

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding implementation of Forest Rights Act (FRA) in West Bengal -laid.

SHRI RAJU BISTA (DARJEELING) : FRA 2006 states that all forest villages inhabited by people must be converted into revenue village, and land rights and ownerships must be transferred to forest dwellers.

In 2013, West Bengal Government issued a notification to convert forest land to revenue villages across the state. Even though the Parja Patta is being handed to forest dwellers in the neighbouring districts of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduars since 2014, no such step has been taken till date to confer Parja Patta rights to about 2.6 lakh dwellers living in Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts. Recently, Kalimpong district administration issued a certificate to some people as 'Title for Forest Land Under Occupation'. These forest lands are not occupied, because they form part of the heritage and historical roots of our people. Depriving people of their rights to their ancestral land is injustice.

The discriminatory policy adopted by West Bengal Government in implanting FRA 2006, needs urgent investigation and intervention by Ministry of Tribal Affairs.