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## THE TIMES OF INDIA

## Govt to amend law to curtail forest dept powers

NEW DELHI: Union environment minister Jairam Ramesh announced on Monday that the government would amend the colonial period legislation - Indian Forest Act, 1927 - to curtail the powers given to forest department to foist criminal cases against tribals.

"We are bringing about amendments to the Indian Forest Act in order to ensure that these large number of cases are not foisted on tribal communities people who are going into forests daily and picking up their daily requirements. That is one big complaint against the forest department," he said.

Ramesh was speaking while formally receiving the Forest Rights Act review committee report. The report was prepared by a panel headed by NAC member N C Saxena.

Driving home a point that won't be lost on the forest bureaucracy which has largely been opposed to the regime FRA brings in, Ramesh said, "After all we should not forget we are the only country in the world where 250 million people depend on forests for their daily livelihood," he said.



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