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## Govt plans to make each tribal a lakhpati, says YSR

PADERU (Visakhapatnam Dt): The State Government is planning a number of innovative welfare schemes, exclusively for tribal people, with an aim to make every tribal a 'lakhpati', Chief Minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy said here today.

Addressing huge gathering at the Residential Polytechnic College Grounds here today Rajasekhara Reddy said that the Government is actively considering various welfare schemes for empowering the tribals and they would be announced soon.

The Chief Minister started the distribution of pattas to tribals under the Tribal Forest Land Rights Act, on the occasion. Addressing the tribals he promised them that he would take steps to increase the number of days of employment assured under the NREGS from 100 days to 150 days in a year.

He also assured them to increase the present wage under NREGS from Rs 100 per day to Rs 120.

Rajasekhara Reddy assured them that the Government is taking all steps to provide protected drinking water to all the tribal hamlets.

He sanctioned Rs 6 lakh per year to each of the 6,000 Vana Samrakshna Samitis in the State. He appealed to the members of the VSS to utilise these funds for the development of their respective Agency areas.

The Government is laying roads every nook and corner of the Agency areas, to enable tribals get connectivity to the mainstream society, he added.

The Chief Minister also showered boons on the non-tribals, living in Agency areas.

"The Government will regularise the houses of non-tribals who are living in Paderu and Araku divisions of Agency areas," The Chief Minister said.

Elaborating on the implementation of Tribal Forest Land Rights Act since 2006, the Chief Minister said that his Government started recognising the tribal rights on forest land right from 2006. Under the Act 5 lakh tribals in the State were given nearly 1 lakh acres of land and seven lakh acres of forest lands would be distributed to 2 lakh tribals on or before July 31, he assured.

During his whirlwind visit in the Agency headquarters, Rajasekhara Reddy distributed title deeds to tribals and inaugurated a number of developmental activities, worth Rs 450 crore, including coffee project.

He also inaugurated the protected drinking water supply project and laid foundation stones for roads linking up to several tribal villages from Paderu.

District in-charge Minister Kanna Lakshminarayana and Tribal Welfare Minister P Balararaju were present. Paderu ITDA Project Officer B Anand Mohan and District Collector J Shyamala Rao briefed the Chief Minister about the developmental programmes and welfare schemes being implemented in the Agency areas.

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