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**“Distribution of Land to Poor: An Initiative towards Eradicating Poverty”**

**G Thiloth Rao,**

*“We must work together to ensure the equitable distribution of wealth, opportunity, and power in our society.*

*”– NELSON MANDELA*

**Abstract:**

*Land and property rights reforms are receiving new and renewed attention as instruments to redress rural poverty by enhancing the land access and tenure security of poor households. The scheme has implementation bottle necks and it has to implement with right approach, then only the benefits will reach the intended. This paper intended to find the new initiative taken in Telangana state and any implementation problems in this regard. The initiatives taken by the government is appreciated and it very much need in the present scenario. The scheme has implementation bottle necks and it has to implement with right approach, then only the benefits will reach the intended.*

**Keywords:** Land, property rights, Poverty, Poor, land distribution, Scheduled Castes.

**Introduction:**

Land and property rights reforms are receiving new and renewed attention as instruments to redress rural poverty by enhancing the land access and tenure security of poor households. The World Bank's in its draft policy research report on land, *Land policy for growth and poverty reduction* (World Bank, 2003) is perhaps the sharpest signal of the prominence of these reforms in contemporary policy debates and agenda. As part of this search, land access and distribution have re-entered the debate. However, the land policy tools now under consideration are rather different from those utilized in an earlier land reform era. In contrast to direct state-mandated land redistribution, the World Bank's policy research report on land and contemporary land access policy is built around a primary and secondary set of policy instruments:

**Objectives:**

- The land distribution program in Telangana, initiatives taken (evaluation)
- Implementation bottlenecks in the Distribution of land in Telangana

**Methodology:**

The required information is taken from the government websites and the website regarding the land distribution in Telangana. In detail analysis of the new initiatives recently taken by the government to ensure proper and perfect implantation of the scheme.

**Online to buy land for poor:**

The state government has come out with a novel idea to purchase land for the landless poor in the state. The government has opened a portal seeking offers from private landowners who wish to sell their properties. Landowners offering their lands for sale under the ‘Land Purchase Scheme’ have to provide information like the district, village, name of pattadar, address, survey number, soil type, source of irrigation at the time of sale, rate offered by the pattadar, mandal, caste, contact number, extent in acres, whether it is being cultivated or fallow and the prevailing market price.

Once the process is initiated, officials of the department will visit the site and after conducting a detailed study of the prevailing market price in the area, quality of land etc., they will fix the price. Though the scheme is basically meant for purchase of land by the Corporation for the government's “land purchase and distribution scheme”.

**Big push on anvil for Land Purchase Scheme:**

The land distribution scheme taken up by the State government to address the perpetual poverty among [Scheduled Castes](#) (SC) is awaiting a major push this year. No significant headway could be made on this count despite the planned initiatives and policy measures in the undivided State. There was in fact a decline in the land holding status of both the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes before the formation of Telangana.

As part of the strategy to reverse the trend, the Telangana government enhanced the value price paid to farmers for acquisition of their land for distribution to landless SC beneficiaries up to Rs 7 lakh per acre in August 2014. But the State witnessed a big boom in land prices thereafter, thanks to the rapid urbanisation consequent to the reorganisation of the districts, revenue divisions and revenue mandals last year.

Added to this, the big promise of irrigation to one crore acres of land in the State and the implementation of projects such as Kaleshwaram, holding out hope for one third of the State, has rendered land unavailable. No farmer is willing to part with his land irrespective of the price offered. Provision of irrigation facility, the majority believe, is certain and selling land at this juncture is considered suicidal.

**Tardy progress:**

The implementation of investment support scheme scheduled to take off from May next is also a major factor that has rendered land purchase for SC beneficiaries an arduous task. Barring a few districts, including Adilabad, Mahabubnagar and Nagarkurnool, the SC Corporation is finding it difficult to purchase land for the scheme even at the value enhanced by the State government. The District Collector of Yadadri Bhongir wrote to the government seeking a review of the issue and if possible considering a further increase in the cost offered to farmers from whom it is to be acquired. The land value in districts such as Ranga Reddy, Karimnagar and Khammam is also too high. As a result, progress in land purchase is not as desired.

The Minister for Power and SC Development, G Jagadish Reddy, said that the government had raised the cap substantially for purchase of land in view of the dire need felt to provide landless SC families with land as well as socio economic support and insulate them from exploitation.

Despite the boom in land prices, all out efforts are being made to realise the targets this year.

Land required for the implementation of the land purchase scheme for SC beneficiaries was already identified in each district. Every effort is being made to address implementation issues. The government has made necessary allocations for this purpose. The need for enhancing the assistance under other economic support schemes is also being examined.

**Problems in purchase Land:**

Being paid to farmers for acquiring their lands would be taken up with the government Secretary SC development, Jyothi Buddha Prakash, said that the government had already enhanced the cost being paid for land from Rs 2 lakh per acre to Rs 7 lakh. It is indeed a big hike. The government is giving a subsidy of Rs 21 lakh per beneficiary, per unit (three acres), under the scheme. But land value cannot be uniform in all districts. Giving 25 cent just outside Outer Ring Road will be equivalent to giving three acres in Adilabad or remote areas of Wanaparty. These issues would be discussed when the policy would be finalised by the government for budget making this year. The initiative of the State government to give irrigation facility would certainly give a value addition to the land holdings.

The government had distributed some 12,000 acres during the past three and half years covering as many as 4,000 beneficiaries, according to the General Manager SC Corporation B Anand. He informed that the stage had been set for distribution of 10,000 acres this year. The requests made by some collectors for enhancing the price.

#### **Land Scheme for Dalits is a Fruitless:**

Dalit Bahujan Front faults State government Land purchase for Dalits, a much publicised scheme by the Telangana government, has fallen flat, going by the results achieved after four budgets. According to the data taken from the SC Development department's website, the number of beneficiaries stands at mere 4,596 in all the 31 districts, and the extent of land distributed among them is 11,968 acres. Of this, 1,466 acres are yet to be registered in the beneficiaries' names. As per the scheme, the government has to ensure three acres of land each for about three lakh landless Dalit households, and three lakh more households which have land less than three acres. To buy land wherever government lands are not available, the department has sanctions to spend up to Rs. 7 lakh per acre.

Findings of a study carried out by the Dalit Bahujan Front reveal that during 2016-17, land was not purchased in Jagtial, Gadwal, Kamareddy, Nagarkurnool, Nizamabad, Peddapalli, Warangal Urban, Sircilla, and Siddipet. In 2017-18 too, land was not purchased in nine districts, Sangareddy, Ranga Reddy, Warangal Urban, Yadadri Bhongir, Peddapalli, Nizamabad, Mahabubnagar, Jagtial, and Jangaon. Even land purchase targets were not set for Hyderabad, Medchal and Bhadradi Kothagudem districts due to surge in land prices, representatives of DBF informed. In Gudem village of Bejjanki mandal in Siddipet, where two Dalit youth attempted suicide demanding allocation of land, it is yet to be distributed, P. Shankar of DBF informed. Land was offered to the already landed families, and when they rejected the same, land distribution itself was suspended, he alleged.

#### **Inputs not provided:**

Though irrigation and inputs are part of the package, in many villages, the same was not provided. The study with a sample size of 42 villages has discovered that households in 18 villages did not receive seed, fertilizer and investments, and no irrigation facility was provided for lands in 17 villages.

In five villages where bore-wells were sunk the administration failed to fit pump-sets, the study noted. Even the land quality was not uniform. There were cases where uncultivable land was distributed, and at times, the land was part of a lake. Some beneficiaries even received land on hillocks.

#### **Conclusion:**

The land distribution programme are intended to reduce the poverty and have an equality life. The proposed changes made in the LPLDs scheme initiated by the Telangana government has been introduced with rules to give more priority to the poor households. The scheme has implementation bottle necks and it has to implement with right approach, then only the benefits will reach the intended.

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