

Awareness programme organised on Forest Rights Act implementation

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THE HINDU BUREAU

The Nilgiris district administration, in association with the Tamil Nadu Forest Department, held an awareness programme on Thursday in Cairn Hill, Udhagamandalam, on the implementation of the Forest Rights Act, 2006.

Speaking at the event, Nilgiris district collector Lakshmi Bhavya Tanneeru said that the Forest Rights Act, 2006, enshrines essential principles of human rights, community rights, and the right to livelihoods.

Speaking to attendees from tribal communities at the event, Ms. Tanneeru said that understanding the law would prove helpful for communities to demand the rights assured to them. She also added that tribal communities who have secured individual rights to property under the Act, should now work towards ensuring that they have access to community rights too.

The Collector mentioned that there would be initiatives aimed at educating bank managers about providing loans to help secure livelihoods

for local communities. Ms. Bhavya also acknowledged the hesitation of Adivasi communities to seek employment outside the Nilgiris. However, she pointed out that there are companies in Coimbatore, which is only three hours away, offering jobs to community members. She encouraged attendees to take advantage of these career opportunities in nearby districts.

A member of the District Level Committee monitoring the implementation of the Forest Rights Act made a presentation to the attendees, highlighting how the Act benefitted Adivasi and forest-dwelling communities. Also present was Divisional Forest Officer (Nilgiris), S. Gowtham.

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