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STs tag sought for three communities living in the Western Ghats

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Chairman of Western Ghats Task Force Ananth Hegde Ashisar (second right) having a word with Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar The Hindu before presenting memorandum along with his group at Chief Minister's official residence 'Krishna' in Bangalore on 8 Jan, 2013. Photo: V Sreenivasa Murthy

The communities are Danagara Gowli, Kunabi Marathi and Hallakki

The Task Force on Western Ghats on Tuesday urged the State government to accord Scheduled Tribes status to Danagara Gowli, Kunabi Marathi and Hallakki communities living in the Western Ghats.

Submitting recommendations to Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar, Task Force Chairman Anant Hegde Ashisar said that these communities had been recognised as pure tribal communities by different experts.

Though they have been living like Scheduled Tribes and have been deprived of amenities, these communities are not getting any government facility, he regretted.

Mr. Hegde regretted that the State government has not taken effective steps to enforce the Scheduled Tribes and Other Forest Dwellers Act, enacted by the Union government in 2006.

The State government should adopt a timeframe to implement this Act, he said.

Similarly, over three lakh forest dwellers and Scheduled Tribes people living in the Western Ghats have not got any modern facility, including education, power, healthcare and communication.

The government should immediately provide all these facilities to these people utilising Central grants, Mr. Hegde

said.

Also, the government should give primacy to tribal and forest dwelling people in government recruitment, particularly, in the forest and tourism departments, he suggested.

Stating that forest dwellers played a greater role in the collection of minor forest produce, Mr. Hegde said that the government should frame a policy to involve these people in the collection of these produce. Also, steps should be taken for value addition of these products, he said.

On the crop loss caused by wild animals, Mr. Hegde demanded formation of crop insurance and medi-claim insurance schemes for the affected people. He also demanded opening of a sports school in Yellapur taluk which has the highest tribal population in the State and had contributed many sports personalities.

Responding to these demands, Mr. Shettar said that the government will consider all of them.

Keywords: [Western Ghats](#), [Jagadish Shettar](#), [Scheduled Tribes](#)

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