

**Forest Act, 1963**

**Section 96 - Power of Revenue, Forest and Police Officers to Search and Seize Property Liable to Confiscation**

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Any Revenue Officer not below the rank of a Revenue Inspector or any Forest Officer not below the rank of a Forest Guard or any Police Officer not below the rank of a Head Constable may, within his jurisdiction enter any land and inspect at all reasonable times, stock of cutch, catechu trees felled, boiling of catechu, accounts maintained and for that purpose enter any premises or stop any animal, vehicle, vessel or other conveyance and search the same and seize stocks of catechu trees and cutch together with the packages, coverings and containers thereof in respect of which he has reason to believe that any of the provisions of this Chapter have been contravened, and the driver and other person or persons, who may, for the time being in charge of such animal, vehicle, vessel or other conveyance, shall stop or secure the stopping of such animal, vehicle or other conveyance on demand by the said officer and render all assistance within their power in connection with such search or seizure:

Provided that in exercising the power of entry and search due regard shall be paid by such officer to the social and religious customs of the occupants of the premises or vehicle, vessel or other conveyance:

Provided further that if any such premises be found locked up and unoccupied or unattended by or on behalf of the owner or occupiers, the same may, in the presence of two respectable witnesses, be broken open and entered upon for any or all of the above purposes.

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