



Upgrade in Land Records

For Prelims: Forest Right Act 2006, Digital Land Records, Government's Initiative

For Mains: Features Forest Right Act, Digital Land Records, Geographic Information System, Related Initiatives

Why in News?

Recently, the Union Government has written a letter to states across the country, directing them to record **Settlement Rights** in **Revenue and Forest Records** within a period of three months.

- The letter stated that the **revenue and forest departments** should prepare a **final map of the forest land** that was vested to communities under the [The Forest Rights Act \(FRA\), 2006](#).

What are the Key Points of the Notification?

- **About:**
 - **Digital information** on the **record of rights (RoR)** (a legal document that gives details about the land and who owns it) under **The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006** or Forest Right Act (FRA) will also be integrated in the **PARIVESH portal** and other web [Geographic Information System \(GIS\) platforms](#) of central and state government departments.
 - It would be done after completion of the process of **settlement of rights** and **issuance of titles**. The map should then be incorporated in the land records under relevant state laws.
 - The ministry has also directed states to undertake **geographic information system (GIS) surveys** of each land patch and maintain geo-referenced digital vector boundaries of the polygons.
- **Benefits:**
 - Land records with data of FRA titles **eliminates the conflict between tribals and officials**.
 - Sometimes, a piece of land that has been allotted under FRA, is also diverted for afforestation and this creates a lot of problems for both parties.
 - Geo-referencing of RoR under FRA will be beneficial for the people of the states as the forest and tribal welfare departments will be **able to initiate specific projects and schemes for improving the livelihoods of the FRA title holders**.

What is the Forest Rights Act, 2006?

- The Act **recognizes and vests the forest rights and occupation in Forest land in Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes (FDST) and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFD)** who have been residing in such forests for generations.
- Forest rights can also be claimed by **any member or community who has for at least three generations (75 years)** prior to the 13th day of December, 2005 primarily resided in forest land

for bona fide livelihood needs.

- It **strengthens the conservation regime** of the forests while ensuring livelihood and food security of the FDST and OTFD.
- The **Gram Sabha** is the authority to initiate the process for determining the nature and extent of **Individual Forest Rights (IFR)** or **Community Forest Rights (CFR)** or both that may be given to FDST and OTFD.
- **The Act identifies four types of rights:**
 - **Title Rights:**
 - It gives FDST and OTFD the **right to ownership to land** farmed by tribals or forest dwellers subject to a **maximum of 4 hectares**. Ownership is only for land that is actually being cultivated by the concerned family and no new lands will be granted.
 - **Use Rights:**
 - The rights of the dwellers **extend to extracting Minor Forest Produce**, grazing areas etc.
 - **Relief and Development Rights:**
 - To **rehabilitate in case of illegal eviction or forced displacement** and to basic amenities, subject to restrictions for forest protection.
 - **Forest Management Rights:**
 - It includes the **right to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage** any community forest resource which they have been traditionally protecting and conserving for sustainable use.

What are India's Initiatives for Digital Land Records?

- **SVAMITVA:**
 - **SVAMITVA** is a scheme for **mapping the land parcels in rural inhabited areas** using **drone technology** and **Continuously Operating Reference Station (CORS)**.
 - The mapping will be done across the country in a phase-wise manner over a period of four years - from 2020 to 2024.
- **PARIVESH Portal:**
 - **PARIVESH** is a web-based application which has been developed for **online submission and monitoring** of the proposals submitted by the proponents for seeking **Environment, Forest, Wildlife and Coastal Regulation Zones (CRZ)** Clearances from Central, State and district level authorities.
- **Bhumi Samvaad:**
 - **Bhumi Samvaad** is a **National Workshop on Digital India Land Record Modernisation Programme (DILRMP)**.
 - It attempts to build upon the commonalities that exist in the arena of land records in various States to develop an appropriate **Integrated Land Information Management System (ILIMS)** across the country, on which different States can also add State-specific needs as they may deem relevant and appropriate.
- **National Generic Document Registration System:**
 - It is a major shift from the **existing manual registration system to online registration** of all transactions in sale-purchase and transfer of land.
 - It is a big step towards National Integration and a leap towards **'One Nation One Software'**.
- **Unique Land Parcel Identification Number:**
 - Being described as "the **Aadhaar** for land", **Unique Land Parcel Identification Number** is a number that would uniquely identify every surveyed parcel of land and prevent land fraud, especially in the hinterlands of rural India, where land records are outdated and often disputed.

What is the Geographic Information System (GIS)?

- A GIS is a computer system for **capturing, storing, checking, and displaying data** related to positions on Earth's surface.
- By relating seemingly unrelated data, GIS can **help individuals and organizations better understand spatial patterns and relationships**.
- GIS can use any information that **includes location**.

- The location can be expressed in many different ways, such as **latitude** and **longitude**, **address**, or **ZIP code**.
- GIS can include data about people, such as **population**, **income**, or **education level**.
 - It can also include information about the sites of factories, farms, and schools, or storm drains, roads, and electric power lines etc.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q1. At the national level, which ministry is the nodal agency to ensure effective implementation of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006? (2021)

- (a) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- (b) Ministry of Panchayati Raj
- (c) Ministry of Rural Development
- (d) Ministry of Tribal Affairs

Ans: (d)

Exp:

- The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, also referred to as the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, recognizes the rights of the forest-dwelling tribal communities and other traditional forest dwellers to forest resources.
- The Act encompasses Rights of self-cultivation and habitation which are usually regarded as individual rights; and community rights as grazing, fishing and access to Water bodies in forests, habitat rights for PVTGs, etc.
- In conjunction with the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Settlement Act, 2013, FRA protects the tribal population from eviction without rehabilitation and settlement.
- As per the provisions of the Act and the rules framed thereunder, various schemes and projects are implemented under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- Therefore, option (d) is the correct answer.

Q2. Consider the following statements: (2018)

1. The definition of "Critical Wildlife Habitat" is incorporated in the Forest Rights Act, 2006.
2. For the first time in India, Baigas have been given Habitat Rights.
3. Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change officially decides and declares Habitat Rights for Primitive and Vulnerable Tribal Groups in any part of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (a)

Exp:

- "Critical Wildlife Habitat" has been defined in the Forest Rights Act, 2006 as such areas of National Parks and Sanctuaries that are required to be kept as inviolate for the purpose of wildlife conservation as may be determined and notified by the Central Government. Hence, statement 1

is correct.

- The Baiga community (largely in Madhya Pradesh) is one of the 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India, who are eligible to get Habitat Rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006. Over the years, increasing state control over forests and diversion of forest land for development and conservation has seriously threatened these forest communities. The Government of Madhya Pradesh in 2015 recognised the habitat rights of Baigas and the tribe became the first community in India to get the habitat rights. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- The Habitat Rights of the PVTGs are recognized by the District Level Committee in the States. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs clarifies the scope and extent of the definition of habitat rights in the context of PVTGs. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.
- Therefore, option (a) is the correct answer.

[Source: DTE](#)

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