

## **70% of deemed forest joint survey completed**

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Chikkaballapur: Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Eshwar B. Khandre said that nearly 70 per cent of the joint survey to rectify discrepancies in the deemed forest certification submitted to the Supreme Court in 2022 has been completed.

Speaking to reporters after reviewing progress at the office of the Deputy Conservator of Forests in Chikkaballapur, the minister said the earlier certification contained several lapses, including the inclusion of government buildings and patta lands as deemed forests. To address these issues, forest and revenue department officials have been directed to complete the joint survey at the earliest and submit a detailed report.

Khandre said the Supreme Court has granted the state an opportunity to correct the errors, and committees have been formed at the state, district and divisional levels to find a permanent solution to the issue.

Referring to forest land cases, the minister said instructions have been issued to resolve issues related to Section 4 notifications at the earliest and to take steps to proceed with Section 17 declarations. He added that priority has been given to clearing forest encroachments that occurred after 2015, as well as encroachments exceeding three acres, including patta lands, that existed prior to 2015.

To improve green cover in the district, Khandre said officials have been instructed to plant and nurture tall saplings along both sides of nearly 4,000 kilometres of roads, including national highways, state highways, district main roads and rural roads.

The minister also directed officials to take strict and uncompromising action against illegal stone quarrying in forest land after conducting thorough inspections. With regard to Skandagiri, he said officials have been cautioned to ensure that tourists face no inconvenience while strictly enforcing rules to prevent any illegal activities in the area.

On pollution control, Khandre said local bodies have been instructed to issue notices where untreated sewage is being discharged into rivers, lakes and other water bodies, and to file criminal cases if corrective action is not taken. He further said officials of the environment department have been directed to conduct regular checks to prevent air and water pollution in the district.

Deputy Conservator of Forests Girish and other officials were present during the review meeting.

Source: <https://www.thehansindia.com/karnataka/70-of-deemed-forest-joint-survey-completed-1036620>