

Silkly Woven

Priyanshi - Nandini - Rishika

# PROJECT GREEN CHALLENGE - INDIGENOUS PEOPLE



DAY 9  
GREENER  
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

The Vani Raji People

# INDIGENOUS

## WOMEN'S STRUGGLE FOR FOREST RIGHTS IN INDIA



**Woman's hand in the integration  
and cultivation of the land !!**

In India, Indigenous forest-dwelling groups officially documented as 'Scheduled Tribes' or 'Adivasis' have historically been dispossessed and excluded from their traditional homes in forests.

### UTTARAKHAND, INDIA

Protest in the foothills of the Himalayas..

---

## The Vani Raji - An Indigenous Tribe

# BUT WHAT'S THE MATTER??



The Van Raji people are a small forest-dwelling tribal group that inhabit remote, isolated, and ecologically fragile areas of Uttarakhand, a northern state located in the foothills of the Himalayas.

The FRA has the potential to be a powerful piece of environmental justice legislation, but its abysmally slow implementation continues to threaten Indigenous people's survival, as does its lack of gender responsiveness.

The policies remain highly male-centric and often disregard young women, especially those who are separated from their husbands or widowed.

Without land rights, they are marginalised and put at the mercy of other social actors.

Indigenous women are at the forefront of the fight for their community's forest rights. They often take this massive responsibility without substantial policy support or incentives.



THE GOOD STEP OF

# GOVERNMENT'S STAND FOR THE VANI RAJI

Dipika Adhikari



With critical support from a progressive local non-government organisation and active local leadership, Van Raji women have been able to raise their concerns to state authorities.

Indigenous women participate in decision-making bodies such as a sub-divisional forest committee and Gram Sabha (village assembly) level Forest Rights Committee, where they get the chance to vocalise their concerns and protect their rights and entitlements.



---

# TODAY'S WOMAN OF OUR NATION



*The Van Rajis' experience shows that women's fight to protect the forest is unnecessarily gruelling in the absence of policy support. The biased socio-economic and political environment entrenches unequal power and, despite the FRA's good intentions, prejudice often squashes and disables Indigenous women's efforts to achieve its goals.*

*With India celebrating the historic election of its first tribal woman as president on 21 July 2022, a great deal of attention must now be devoted to including Indigenous women in local decision-making processes in forests.*

*Further efforts must be extended to invest in training and capacity building – not only to support Indigenous women's efforts, but to assure Indigenous communities' entitlements in forest-related decisions more widely*

---

# Thank You



---

@silkly\_woven

---