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## ‘Clear encroachments on govt. land’

Demanding that the government act on clearing and taking ownership of encroached government lands, scores of citizens, led by freedom fighter H.S. Doreswamy and A.T. Ramaswamy, former MLA , staged a protest at Town Hall here on Monday.

Speaking to *The Hindu* , Mr. Ramaswamy, who headed the Joint Legislature Committee on encroachments on government land in Bangalore Urban district, said that over 20,000 acres of government land in the city had been encroached upon.

“The civic agencies are only looking at clearing visible encroachments. However, in many cases, false documents have been created and ownership of government lands changed. These encroachments are being overlooked,” he said.

He alleged that most encroachments were by politicians in connivance with bureaucrats and the land mafia. Mr. Ramaswamy also said that the Karnataka Land Grabbing (Prohibition) Bill, 2007, which was approved by both the Assembly and Council, was still awaiting the President's assent.

### **‘Lack of political will’**

“The government is not following up on this. There is clearly lack of political will to enact the law,” he alleged. He pointed out that two months ago, Law Minister T.B. Jayachandra had assured that it would be enacted soon.

V. Balasubramanian, who headed the Task Force for Recovery of Government Land in the State, concurred with Mr. Ramaswamy. He said the government had kept his report, submitted in July 2011, in limbo and was yet to accept it.