

Dotted Lands

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Context- Recently, the Andhra Pradesh government has initiated a significant step to release “dotted lands” from the disallowed list, permitting ranchers to practice their full freedoms over these contested terrains. This move aims to provide eligible farmers with clear land ownership documents and to settle ownership disputes.

About Dotted Lands

- Dotted lands are land ownership disputes for which there are no clear documents.
- Regularly, at least one person as well as the government’s Income Office lay guarantee over the land.
- These lands became known as “dotted lands” because local revenue officials who were tasked with identifying government-owned and privately owned lands put dots in the ownership column when more than one person claimed ownership or when ownership could not be clearly established during British land ownership surveys and resettlement of land records.

Causes of Ownership Disputes:

- When multiple heirs claim the same land or when landowners fail to clearly establish inheritance through wills, ownership disputes frequently arise.
- The government may identify land as belonging to the state but discover that private parties are occupying it.
- The Government’s Plan to Address the Dotted Lands Problem:
- A bill was introduced by the government of Andhra Pradesh to grant land titles to farmers who have been cultivating dotted lands for more than 12 years.
- About 97,000 farmers will have clear land ownership documents once dots and entries

from land registers are removed.

- In urban areas, dotted lands have been illegally sold and houses have been constructed, which cannot be taxed, and landowners and farmers can use the lands as collateral to obtain loans. apply for monetary help for crop support, sell the grounds, or gift them to relatives.
- The Andhra Pradesh Government's **"Jagananna Saswatha Bhu Hakku Bhu Raksha Scheme"** will prepare digital records for this land to prevent tampering in the future.
- In the first phase of this program, farmers in 2,000 villages received 7,92,238 permanent title deeds from the Andhra Pradesh government.

Rationale behind the Government's Action:

- Over a thousand requests to settle dotted land disputes were submitted to the Chief Commissioner of Land Ceiling, indicating the urgency of the situation.
- The illegal sale and construction of dotted land in urban areas caused tax evasion and revenue loss for the government.
- The enlistment worth of the 2,06,171 sections of land surpasses Rs 8,000 crore, while the land esteem outperforms Rs 20,000 crore.

What are India's initiatives to reduce land disputes through digital land records?

- **SVAMITVA:**

- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj's Central Sector Scheme SVAMITVA uses drone technology and a Continuously Operating Reference Station (CORS) to map land parcels in rural inhabited areas.
- Over the course of four years, from 2020 to 2024, the mapping will be carried out in stages across the nation.

- **PARIVESH:**

- PARIVESH is a web-based application designed for online proposal submission and monitoring to obtain CRZ (Environment, Forest, Wildlife, and Coastal Regulation Zone) clearances from district, state, and central government officials.

- **Samvaad Bhumi:**

- A national workshop on the Digital India Land Record Modernization Program (DILRMP) is Bhumi Samvaad.
- It aims to develop an appropriate Integrated Land Information Management System (ILIMS) across the nation by building on the commonalities that exist in the realm of land records in various States. On top of this, different States can also add State-specific requirements as they see fit.

- **National Generic Document Registration System:**

- It is a significant shift from the current manual enrollment framework to online enlistment of all exchanges in deal buy and move of land.
- It is a significant step toward "One Nation, One Software" and national integration.

- **Unique Land Parcel Identification Number:**

- The Unique Land Parcel Identification Number, also known as “the Aadhaar for land,” is a number that would uniquely identify each surveyed parcel of land and prevent land fraud, particularly in rural India’s hinterlands, where land records are outdated and frequently disputed.