

Land Reforms in India

Land formalization remains the major part of Indian policies from the beginning. Before independence British Colonization were not in favor of adopting the land reforms which were progressive and on the positive side of rural farmers. This was the opportunity for the big landlords or Zamindars to exploit poor and rural people at great extent.

So after independence, India fought its most revolutionary policy which was the abolition of Zamindari system. Zamindari system is also called as practices of feudal land holding.

There are two specific objectives of land reform:

- a. To remove the exploitation of rural people in order to increase the agricultural production which are arise from structure inherited from our ancestors
- b. To provide security among the tiller of soil and assuring the equality and opportunity to all section population.

Some serious efforts were taken in the favor of land reform. These are as given:

1. Tenancy Reforms:

There were three types of tenants which were as follows:

1. Occupancy or permanent tenants
2. Non-occupancy or temporary tenants
3. Sub-tenants

The authority of the land was under permanent tenants and they have the permanent ownership and the rent of permanent tenant is fixed. Till they pay the rent, they have the authority to cultivate the land which goes generation to generation. As a result of such security, permanent tenants make improvement among their land. They are the first owner of land and hence they can mortgage or sell the land.

Temporary or non-occupancy tenants do not have the right or authority to cultivate the land. They can cultivate but not permanently. In this case, rent is high as compared to permanent tenants. They do not try to make any improvement as they have fear of losing the land.

In case of sub-tenants, they cultivate the land for the big owners. They have the option of cultivating on lease basis. These leases can be changed as well as these are oral. They have pay the rent either as a share of product or in cash.

We can save the dignity and respect of the tenant by implying the following steps

1. Security of tenant's tenure
2. Fixing the rent
3. Grant the ownership to tenants if they paying the rent without any delay.

2. Ceiling the land holdings

The important step is imposition of land holdings which implies that fixing the amount of land that can be possessed by an individual or a family. It has two aspects as

1. Ceiling limit fixation
2. Acquisition of surplus land among landless workers or small farmers.

This imposition on land holding is a redistributive measure. According to professor Gadgo, Apart from all resources, the land supply is most limited and claimants are extremely numerous. So it is difficult and unobvious to allow the large land exploitation by a family or an individual.

3. Consolidation of land holdings

It means the bringing various small plots of land together which is scattered in village as a compact block either by purchasing or in exchange of land. Average size of land holding is very small. The size of land holding is decreasing but the number of land holders are increasing. The inevitable consequence of inheriting the laws is that the farms are getting subdivided with passing generations. Further this land division also destroying the joint family.

As a result nuclear family is leading as the reason of fragmentation or sub-division of holdings. Fragmentation and sub-division of land results in many disadvantages like difficult land management, wastage of land, difficult to adopt new technology, disguised unemployment, disputes of boundaries or low productivity.

4. Co-operative farming

It has been implied to resolve the problems of fragmentation or sub-division of land holdings. In this case or system, farmers give their small land holdings for cultivation and get the benefits of large scale farming. The advantage of adopting new technologies,

scientific farming, and co-operative farming leads the foundation of democracy, self and mutual help. In context of India this type of services or farming is quite observable.

But co-operative farming is a failure in India as the farmers of India are not socialized in this co-operative system. Moreover the attitude of bureaucrats is not in favor of co-operative farming.

5. Emergence of new technology

The new seed and fertilizer technology needs ample resources and free entrepreneurship. Only large farmers have the ability to fulfill these conditions. Hence this comes in the favor of abolition of land holdings.

Many remedial measures have been made in order to remove the difficulties which are pertaining over land reforms.

1. Personal cultivation should be changes keeping the interest of landless farmers.
2. Residential qualification is must for holding land.
3. Transfer of land to a non-agriculturist should be banned.
4. Attention should be given to tribal.
5. Land records should be computerized and kept updated. Funds can be provided by the government to keep it in good conditions.
6. Excess land of big landholders should be distributed equally.

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