

Indian Agriculture

Indian agriculture had reached the last stage of development & maturity much before the now adv countries of the world ~~on~~ embarked on the path of progress.

In India, prior to independence, agriculture was the heart of the economy. It was the main source of occupation as 70% of the population were dependent on ^{agri} it. However despite of having such a major position of population involved in it, it could only generate 13% of the national income. The interference by the British further ~~deteriorate~~ deteriorate the situation. The British were up to following a pursued a typical colonial policy in India and did nothing to develop the agriculture. Instead they created a class of intermediaries known as zamindars who sucked the very blood out of the rural poor. A substantial part of the produce were taken away by this parasitic class & the actual agri cultivators was ^{left} taken only with subsistence income. The cultivators had neither the dream nor the initial incentive to invest in agri. Therefore Indian agriculture in the pre-independence period can be correctly described as a 'subsistence' occupation.

The British came to India with a motive of ~~transfer~~ transforming India into a supplier of raw material for England in one hand, & on the other hand they seek to create a market for final goods imported from England. This policy of ~~but~~ transforming India into a supplier & a buyer, drained the latter of its valuable resources & wealth & further impoverished the state.

The Indian agricultural economy was subsistence in nature i.e. the economy consumed whatever they produced & was devoid of any commercialisation policy. This was one of the main reason why agricultural productivity in India was low. Another reason for low productivity of agriculture in India is that the ~~farm~~ ^{prevalence of} farming technique was primitive. Indian agricultural sector was considered to be backward owing to the following characteristics:-

① The agricultural sector in India ~~was~~ ^{was} completely dependent on rain i.e. it was rainfed & had no proper irrigation facilities.

② Farmers had an orthodox mind set and were scared to use any of the fertilizers & pesticides.

③ The seeds which were used in farming were home grown and were low productive in nature. Unlike HYV seeds, the home grown seeds were vulnerable to / ~~from~~ prone to disease and pest.

4) The primitive agricultural practices were highly ~~dependant on cows and oxen for ploughing~~ and were devoid of any machinery practice. In other words the farmers were not aware of the use of ~~for~~ tractors & other machines which caused the productivity to fall.

5) It is also believe that the social environment has also led to the low productivity of the agri sector in India. The Indian farmers are illiterate, superstitious, conservative & unresponsive to new agri technique which was one of the greatest reasons for the backwardness of Indian agri.

6) Land tenure system: Perhaps the most important reason of low productivity has been the exploitative zamindari system which sicks to drain ~~the~~ out the capacity, willingness and enthusiasm of the cultivators.

7. Uneconomic Holding: According to National Sample Survey 1961-62, 52% of holding had a size of less than 2 hectares. Most of the holdings are not only extremely small, they are also fragmented into a number of tiny plots which only allows for labour intensive farming techniques. This results in low productivity.

Measures to increase Productivity.

① Integrated Management of Land & Water:

As stated earlier, almost half of the country's lands are degraded. There is a huge loss because of water logging, salinisation, human-induced water erosion etc. This proves the urgency of an integrated and efficient management of our land and water resources. With this view, the committee on 25 year perspective Plan for the development of the rain-fed areas constituted by the Planning Commission for the 10th plan suggested treating of 75 million hectares arable land & non-arable land by 2021-22.

② Improved seeds: Improved or HYV seeds can play a important role in increasing productivity. In fact, the efficacy of other agricultural inputs such as fertilisers, pesticides & irrigation is largely determined by the quality of the seeds used. It is estimated that quality of seeds accounts for 20-25% of productivity. Therefore timely availability of quality seeds at affordable prices to farmers is may help in achieving higher ager prodⁿ & productivity.

③ Fertilizers: There is an urgent need for the promotion of the use of chemical fertilizers among instead of primitive organic fertilizers. The orthodox farmers are unaware of the use of chemical fertilizer and consider their use as an taboo. Therefore proper steps should be take to educate the farmer & make them aware regarding the efficient use of chemical fertilizers along with improved variety of seeds.

4) Irrigation Facilities: In major part of the country the farming practice were dependant on rain fall i.e they were rainfed. Thus due to the absence of irrigation facility a

irregularities in rain may ~~used~~ caused ^{down} to the agri sector & its productivity. Thus it was necessary to promote the establishment of irrigation facilities in the agri sector & make the farmers aware of the benefits of irrigation.

⑤ Technology: Improved technology is most important for the growth of agri output. There is an urgent need of transformation from a primitive farming technique system to a machine driven farming system. The inclusion of machineries in agri such as tractors, pumps etc would promote efficiency in agri sector and also help in increasing productivity. Thus efforts should be made to educate the tillers about the use of machinery technology in agri sector.

⑥ Provision of Credit & Marketing facilities: With the ushering of green revolution & inclusion of H.V seeds, technology, fertilizers in the agri sector, a huge demand for capital by the tillers sprung up. The modernised technique of farming required substantial

money resources which small farmers do not usually possess. Therefore it was necessary to strengthen the credit cooperative sector & free it from the clutches of large landowners so that it can meet needs of small farmers. Regional Rural banks played a land marketing role in this regard. The marketing structure was also needed a reorientation to serve the small and marginal farmers in better way. Cooperative marketing societies were thus promoted to ensure better price to small farmer.

Thus we can conclude that prior to British rule, Indian agri^{a closed eco} was ^{subsistence in} nature and was devoid of any surplus agri product. However ~~with the~~ in the colonial period, the British ^{concept of} ~~tried to~~ followed introduce commercialisation in the agriculture sector. The policy of commercialisation forced the Indian tillers to produce migrate from the production of staple crops (such as rice, wheat) to prodⁿ of cash crops (such as tea, sugarcane). The British were also responsible for promoting modernisation of Indian agri by ~~introducing~~ promoting the use of 1

Land Reform

By the term land reform, we mean reform of institutional factors related to land. In order to raise agricultural production and also increase the level of income & standard of living of cultivators, institutional factors along with technical factors are playing an important role. These institutional factors include land tenure system, land holding, farming structure, land distribution, intermediaries etc.

In order to attain inter-institutional change in agrarian structure, land reform are considered effective. According to Gunnar Myrdal, "Land reform is planned & institutional reorganization of the relation between men & land."

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The term land reform has 2 diff senses. In a narrow sense, land reform are considered concerned with those reform related to land ownership & land holding. But in a broad sense the term land reform is used to mean the measures of reform necessary to raise agri production which include reform related to fixation of rent on land, abolition of intermediaries, credit & marketing arrangement etc.

Need of Land reform -

There is a great need for land reform in a country like India where majority of pop is still depending on agri. Land reform aims to make more rational use of the scarce land resources by effecting the condition of holding, imposing ceilings & floors on holdings so that cultivation can be done in the most economical manner.

Land reform is also a mean of redistributing agri land in favour of the less privileged classes & of improving the terms & condition on which land is held for cultivation by actual tillers with a view to ending exploitation.

Scope of Land reform -

Land reform aim at redistributing land ownership holding from the view point of social justice & reorganisation

operation holding from the view point of optimum utilization of land.

Besides this there is a prob of condition of tenancy; i.e. the right & condition of holding land. Land reform aim at providing security of tenures, fixation of rents, conferment of ownership etc. The entire concept of land reform aims at the abolition of intermediaries & bringing the actual cultivator in direct contact with state. Provision of security of tenancy & rent regulation provides a suitable atmosphere in which the agriculturist feels sure of reaping the fruits of his labour.

Therefore the scope of land reforms can be summed up as follows.

- 1) Abolition of intermediaries.
- 2) Tenancy reform, i.e. regulation of rent, security of tenure for tenants & conferment of ownership on them.
- 3) Ceilings & floors of land holdings.
- 4) Agrarian reorganisation including consolidation of holdings & prevention of subdivision & fragmentation.
- 5) Organisation of cooperative farms.

Basically land reform measures are aimed at alleviating rural poverty in following manner -

1) By distributing land among the landless

2) By taking possession of surplus land from large land holders.

3) By providing security of tenure &

ownership right of tenants & share cropper & by regulating a rent payable by them to the landlords.

4) By protecting the interest of tribals in land & preventing non-tribal to encroach upon the tribal land.

5) By promoting consolidation of holding. To increase the size of operation holding thereby paving the way to raise productivity.

6) By development of public land thereby providing better access to the rural poor to obtain fuel wood

7) By providing access to women to land & other productive assets

Types of Land System - prevailing in India - (before independence)

At the time of independence there were 3 types of land tenure system prevailing in the country. They were -

- 1) Zamindari system
- 2) Mahalwari system
- 3) Ryotwari system

Zamindari System → This system was created by the East India Company when in 1793 Lord Cornwallis entered into permanent settlement with land

lords with a view to increase revenue of the company. In this system the ownership of the land rests to the Zamindars or land lords. They own the land & are responsible for the payment of taxes to the Govt. The land lords do not cultivate their land by themselves. They lend out land to the tenants & collect the share of the produce of land as rent. The tenant ^{who} cultivated have no direct relation with Govt.

2) Mahalwari System — This system was introduced by William Bentinck in agrar & auck and it was later extended to M.P & Punjab. In this system the whole village was treated as a unit as far as payment of land revenue is concerned. The responsibility for collecting the land revenue & depositing it in the ^{the treasury} ~~treasury~~ ^{treasury} ~~treasury~~ of the village head men were co-shares appointed for the purpose.

3) Roy Ryotwari System — In this system the responsibility of paying land revenue was of the cultivator or individual Ryot himself & there was no intermediate between him & the state. The Ryot has full right regarding sale, transfer & leasing of land & couldn't be ejected from the land as long as he paid the land revenue. This system was not available to cultivators under the Gomindari system.

Though the Ryotwari system appears satisfactory on the face of it, it also develops various snags or loopholes. In this area money-lenders or mahajans granted loans to cultivators by mono-mortgaging their

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land. Soon substantial portion of land slip out of cultivators and became the property of money lenders & mahajans

Objectives of Land Reform

The objective of Land reform was to create necessary conditions for evolving an agrarian economy with high degree of efficiency & productivity. The govt define the objectives of land reforms as follows:-

- 1) To remove such impediments to increase in agricultural production as arise from the agrarian structure inherited from the past.
- 2) To eliminate all forms of exploitation & social injustice which in the agrarian system to provide security for tiller of soil & ~~also~~ ensure equality of status & opportunity to all section of rural population

Thus land reforms in India aim at ~~at~~ ~~conferring~~ & conferring security of tenure, fixation of rent, conferment of ownership etc. Through the abolition of intermediaries & bringing the actual tiller in direct contact with the state. Following are some of the imp objectives of Land reforms in India —

- 1) To make provision for more rational use of scarce land resources. Raise the production level of
- 2) Raise the prodⁿ of agric sector
- 3) To remove exploitation of ~~poor~~ ^{poor} farmers by redistributing agric land in favour of less privileged class of farmers and also by improving terms & conditions for possessing land.
- 4) To promote social welfare for under-represented masses & social ~~injustice~~ ^{justice} through equitable distribution of income.
- 5) To attain planned development of agric sector on long term basis to raise the standard of living of the rural poor through redistributive ~~packages~~ ^{packages} & programmes.

Land Reform measures introduced in
India—

are -

① Abolition of Intermediaries: During the time of independence India experienced the zamindari system. This system was created by the East India Company when in 1773 Lord Cornwallis entered into permanent settlements with land holders with a view to increase revenue of the company. In this system the ownership of land was vested to zamindars. The zamindars thus acted as the land & were responsible for ~~the~~ the payment of taxes to the govt. The zamindars used to distribute the land among the tillers ~~to who~~ and for farming & in return collected a amount of the produce as rent on land. Thus the farmers had no direct relation with the government which enable the zamindars a scope for exploiting them.

The zamindari as a scheme of exploitation used to charge high rent from the tenants in the name of paying tax to the govt. This ^{communication} gap betw. the land tenants & govt gave the intermediaries a huge scope to exploit the landless farmers & become rich.

To curb this exploitation, legislation has been ~~drawn up~~ ^{was framed} to abolish intermediaries and providing the tenant farmers with direct access to property rights. On other words farmers were provided lands were provided to farmers such that no intermediaries interest exist. enter a cultivator & govt.

② TENANCY Reforms - Along with abolition of Zamindari system, tenancy reforms also played a great role in the glorifying green revolution. Tenancy reforms included ^{policy of} fixation of ~~as~~ a uniform rent, security of tenure and conferring ownership rights ~~on~~. This policies are explained as follows

- a) Fixation of Rent: Diff states have fixed a different ^{min} rent for this purpose. Such as Punjab has fixed $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the total produce, in Kerala it varied from $(\frac{1}{2} \text{ to } \frac{1}{4})$ etc.

b) Security of Tenure: It promotes ^{the life of farmers} stability & confidence in

① Prevention of large scale ejectionment of tenants.

② Assuring a prescribed min area of land to the tenants.

Further govt has also made mandatory for the farmers to get registered through the Barg legislative process

② Conferring ownership rights - This policy aimed to take distribute the surplus land to the landless labourers & to give them property rights on land.

③ Ceiling on land holdings - By ceiling on land holdings we mean fixation of maximum size of land an individual can hold or own. Beyond the minimum size, all the surplus land of the land lord is taken by the govt & is distributed among the landless labourers. Presently ceiling 17 acres.

④ Consolidation of holdings under which scattered plots of land are brought together to form one compact block of land & further perform to promote collective farming. This policy aims at to prevent wastage of land (caused by building boundaries) and also ~~promotes~~ ^{make provision for the} to use advanced machineries in farming. Thus this policy stands ~~ago~~ against subdivision & fragmentation of land which is one of the prime causes of low productivity.

(c) Agricultural Marketing :

Agricultural marketing comprises all operation involved in the movement of farm produce from the farmer to consumer. Expansion of agricultural market & easy access to weekly markets & mandis have helped the farmers to reap

higher π . Formation of co-operative marketing societies ~~are~~ by farmers to sell output collectively has also been a driving successful factor for the success of G. Revolution.

Factors responsible for poor performance of Land Reform - Evaluation of Land reform in India - 4)

- 1) Lack of Political will - In the context of the socio-economic condition prevailing in the several areas of a country no tangible progress can be accepted in the field of land reform in the absence of requisite political will. The sad truth is that this crucial factor have been wanting. As long as the legal political will is not forthcoming the implementation of land reform will be very difficult.

2) Absence of Pressure from below:- Small

& marginal farmers along with land less agricultural ~~far~~ workers, who form the majority of cultivating population are unorganised & have not been at a position to press the demand for effective implementation of land reform measures.

3) Administrative inadequacies & the legal difficulties have delayed & even frustrated the implementation of land reform measures.

4) Some weak point/spot in the land reform problem such as - i) complexity & ~~not~~ variety in land reform laws in various states.

ii) Lack of integrated approach in the implementation of various ~~major~~ measures.

iii) Lack of financial support

Thus the very instruments of implementing land reform have turned into instrument of subverting land reforms. The ~~various~~ nexus betw politicians, administrators & large land owners ~~have~~

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brought the 'rich peasant' power
into the lime light. Into the
peasant power dominates the state govt,
regional & local administration &
serves as the principle instrument of
land grabbing & as a strong impediment
in the implementation of land reform