Adivasi lands were encroached long ago

Administration trying conciliation and compromise approach, says official

The ongoing conflict between the Adivasi and Lambada tribes has once again brought land issues to the fore in erstwhile undivided Adilabad district. In Adilabad, there are about 150 such cases of alleged encroachment of Adivasi lands by Lambadas while in Kumram Bheem Asifabad, there are 10 to 15 cases in every village which has a mixed population of Adivasis and Lambadas.

The administrations are trying various methods to address the issue which include conciliation and compromise between the opposite parties as almost all cases are 30 to 40 years old.

Not a new issue

The first records of land-related issues in these parts, however, date back to the first half of 1940s noted in the 1945 book Tribal Hyderabad Four Reports By Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf which was based on the famous Austrian Anthropologist’s field notes.

The ethnologist had, who has discussed the problem at great length and with enough of examples, was studying the tribal problem in the Nizam’s Hyderabad. The study was initiated by the seventh Nizam following the rebellion by the legendary Raj Gond martyr Kumram Bheem in the preceding decade. On page 85, Haimendorf notes how affluent non-aboriginals could acquire whole villages in auctions as there were no pattas to tribal lands. He quotes the examples of a Rohilla moneylender who acquired whole village of Yenka and settled other non-tribal farmers and migrant Lambadas acquiring Tadi Harapnur (now in Narnoor mandal of Adilabad district), a pure Gond village which had the latter migrating to nearby Gunjala.

“There are some transactions which reveal that Adivasis have sold their lands to Lambadas are perfect as per given law. There are others where the ethnic people are alleging that the Lambadas have cheated their parents or grandparents to sell the lands for a pittance or even got lands transferred by fraudulent means,” points out KB Asifabad Collector Prashant J. Patil as he talks of the changed profile of land related cases.