

# The Statesman

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**[Orissa Plus]** —————

## **Verdict on forest rights reserved**

;Press Trust of India

Cuttack, 17 JULY: The Orissa High Court has reserved its verdict on a plea by the state government to vacate an interim stay imposed about a year ago on the implementation of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act.

The Act was enacted in 2006 to recognise and vest forest rights and occupation of forest land to traditional forest dwellers for generations.

Accordingly, the Orissa government had identified more than 30,000 forest dwellers to be benefited by the Act of whom about 20,000 tribals were from Kalahandi, Koraput and Kandhamal district.

But the Act was challenged in the Orissa High Court through a PIL filed by the Society of Retired Forest Officers' of Orissa stating that the new act went against the spirit of the National Forest Policy of 1998, Indian Forest Act of 1927 and Forest Conservation Act of 1980.

Adjudicating on the PIL, the high court in an interim order passed in July last year had allowed the state government to go ahead with the process of identifying the beneficiaries, but had restricted issue of title deeds especially in sanctuaries, national parks and bio-sphere reserves.

### **Discussion on this Orissa Plus item**

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**No discussions on this item**

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