal	2	14	3597	2	242	12	3355
	TOTAL	53	848	89808	257	25007	591	64801

Source: Annexure I of letter of Dr.G.S Bharadwaj, Addl. DGF (Project Tiger) & Member Secretary NTCA, National Tiger Conservation Authority, New Delhi, D.R. No. 15-3/2008-NTCA dated June 19, 2024

Annexure - III

F. No. 8-34/2017-FC
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change
(FC Division)

Indira Paryavaran Bhavan
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj
New Delhi-110003
Dated: 25th May, 2019.


To
The Principal Secretary (Forests),
All States / Union Territory Governments,

Sub: **Order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 28.01.2019 on I.A. No.3924/2015 in WP (Civil) 202/1995 regarding changing status of forest land to revenue land in case of voluntary relocation of villages, reg.**

Sir,

I am directed to refer to Hon'ble Supreme Court order dated 28th January, 2019 wherein the Hon'ble Supreme Court, based on recommendation made in the CEC report dated 28.09.2018, in which it has extended the scope of its order dt. 21.11.2008 to all such cases of relocation/rehabilitation of the villages from the core/critical Tiger reserves and core of the Protected Areas (National Park and WL Sanctuaries) to the periphery of Reserved forests/Sanctuaries/National Parks subject to following conditions:

- a) resettlement / relocation within the boundaries of the notified forest land be considered only if suitable non-forest land is not available within the vicinity of the protected area from where the relocation is proposed;
- b) the District Collector concerned shall furnish to the NTCA a certificate of non-availability of land suitable for relocation of the villages located within the Protected Area and Tiger Reserves before any proposal of relocation within the forest is approved;
- c) the land identified for relocation/rehabilitation should not result in fragmentation of the forest/wildlife habitat;
- d) the relocation activity shall be undertaken solely as a process of consolidation of the wildlife habitat;
- e) the relocation shall be undertaken only along the fringes of the forest such that all facilities to the resettled families can be provided without recourse to further diversion of forest land for providing infrastructure;
- f) the land / villages within the forest which have been vacated shall be brought under the protected area network through enabling notification under the Wildlife Protection Act after extinguishing all the existing rights over the vacated land;
- g) the extent of land de-reserved / de-notified for resettlement shall not be more than the extent vacated by the settlers in the core area; and


25/05/2019

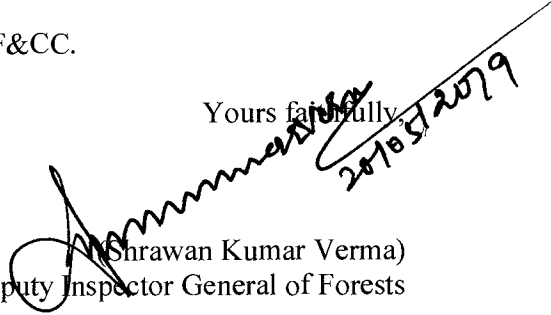
h) the payment of NPV and cost of CA may be exempted in all such cases of voluntary relocation/rehabilitation of families from the protected areas undertaken within the forest land.

2. In this regard, it is informed that in compliance of the above order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dt. 28.01.2019, the approval of the competent authority of the MoEF&CC is hereby conveyed for change in the legal status of forest land to revenue land in respect of all the 122 villages in 18 states (as mentioned in letter vide 12-12/2015-NTCA dated 20.12.2018 of NTCA to Member Secretary, CEC), which have been relocated to forest areas from the National Parks/Wildlife Sanctuaries/Tiger Reserves. Copies of letter of NTCA to CEC dt. 20.12.2018, Hon'ble Supreme Court orders dt. 21.11.2008 & 28.01.2019, Report of CEC dt. 26.12.2018 are enclosed.

3. It is also to inform that in future, all relocation/rehabilitation cases involving forest land shall be considered for change in legal status of the forest land on case to case basis as per the provisions under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, subject to conditions at para-1 above.

This issues with approval of the Hon'ble Minister, EF&CC.

Yours faithfully,


Shrawan Kumar Verma)
Deputy Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:-

1. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, all States/UTs Governments.
2. Nodal Officer, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, all States/UTs Governments.
3. All Regional Offices, MoEF&CC
4. PPS to Member Secretary, CEC
5. PPS to the Secretary, EF&CC/PPS to the DG of Forests & Spl. Secretary, MoEF&CC
6. PPS to all ADGFs (Incl. NTCA)/IGFs, MoEF&CC
7. Monitoring cell (FC Division)
8. Guard file

ANNEXURE -R1

F. No. 12-12/2015-NTCA
 Government of India
 Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
 National Tiger Conservation Authority

9

B-I Wing, 7th Floor,
 Pt. Deendayal Antodaya Bhawan,
 CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003
 Email: aig3-ntca@nic.in
 Tel. (EPABX): +91 11 24364837-42
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Dated: 20.12.18

To
 The Member Secretary
 Central Empowered Committee
 II Floor, Chanakya Bhawan,
 Chanakyapuri
 New Delhi 110021

Sub : Information in respect of I.A. No. 3924 of 2015 in W.P. (Civil) 202 of 1995
 with respect to changing status of land from forest to revenue in cases of
 voluntary village rehabilitation

Reference : Your letter no. 1-26/CEC/SC/2018/Pt. 64 dated 27.9.2018

Sir,

Reference is invited to the subject and correspondence cited above. In this context, I am directed to enclose herewith record of voluntary village rehabilitation from core/critical tiger habitats of tiger reserves (which is constituted of National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries) in respect of resettlement of villages on forest/revenue land and status of these rehabilitated land vis-a-vis their de-notification as per provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, as received from the States.

An abstract of the same is as follows;

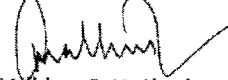
Number of villages rehabilitated	On Forest Land	On Revenue land	IF Forest, whether denotified
177	122	55	42
Percent wise	68.93	31.07	34.43

No relocation has been done in a National Park or Wildlife Sanctuary but only on notified forest land in 68.93% of the cases. Nearly 35% of these notified forest areas have been de-notified in order to make available amenities and welfare facilities to the resettled families.

This is for favour of your kind information.

Encl: As above.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. Vaibhav C. Mathur)
 Assistant Inspector General (NTCA)

S. No	State	Tiger Reserve	Number of villages rehabilitated	On Forest Land	On Revenue land	If Forest, whether denotified	Remarks
1	Andhra Pradesh	Nagarjunsagar Srisaillam	1	0	1	0	
2	Arunachal Pradesh	Pakke	1	1	0	0	
3	Assam		0	0	0	0	
4	Bihar		0	0	0	0	
5	Chattisgarh	Achanakmar	6	6	0	0	Under process of denotification
6	Jharkhand		0	0	0	0	
7	Karnataka	Nagarahole	9	9	0	9	
8	Kerala	Periyar	2	2	0	2	
		Kanha	35	23	12	0	
		Panna	8	8	0	0	
9	Madhya Pradesh (65)	Pench	2	1	1	0	
		Satpura	20	20	0	0	
		Bor	1	1	0	0	
		Melghat	19	5	14	5	
10	Maharashtra (60)	Navegaon Nagzira	5	5	0	0	
		Pench	1	1	0	0	
		Saahyadri	29	9	20	9	
		Tadoba Andhari	5	5	0	4	Under process of denotification
11	Mizoram	Dampa	2	0	2	0	
12	Odisha (6)	Similipal	5	3	2	3	
		Raigoda	1	0	1	0	
		Mukundra	2	0	2	0	
13	Rajasthan (12)	Ranthambhore	5	5	0	2	Under process of denotification
		Sariska	5	5	0	5	
14	Tamil Nadu	Mudumalai	6	6	0	0	
15	TeLANGANA	Kawal	2	2	0	0	Under process of denotification
16	Uttarakhand	Corbett	4	4	0	3	
17	Uttar Pradesh		0	0	0	0	
18	West Bengal	Buxa	1	1	0	0	
		TOTAL	177	122	55	42	
		Percent wise		68.93%	31.07%	34.43%	