

## **PONDA HOSTS SPECIAL FOREST-RIGHTS CAMP; 60 CLAIMS CLEARED**

Panaji, June 14, 2025

A one-day special camp to fast-track claims under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 was held today at the Office of the Deputy Collector & Sub-Divisional Officer, Ponda.

Convened under the direct supervision of Shri Shubham Naik, Deputy Collector, Ponda, and Chairperson of the Sub-Divisional Level Committee (SDLC), the camp brought together officials from the Tribal Welfare, Forest and Revenue departments, along with the village panchayats of Bethoda, Borim, Conxem, Ganjem, Shiroda, Usgao and Nirancal.

The occasion was graced by Shri Srinet Kothawale, Additional Collector-I, South Goa, whose presence underscored the district administration's commitment to speedy redressal of forest-rights claims. Shri Rajesh Sakhalkar, Joint Mamlatdar-I, Ponda, and Shri Ashwin Dessai, Block Development Officer (BDO), Ponda, personally oversaw verification desks, guiding applicants on documentation and ensuring seamless inter-departmental coordination.

"Today's camp is in furtherance of the initiative of Project Adhikar driven by the Chief Minister to bring every department to the people so no eligible claimant is left out," Shri Naik said while inaugurating the event.

"The district administration is fully committed to clearing the backlog well before the 19th December 2025 deadline," added Shri Kothawale.

The applications at a glance and particulars and figures are as follows, the total claims in Ponda jurisdiction 259, Claims already scrutinised and forwarded to the District-Level Committee (DLC) 129, Claims taken up today for document rectification 130 and Claims fully decided by SDLC during the camp 60.

Throughout the day officials verified land sketches, genealogy records and affidavits. Forest officers clarified demarcation procedures, while Revenue staff explained survey references.

Village panchayat representatives hailed the initiative for "bringing the office to the doorstep" of tribal hamlets. Several beneficiaries expressed relief that long-pending files had finally progressed.

Claimants have been instructed to submit the pending documents within a period of 15 days, for addressing the remaining cases, enabling the SDLC to forward all the cases of Ponda jurisdiction to the DLC well ahead of the State government's Project Adhikar deadline of December 2025.

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