



Violation of Forest Rights Act in Madhya Pradesh | Madhya Pradesh | 08 Jan 2025

Why in News?

[The Ministry of Tribal Affairs \(MoTA\)](#) took cognizance of petitions and complaints from 52 villages regarding **non-recognition of forest rights** and forceful eviction attempts around **the Rani Durgavati Tiger Reserve** in Madhya Pradesh.

Key Points

- **Restrictions and MoTA's Directive:**
 - The villagers alleged that after the notification of Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve in September 2023, forest rights claims were denied, and forceful relocations occurred, **violating the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006** and **Wildlife Protection Act (WLPA) 1972**.
 - Villagers claimed restrictions on accessing forest resources, produce, and farms.
 - MoTA's letter emphasized that **denying communities their rights is a violation** and advised that the issues be resolved in consultation with state forest departments, and district collectors.
 - The letter was also directed to the **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes**, district collectors, and **the National Tiger Conservation Authority** for appropriate action and safeguarding community interests.
- **Legal Framework for Relocation:**
 - The Wildlife Protection Act allows the **creation of 'inviolable' areas for tiger conservation**, but only after recognizing and settling the **rights of tribal and forest-dwelling communities**.
 - **Relocation of villagers can only occur voluntarily** after their rights are recognized, in accordance with both FRA and WLPA.
 - MoTA stressed the importance of **Gram Sabha consent and community participation in relocation decisions** for critical wildlife habitats.

The Forest Rights Act, 2006

- It was introduced to formally recognise and grant forest rights and occupation in **forest lands** to **forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes** and other traditional forest dwellers who have resided in these forests for generations, even though their rights had not been officially documented.
- It aimed to **address the historical injustices** faced by forest-dwelling communities due to the forest management policies of colonial and post-colonial India, which failed to acknowledge their **long-standing symbiotic relationship with the forests**.
- Additionally, the Act sought to **empower forest dwellers** by enabling them to access and utilise forest resources sustainably, promote biodiversity and ecological balance, and protect them from unlawful evictions and displacement.

Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

- It provides a legal framework for the **protection of various species of wild animals and plants**, management of their habitats, regulation, and control of trade in wild animals, plants, and

products made from them.

- The act also **lists schedules of plants and animals that are afforded varying degrees of protection and monitoring** by the government.
- India's entry to the **CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora)** was made easier by the Wildlife Act.

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