

**Revive & develop forest lands: CM KCR**

23 October 2021

**Hyderabad:** Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao on Saturday directed the officials to revive and develop forest lands as thick forests while solving Podu land issues and protecting these lands and start taking claims from November 8 to December 8.

The CM also directed the Collectors, Forest and Police departments officials to identify and take stringent action against those destroying the forests while extending help to the innocent Tribals, who dependent on forest for their livelihood. He said that the District Collectors should play a key role in protecting the forestlands by making the department officials concerned, Gram Sarpanches and other public representatives as partners.

The CM suggested that all those tribals involved in Podu cultivation within the forest should be provided with an alternative government land nearby for cultivation. 'If there is no government land available, they should be provided with land on the outer periphery of the forestland along with providing free water, power and residential homes.' He directed to fix forestland boundaries and to set up protection trench. He suggested to use employment guarantee scheme for setting up the trench along the forest funds.

The CM told to implement forest revival programme with special focus in other districts like in Gajwel and to develop forests in plain and vacant lands in those districts, where there is no forest. He congratulated the officials for developing village natural forests under Palle Pragathi programme. CM KCR directed all the Collectors to convene an all-party meeting in districts to solve Podu land issues and protection of forest lands. He instructed that there should be a unanimous opinion from the all-party leaders on providing ROFR rights to those already doing the Podu cultivation. He suggested that sarpanches in villages and other public representatives should be encouraged to take protection of forestland as a duty.

The CM directed the officials to hold preparatory meetings and to form village committees as per ROFR Act before November 8. One Nodal officer should be appointed for two to three villages, RDO at sub-division level and Collector at district-level should monitor the process. He said 87% of encroachment of Podu lands was there in 12 districts such as Bhadradi-Kothagudem, Komaram Bheem Asifabad, Adilabad, Jayashankar Bhoopalpally, Kamareddy, Khammam, Nirmal, Warangal, Nalgonda and Nizamabad.

The CM instructed the officials to stop providing Rythu Bandhu, Rythu Bima, free power to those farmers indulged in ganja cultivation. He told the police to arrest them and sent to jail. He also directed to cancel pattas for those cultivating ganja in ROFR lands and to take stringent measures against them.

Source: <https://www.thehansindia.com/news/cities/hyderabad/revive-develop-forest-lands-cm-kcr-712197>