

Tension over influx of Jharkhand tribals

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Tension continues to prevail in Chandandhar village under Meghpal gram panchayat of Jujumura block in the district following the April 5 incident when 22 hutments of Christian tribals inside Langakot reserve forest were set afire.

Sources said the Christians had migrated from bordering areas of Jharkhand and set up hutments in the area which was protested by locals time and again. In fact, these tribals from across the border are alleged to be behind the influx of Maoists to the region.

According to reports, the Christian villagers from Jharkhand have been entering the area in small groups and constructed hutments by clearing about 10 lakh square metres of Langakot reserve forest in an effort to get rehabilitated by the State Government under Forest Rights Act.

This triggered resentment among local villagers who depend upon the forest for livelihood.

On April 5 morning, when some tribals were cutting down trees in the forest, the locals protested but the former did not pay heed. The irate locals then set fire to their hutments at night.

Police registered a case and DIG (North) Sanjay Kumar visited the spot on Monday and asked the Sub-Collectors of Sambalpur and Rairakhol and forest officials to take necessary action.