



Denial of forest land titles could

Express News Service Posted online: Thursday , Mar 25, 2010 at 0354 hrs

Vadodara : Denying land titles to the tribals under the Forest Rights Act could force them to terrorism, Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Tushar Chaudhary has said. He was addressing a public meeting to further the Centre's Bharat Nirman initiative in Rajpipla.

"The Forest Rights Act has not been implemented and the tribals are being discriminated against. There is a chance that they might become terrorists ... no one can violate their rights," said Chaudhary at a public meeting in Rajpipla.

He also accused the state tribal development department and the Gujarat government for giving 'achikar patras' to the tribals instead of land titles. Only 11,830 land titles have been given to the farmers, out of the 1,83,000 applications as on January 31.

He told The Indian Express that the implementation of the Forest Rights Act, 2006 is dismal compared to other states. "Only 7.7 per cent of the applications have been processed. Now they have stopped giving the deeds but have started issuing 'adhikar patras' that limit the rights of tribals over forests."

"In states like Tripura, MP and AP, there has been 80 per cent implementation of this Act, but the state government's performance here is not up to the mark. The tribal development department must clear the backlogged applications as soon as possible," he added.

On the recent arrest of two persons in Dangs district over alleged involvement in Naxalite activities, he said the people are neither tribals, nor belong to Gujarat. "They have come from outside the state," he further said.