

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:531
ANSWERED ON:26.11.2014
FOREST RIGHTS TO VILLAGERS
Misra Shri Ajay (Teni)

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the inhabitants residing near forest areas have been given rights for grazing cattle, taking grass-hay, weeds and fire woods from the forest areas;
- (b) if so, the procedure laid down in this regard;
- (c) if not, whether the Government contemplates to provide such rights to them; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The National Forest Policy, 1988 provides for the protection of the rights and concessions from forests for the bonafide use of the communities living within and around forest areas, specially the rural and tribals for meeting the requirements of fuel-wood, fodder, minor forest produce, small timber and construction timber. The rights and concessions also includes grazing rights which should be related to the carrying capacity of forests. Further such requirements of the community are also met by development of social forestry outside the reserved forests.

The bonafide inhabitants residing near forest areas have been given rights and concessions for grazing cattle, taking grass-hay, weeds and fire woods from the forest areas as per the procedures laid down in the Chapter II of the Indian Forest Act, 1927.

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 accords recognition to the forest rights in forest lands to forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers. The forest rights under the Act includes grazing, right of ownership, access to collect, use, and dispose of minor forest produce. The procedures for vesting of such rights are given in the section 6 of the Act.