

# BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 223

AN ACT TO HASTEN TITLING OF RESIDENTIAL LANDS OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN BY AUTHORIZING THE GRANT OF FREE PATENT UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS AND PROVIDING FOR EXPEDITIOUS CADASTRAL AND OTHER JUDICIAL PROCEEDING WITH RESPECT THERETO AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

**Section 1.** The provisions of any law, rules or regulations to the contrary notwithstanding, any citizen of the Philippines who is not a registered owner of a residential land in the same municipality and who, since June 12, 1945 or prior thereto, either by himself or through his bona fide predecessor-in-interest, has been actually residing on, and continuously possessing and occupying, under a bona fide claim of acquisition of ownership, a parcel of residential land of the public domain, which is alienable or disposable, and who has paid all the real estate taxes thereon since June 12, 1945 or prior thereto, shall upon application, be entitled to have a free patent issued to him for such parcel of land not to exceed three thousand square meters: Provided, That the land applied for is not needed for the public service or public use: Provided, further, That no free patent shall be issued for residential lands located in cities, in capitals of provinces, in first class, second class third class, and fourth class municipalities, and in townsite reservations established under Chapter XI of the Public Land Act: Provided, finally, That none of the provisions of Presidential Decree No. 705 are violated by the issuance of such patent

**Section 2.** The application shall be accompanied with a map and technical description of the land applied for, along with supporting affidavits of two (2) disinterested persons who are residents of the municipality where the land is located, attesting to the truth of the facts contained in the application to the effect that the applicant thereof has, either by himself or through his predecessor-in-interest, actually resided on and continuously possessed and occupied, under a bona fide claim of acquisition of ownership, the land applied for since June 12, 1945 or prior thereto, and has complied with the requirements prescribed in Section One hereof.

All applications for free patent under this Act shall be filed on or before December 31, 1987.

The provisions of Section Two and Three of Republic Act Numbered Seven hundred eighty-two and pertinent provisions of Chapter XIV, Title VI of Commonwealth Act Numbered One Hundred forty-one, as amended, shall apply to free patent applications filed under the provisions of this Act.

Legal restrictions on free patent granted over agricultural lands shall likewise apply to free patent granted under this Act.

The Minister of Natural Resources shall, upon the recommendation of the Director of Lands, promulgate such rules and regulations and prescribed such reasonable fees as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

**Section 3.** In order to hasten the settlement and adjudication of land titles over alienable and disposable lands of the public domain in cadastral proceedings and to support, among other objectives, the land reform and the housing programs of the government, the Director of Lands shall immediately institute cadastral proceedings within sixty days from the approval of this Act in all cities, capitals of provinces, and first class, second class, third class, and fourth class municipalities that have been subjected to cadastral survey.

In all other areas, the Director of Lands shall commence survey and make plans preparatory to the institution of cadastral proceedings within six months from approval of this Act, and shall institute cadastral proceedings within sixty days from the completion of the survey.

The Land Registration Commission (National Land Titles and Deeds Registration Administration) shall issue the decree of registration within thirty days from receipt of the copy of the order for the issuance of the decree.

**Section 4.** Any violation of the provisions of this Act or of the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder shall subject the offender to the same penalties provided for in the Public Land Act.

**Section 5.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

*Approved: April 16, 1982*