

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
(MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS)  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 298**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24.06.2019  
**DISPUTE OVER FOREST LAND**

298. SHRIMATI RAKSHA NIKHIL KHADSE:

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to examine for the biggest reforms to correct this historic injustice done to tribal, as the impact of number of Acts ever since independence, several Government launched, have not been able to resolve the issue of historical injustice regarding settlement of disputed claims of tribals over Forest Lands and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the details of the economic policy of the forests interface and chalk out an integrated strategy;
- (c) whether the Government proposes changes in IFS training to the needed to encompass tribal welfare as a core value of forest management; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS  
(SHRI ARJUN MUNDA)

(a) To undo the historical injustice done to forest dwellers (both tribal and other forest dwelling communities) whose rights over the forest land were not recognized during colonial period well as independent India, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (in short FRA, 2006) was notified for operation on 31.12.2007. This is an Act to recognize and vest the forest rights and occupation in forest land in forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forests for generations but whose right could not be recorded; to provide for a framework for recording the forest right so vested and the nature of evidence required for such recognition and vesting in respect of forest land. As per the provisions of Act and Rules framed thereunder, the State Government, /UTs are responsible for its implementation. As per information received from State Governments/UTs upto 31.03.2019, under the FRA, 42,37,853 claims (40,89,035 individual and 1,48,818 community claims) have been filed and 19,64,048 titles (18,87,894 individual and 76,154 community claims) have been distributed to the extent of 1,29,38,762.14 acres of forest land.

(b) As per information received from Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, there is no economic policy of forests per se. However National Forest Policy (NFP) 1988 provides a broad framework related to economic aspects of forests. Meeting basic requirements of fuelwood, fodder, minor forest produce and small timber of the rural and tribal population is one of the basic objectives of the policy. This is incorporated in essential of forest management. For achieving this, NFP envisages a massive needs-based and time bound programme of afforestation and tree planting, with particular emphasis on fuelwood and fodder development, on all degraded and denuded lands in the country, whether forest or non-forest land. Village and community lands, including those on foreshores and environs of tanks, not required for other productive uses, should be taken up for the development of tree crops and fodder resources: Village and community lands, including those on foreshores and environs of tanks, not required for other productive uses, should be taken up for the development of tree crops and fodder resources. Technical assistance and other inputs necessary for initiating such programmes should be provided by the Government. The revenues generated through such programmes should belong to the panchayats where the lands are vested in them; in all other cases, such revenues should be shared with the local communities in order to provide an incentive to them. The life of tribals and other poor living within and near forests revolves around forests. The rights and concessions enjoyed by them should be fully protected. Their domestic requirements of fuelwood, fodder, minor forest produce and construction timber should be first made available through conveniently located depots at reasonable prices. NFP provides broad governing principles for forest based industries also.

(c) & (d) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change constituted an expert committee for restructuring the Course Curriculum for training of Indian Forest Service (IFS) officers in Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy (IGNFA), Dehradun vide OM dated 19.02.2019. The committee in its recommendations submitted to the Ministry, has suggested to give more emphasis on the welfare of Tribal Communities by incorporating a module titled “Tribals and Forest Dependent Communities” in the IFS probationers professional training curriculum.

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