

Forest Scheduled Rates

2  
wages  
(15/11/90)

# Official - Naxal collusion alleged

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Forest officials come to an agreement with Naxalite groups in bringing down the forest scheduled rates (FSR) prescribed by the Government in forest and timbering operations such as bamboo-felling, timber-cutting, coffee plantations and in afforestation, it is alleged.

In such an agreement arrived on August 20 of this year in Maredu-milli, the rates negotiated for industrial bamboo cuts sadanam type is Rs. 133 and of mullem type Rs. 150 against the FSR Rs. 182.50 and Rs. 199.50 respectively. The paper mills also follow this.

The forest officials' negotiations operate as a baseline for their agreements.

The whole story has taken a different dimension with the writ petition filed by 'Sakti', a voluntary organisation working for the tribals, against the forest scheduled rates (FSR) as they are less than the minimum wages notified by the Government on August 30, 1990.

Justice Syed Mohammad Kadri, while admitting the writ petition against the conservator, Rajahmundry, issued notice returnable within two weeks.

Earlier, the conservator, Rajahmundry, has paid the difference of minimum wage, about Rs. one lakh, to forest maistries on the orders of the assistant commissioner of labour, Rajahmundry, as per the minimum wages of 1984 in the light of the revision of minimum wages on August 30, 1990.

The director, Sakti, has said they shall campaign against these double standards of the department, i.e. neither implementing minimum wages nor FSR, and explain the matter to different pressure groups working for the labourers.

A judgement against the executive engineer, tribal welfare, for payment of minimum wages is not yet complied with. Sakti requested the labour officials to take appropriate action against the authorities for recovery of the amount.