

Support our Journalism!

ThePrint

Home > India > Study suggests granting farm land to fast dwindling Raji tribe of U'khand

India

Study suggests granting farm land to fast dwindling Raji tribe of U'khand

PTI 09 September, 2023 02:04 pm IST



Pithoragarh, Sep 9 (PTI) A study has suggested the government to take special efforts including grant of farm lands to empower the particularly vulnerable and dwindling Raji tribe of Uttarakhand which continues to live in near-primitive conditions.

A survey conducted by ARPAN – Association for Rural Planning and Action –, an NGO, in collaboration with the South Asian unit of Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, to understand the social, economic, and political vulnerabilities of the tribe has suggested ways to empower its members so that they can live a secure and dignified life.



Raji community also known as “Bot Tho” or “Ban Rawats” live in the remote villages of Pithoragarh, Champawat, and Udham Singh Nagar districts.

A total of 249 Raji tribe households spread over 11 villages of the three districts have a total population of only 1,075, it says.

“The highest number of Rajis live in nine villages of Dharchula, Kanalichina, and Didihat blocks of Pithoragarh district followed by Champawat and US Nagar districts where one Raji community village each is situated,” Chairperson of ARPAN Renu Thakur told PTI.

Thakur suggested strengthening of infrastructure in Raji villages to provide them with complete social security.

“The Rajis should be given regular employment to improve their purchasing power. Their existing skills should be enhanced by training and providing infrastructural facilities like

irrigation and soil testing,” she said.

According to Thakur, almost entire Raji community survives by working as daily wage agricultural labourers, who must be given possession of more land in line with the Forest Tribe Act 2006, so that they can cultivate it and earn a dignified subsistence.

The drop out rate among Raji children from secondary schools is 75 per cent due to inaccessibility to schools, their remoteness, and expensive education, the survey report said.

“Not only education, health issues of Raji community are also alarming. Raji men suffer from malnutrition and stomach pains while their women folk suffer from reproductive health issues due to early child bearing, frequent pregnancies and lack of proper nutrition,” Thakur said.

The survey has been conducted on different parameters including economic status, land holding, education, health, housing and toilets, their access to government schemes and their political status, she said.

“Despite being covered under the Forest Rights Act 2006, only 20 per cent of Raji families have government land leases, but even these people have not been given actual possession of the land for farming purposes. Several other claims have been rejected due to lack of sufficient documents,” the survey report said. PTI COR ALM ALM VN VN

This report is auto-generated from PTI news service. ThePrint holds no responsibility for its content.