

1. What are the main components of land reforms? Enumerate the major difficulties in land reforms in India and suggest measures to remove these.

Answer:

Land reforms include equitable distribution of land on the one hand and land development on the other hand. In the first phase of land reforms there was thrust on egalitarian distribution of land such as abolition of intermediaries, giving land to the tiller, fixing rational rents, fixing a land ceiling for ownership of land and distributing the surplus land to the landless and marginal farmers. Land consolidation was also one of the components which aimed at consolidating land of the farmers, which were scattered over distant areas. Some of the states such as Kerala and West Bengal succeeded in achieving the first phase of land reforms targets tremendously. The small level to minimum level of success was achieved in Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Gangetic Plains. The south India states such as Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka got limited success and so was the situation of Orissa, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra.

In the post green revolution period, the second phase of land reforms were pursued for land development. It was observed that various measures for land development, particularly irrigation and drainage facilities, water harvesting, barbing, and agro forestry etc. were adopted in the green revolution areas. Some efforts were also made to analyze land fertility and provide required nutrients. Whereas green revolution areas succeeded in the second phase of land reforms, the other areas remained laggards. The new agricultural policy, 2001, aimed at giving industrial status to agriculture and allows contract farming by creating a joint interest between the farmer and corporate sector. In the third phase of land reforms, if we prefer to call it so, there has been indiscriminate transfer of land for SEZs and residential and commercial use, which has distorted land use pattern and given a scare of scarcity of land for farming.

The problems facing land reforms are many faceted. First of all, there are no proper land records with the exception of some of the states such as Gujarat, Karnataka, and, Andhra Pradesh, which have achieved computerization of land records. Secondly, there has been widespread noncompliance and violation of provisions of land reforms due to lack of political will to implement them and skewed power matrix of the Panchayati Raj system, which is still dominated by Zamindars and the money lenders. Recently, it has been observed that land use in India is more driven by market forces to other uses than agriculture. In some of the cases the farmers were given insufficient compensations. We need a land use policy which is not only pro farmer and pro-agriculture, but which also allows infrastructure and industries to get the land required for their purpose. This requires a model national land use policy followed by state land use policies. It may also be highlighted that apart from egalitarian land reforms, proper attention must also be paid to land development and productivity enhancement. This aspect of land reforms in India has been largely ignored.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Answer the following Questions

1. Suggest the measures needed to improve the employability of labour force as well as increasing number of employment opportunities in light of structural changes being brought by disruptive technologies. (150 words)
2. India's trade policy in agriculture, marred by ad-hocism and pro-consumer bias, has constrained realization of export potential, and prevented the farmers from reaping the benefits. Examine the statement and discuss ways, including government initiatives, to improve agricultural exports. (150 words)

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