



## **Awareness programme on forest right act, 2006 held in Lakhimpur**

19 August 2021

LAKHIMPUR: A crucial awareness meeting on the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 was held on Tuesday at SB Bodo High School under the auspices of the Jonai district unit of the All Assam Tribal Sangha (AATS) and Dhemaji district unit of the United Bodo People's Organization ([UBPO](#)).

Notably, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 is a key piece of forest legislation passed in India on December 18, 2006. It has also been called the Forest Rights Act, the Tribal Rights Act, the Tribal Bill, and the Tribal Land Act. The law concerns the rights of forest-dwelling communities to land and other resources, denied to them over decades as a result of the continuance of colonial forest laws in India.

The meeting commenced with Jonaram Brahma, the vice-president of the Dhemaji district unit UBPO, in the chair under the management of Jonai district Tribal Sangha general secretary Padmeswar Doley. Additional Deputy Commissioner of Dhemaji (Revenue), Utpal Doley attended the event as resource person. In his speech, the ADC said that the State Government had initiated move to accord land right to the Scheduled Tribes and the traditional forest dwellers of the State by enforcing the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. He called upon the people concerned to constitute the gram sabhas for the proper enforcement of the Act. Further, he informed that two subdivision-level committees and one district-level committee were formed in Dhemaji to implement the recommendations of the Act in the district. In connection, he appealed to the ST organizations and ST Autonomous Councils to create awareness among the masses in this regard. He laid emphasis on the conservation of the natural marshes, land for crematory ground, playground, grazing, social forestation during the process of land allotment to the beneficiaries under the Act.

In the event, chairperson of the Bodo Kachari Welfare Autonomous Council (BKWAC), Gambaru Mussahari illustrated the legal issues of the Act. "Though the tribal people have been dwelling in the reserve forests of the State throughout the ages, they have been deprived of the land right. Tribal people are called as the sons of the soil, but they are not potent enough to enjoy the land right due to legal restrictions. Now, the tribal people who primarily resided in forest or forests land prior to December 13, 2005 and depend on the forest or forests land for bonafide livelihood needs will be qualified to achieve land right under the recommendations of the Act," Gambaru Mussahari asserted.

On the other hand, UBPO State president Manoranjan Basumatary hailed the decision on the part of the State Government to enforce the Act in the State. "The tribal people were denied land right during the colonial rule. They had been deprived of the same even in the post-Independence period too. The Forest Right Act, 2006 has brought a ray of hope to the deprived people concerned. It will benefit them," Manoranjan Basumatary added.

In addition to them, Divisional Forest Officer of Dhemaji [Forest](#) Division, Ruhini Kumar Das also delivered awareness lecture on various aspects of the Act. UBPO vice-president Lalit Chandra Brahma, Jonai district unit All Assam Tribal Sangha vice-president Trailokya Sonowal, along with many other dignitaries were present in the meeting.

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