



Dotted Lands

For Prelims: Dotted lands, [SVAMITVA](#), [PARIVESH](#), [Bhumi Samvaad](#)

For Mains: Issues related to land ownership disputes and the concept of dotted lands, significance of Digitization of land records

Why in News?

Recently, the **Andhra Pradesh government** has initiated a significant step to **release "dotted lands"** from the prohibited list, allowing farmers to exercise their full rights over these disputed lands.

- This move aims to **resolve ownership disputes** and provide **clear land ownership** documents to eligible farmers.

What are Dotted Lands?

▪ About:

- Dotted lands are **disputed lands for which there are no clear ownership documents**.
 - Typically, one or more individuals as well as the government's Revenue Department lay claim over the land.
- These lands came to be known as "dotted lands" because when, during the **British era**, land ownership surveys and resettlement of land records were taken up, local revenue officials who were tasked with identifying government-owned and privately-owned lands **put dots in the ownership column if more than one person claimed ownership, or if ownership could not be clearly established**.

▪ Causes of Ownership Disputes:

- Ownership disputes often arise when **landowners fail to establish clear inheritance** through wills or when **multiple heirs claim the same land**.
- In some cases, the government identifies land as **state-owned** but finds it occupied by private parties.

▪ Government's Initiative to Resolve Dotted Lands Issue:

- The Andhra Pradesh government introduced a Bill to grant land titles to **farmers cultivating dotted lands for over 12 years**.
 - Removal of dots and entries from land registers will provide clear land ownership documents to approximately 97,000 farmers.
- Landowners/farmers can utilize the lands as **collateral for obtaining loans**, in **urban areas, dotted lands have been illegally sold** and houses have been constructed, which cannot be taxed. **apply for financial assistance for crop support, sell the lands, or gift them to family members**.
- Through "**Jagananna Saswatha Bhu Hakku Bhu Raksha Scheme**" of Andhra Pradesh Government, **digital records of this land will be prepared** so that **no one can tamper with the records in the future**.
 - Under this **Scheme, Andhra Pradesh government** has provided 7,92,238

permanent title deeds to farmers in 2,000 villages in the first phase.

▪ **Rationale behind the Government's Action:**

- The Chief Commissioner of Land Ceiling **received over 1 lakh applications to resolve dotted land disputes**, indicating the pressing need for a resolution.
- Urban areas faced issues related to illegal sale and construction on dotted lands, **leading to tax evasion and revenue loss for the government.**
- The registration value of the 2,06,171 acres exceeds Rs 8,000 crore, while the land value surpasses Rs 20,000 crore.

What are India's Initiatives for Digital Land Records to Reduce Land Disputes?

▪ **SVAMITVA:**

- **SVAMITVA** is a Central Sector Scheme of the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj** for **mapping the land parcels in rural inhabited areas** using **drone technology** and **Continuously Operating Reference Station (CORS)**.
- The mapping will be done across the country in a phase-wise manner over a period of four years - from 2020 to 2024.

▪ **PARIVESH Portal:**

- **PARIVESH** is a web-based application which has been developed for **online submission and monitoring** of the proposals submitted by the proponents for seeking **Environment, Forest, Wildlife and Coastal Regulation Zones (CRZ)** Clearances from Central, State and district level authorities.

▪ **Bhumi Samvaad:**

- **Bhumi Samvaad** is a **National Workshop on Digital India Land Record Modernisation Programme (DILRMP)**.
- It attempts to build upon the commonalities that exist in the arena of land records in various States to develop an appropriate **Integrated Land Information Management System (ILIMS)** across the country, on which different States can also add State-specific needs as they may deem relevant and appropriate.

▪ **National Generic Document Registration System:**

- It is a major shift from the existing manual registration system to online registration of all transactions in sale-purchase and transfer of land.
- It is a big step towards National Integration and a leap towards 'One Nation One Software'.

▪ **Unique Land Parcel Identification Number:**

- Being described as "the **Aadhaar** for land", **Unique Land Parcel Identification Number** is a number that would uniquely identify every surveyed parcel of land and prevent land fraud, especially in the hinterlands of rural India, where land records are outdated and often disputed.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. With reference to land reforms in independent India, which one of the following statements is correct? (2019)

- (a) The ceiling laws were aimed at family holdings and not individual holdings.
- (b) The major aim of land reforms was providing agricultural land to all the landless.
- (c) It resulted in cultivation of cash crops as a predominant form of cultivation.
- (d) Land reforms permitted no exemptions to the ceiling limits.

Ans: (b)

Mains:

Q. Discuss the role of land reforms in agricultural development Identify the factors that were responsible for the success of land reforms in India. **(2016)**

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