

# 9 lakh acres of forestland identified for tribals

Staff Reporter

*Panels to be formed to process claims of forest-dwelling communities*

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*5.63 lakh acres of assigned land identified for distribution to landless tribals*

*Land holdings of poor up to 80 square yards to be regularised without penal fee*

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GUNTUR: Revenue Minister D. Prasada Rao has said that a preliminary survey has identified about nine lakh acres of forestland, which can be distributed to landless tribals in line with the Scheduled Tribes and Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 – the Forest Rights Act.

The survey is only preliminary in nature and the exact extent of the land can be assessed only after a detailed survey is done, he said addressing media persons here on Wednesday.

## Judicious distribution

The State government would soon constitute committees to process the claims of tribal and forest-dwelling communities.

The committee would also assess the cases that might arise out of them, leading to judicious distribution of land rights, he said.

## Distribution of pattas

The Revenue Minister, who was here to take part in house patta distribution at Brahmanakoduru village, had an informal chat with media persons at the house of Legislative Council member Rayapati Srinivas, before proceeding for the official programme. Referring to the land distribution programme, he said that the government had identified 5.63 lakh acres of assigned land in the State for distribution to the eligible and landless poor in the coming months.

The government has also notified for regularisation of lands and issued a G.O. MS No. 166 according to which land holdings up to 80 square yards owned by individuals belonging to Below the Poverty Line (BPL) could be regularised without any penal fee, while those up to 2,000 sq. yards could be regularised with a penal fee.

## Vacant posts

The Revenue Minister also said that the government would soon fill about 500 vacancies of surveyor posts and 400 deputy surveyor posts, which would fill in the staff crunch and aid the government in the identification, resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced persons in view of the massive irrigation and housing programmes taken up by the government.

Source: <http://www.hindu.com/2008/06/19/stories/2008061953770400.htm>