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Title: Regarding fixing the eligibility criteria for claiming land rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006.

SHRI BALBHADRA MAJHI (NABARANGPUR): As per Forest Rights Act-2006, people of Scheduled Tribe communities have been made eligible to get Jangal Jamin Patta if they have record of occupation of the forest on or before 2005. In case of General, OBC and SC category people etc, they have to have record of such occupation, 75 years prior to 2005.

In reality, it is very unlikely to preserve such records. In villages people live in thatched huts. It is also very unlikely that anybody other than the ST categories would have availed this scheme. Different cut off dates for ST categories and others are creating ill feeling among these communities. There is no logic as to why there should be different cut off dates for different communities in one country. It is against the principle of natural justice.

It is, therefore, requested that the cut off date of 75 years before 2005 be relaxed to make it at par with the ST categories. If for some justifiable reasons, the Government thinks that it should not be same then it should be suitably reduced so that people other than ST categories can produce the necessary documents.