SIXTH CHAPTER

Impact of
Peasants Movements
on
Indian Society
and
Economy
The Agrarian question was a dominant theme of the era of nationalist struggle and its ideology. It acquired enduring significance in the 1920s and 1930s, effected the politics associated with it continue to evoke considerable attention in contemporary India. The nature and the content of the problem; however varied from time to time. It also guided the policies and programmes of congress which was the only party of masses leading the Indian National Movement. Indian National Congress; while resolving the agrarian question initiated different constructive programme, introduced many reforms and schemes, amended laws of the part, consolidated the various groups of the peasants during 1920 to 1950 A.D.

And after independence when India had the freedom to shape its destiny, Congress Party tied up the agrarian question with the national economic policy and introduced many programme and schemes; keeping in view ameliorations of tenant’s conditions; such as rural reconstructive programme; which comprised co-operative farming, agricultural marketing and rural credit, introduction of Green Revolution, improvement of animal breeds providing irrigation facilities etc. And the architect of the policy, which brought about the changes in the social and economic landscape of rural India, was no doubt Jawahar Lal Nehru this task was not easy. He had to carry not only Indian National Congress but also several shades of opinion, powerful factions with right and left leanings. He dominated the Indian National Congress for several decades both before and after independence.
And it is a fact that under Nehru’s inspiration and guidance that the largest body of agrarian legislation was passed after 1947 by different states of the Indian Union, land reform being a state of subject. But so far the radical changes in the rural class relations is concerned, that was effected with the abolition of zamindari and placing of a cieling on land.

What is equally important is that Nehru laid the foundation of a modern industrial society, democratic in spirit, socialists in its aspirations and scientic in its temper. Following the example set by Nehru tremendous advances were made in several spheres in the later years, after Nehru’s death under congress governments which brought about a rural transformation, ushering in a green revolution which has made India self reliant in food production.

While analysing the processes of social changes led by congress; it would be important to deal with the past program initiated by congress. It was common knowledge that the real India lives in the villages. So if the independence of the country was to be achieved, the congress was well aware that the villages must be improved and the teeming millions inhabiting them must be uplifted so that they might be able to contribute there due share to the struggle for freedom when called upon to do so.

Immediately on assumption office, all congress governments applied themselves to the all important task of rural re-construction. In the united provinces, for rebuilding the social, cultural and economic life of the rural areas, the government selected twenty centers in each district; comprising twenty villages for intensive work. An organiser was placed as a friend
philosopher and guide of the centre who used to motivate the rural inhabitants for their own efforts and actions.

His works were supervised by the government and funds were also provided to spend in the villages selected for rural development. In the same manner a rural uplift scheme was launched during 1938-39 to 50 centers. Ideas better forming, better sanitation and better living were included in it. In this scheme a prominent place was given to the encouragement of hand spinning and hand weaving. Trained workers were supplied to serve in the rural uplift centers in the province. Each center had to revive a cottage industry up to profitable stage. Paid trained workers used to guide the rural inhabitants. The general welfare activities in such centers would sanitation; health, hygiene village roads, cleaning of wells and tanks, adult education and agricultural propaganda. Under this scheme Khadi industry and other subsidiary industries were also improved.

Thus congress ministries; from the very beginning launched some rural reconstruction programme as welfare measures for the masses. Had the congress ministries continued in office for a longer period, such schemes would certainly have better chances of success. The Congress constructive programme gave a prominent place to the development of khadi and other cottage industries. Gandhi ji had established the All India Spinners Association and All India Village Industries Association to promote the Khadi Program in the country.

And Gandhi ji motivated the all parties and communities to uplift the villages “economically morally and hygienically”. When the congress
ministries assumed office, they found enough scope to put their ideals into practice. Most of the states established village industries to mitigate the distress of the poor villagers. In the united provinces the main effort of the congress government in the industrial field had been to develop cottage industries.

The *Provincial Rural Development Board* started a scheme of Rs. 2 lakhs for the development of the industries in villages. All the village-based industries were taken into consideration to improve the quality of the articles produced and secondly to secure a market for them. Surveyors were appointed to guide the villagers in improving the quality of their goods.

Besides, master craftsmen were also appointed to train the village artisans. The relief of peasant indebtedness was linked with tenancy reform in congress election manifesto. Naturally a series of moneylenders or debtors relief acts were passed in all states. Legislation providing opportunities to tenants to become owners of the land was passed which pared way to purchase the holdings on which they cultivate. All this encouraged hard working tenants to become owner cultivators. This legislation affected the production-efficiency of the tenants.

Under the Zamindary system landlords grew richer, the intermediaries continued to flourish, the state was deprived of its share of legitimate increase in revenue and the cultivator-tenants lived a “hand to mouth” existence. The serious exists of the system led to legislations for its abolition after independence in the worst affected states. By the end of March 1968, the abolition of intermediaries was fully implemented and
compensation was paid to the Zamindars. Tenants were encouraged to purchase those lands in which they were cultivating for a long time.

**Tenancy legislation under the five year plan**

The primary aim of tenancy legislations recommended in the five year plans (i) to regulate rents, (2) to provide greater security of tenure to the tenants and to encourage and permit tenant to purchase the land. In determining the land reforms policy of the first plan special emphasis was placed on the abolition of intermediaries, enactment of radical tenancy reforms and resumption of personal cultivation based on peasant-proprietorship.

And substantial progress was achieved during the first plan period in almost all states for abolition of intermediaries. Radical tenancy reforms were introduced and old tenancy laws were renewed to suit present day conditions. In U.P. tenants were given full security of tenure; but the work of rent regulation and consolidation of holdings did not make appreciable progress during the first five year plan.

Although land reforms promoted agricultural development in a number of ways, first of all, the imposition of ceilings on land holdings exert new pressure on the big land owning class to work more intensively on land off the farms for maintaining their past standard of living. Secondly, redistribution of surplus land among a large number of landless peasants creates new incentives and opportunities for more work and investment. Thirdly abolition of intermediaries and the system of cultivation by tenants-
at-will followed by the creation of peasant-proprietorship would improve the prospects for raising farm productivity, income and employment since peasant-proprietorship. Fourthly, consolidation of the land led to adopt modern farm practices and lastly need for the co-operative arrangements in village farming was considered. The ultimate objective of land reforms to be found in the second plan report was the creation of co-operative village management; in which the whole village served as the unit of management, and the resources of the whole village community derived from agriculture, trade and village industry were utilized for securing maximum increase in production and employment.

There were three district aspects in second five year plan’s land policy. Firstly, as regards ownership, peasant-proprietorship was emphasized and the individual peasant would continue to be the owner of the land which he possessed. Secondly, the ultimate objective of management would be to entrust it to the whole village community. Thirdly, in the field of operation there would be either individual or co-operative forming. The second plan also tackled; the question of ceiling on land holdings; and provisions in the legislation relating to ceiling have been brought into force, rules framed and steps have been taken for implementing the legislation.

The agrarian policy enunciated in the second plan was prepared in piecemeal fashion. The party in power soon realized that a coordinated land policy is required during the process of industrialization in an underdeveloped country like ours, mainly for the purpose of generating a larger marketable surplus of food grains and agricultural raw material in order to meet the expanding requirements of industrialization and the high
export targets. The congress at the Nagpur session, in the beginning of 1959 showed its deep appreciation of this vital problem and secured to be eager to re-orient and co-ordinate the land policy. 09

The new agrarian policy based on the Nagpur resolution of the congress party, visualizes the co-operatives as the keystone of the arch of our five year plans. The new pattern by of land reforms were aimed at Panchayat based joint co-operative forms, preceded by the development of a network of service co-operatives. These service co-operatives, which were temporary organization, were mainly for supplying good seeds, fertilizers, agricultural implements and scientific advice to the cultivators. Tasks of credit and marketing facilities were also given to them. The state governments were ordered to enact legislations relating to ceiling on holdings by the end of 1959.

The Nagpur congress session passed following resolution on agrarian organizational pattern for India.

1. The future agrarian pattern should be that co-operative joint farming; in which land would be pooled for joint cultivation the farmers continuing to retain their right of property, getting a share from the production.

2. As a first step, prior to the institution of joint farming, service co-operatives should be organized throughout the country.

3. Ceiling should be fixed on existing and future holdings and legislations to this effect, as well as for the abolition of intermediaries,
should be completed in all states by the end of 1959. All surplus land should be under the control of panchayat and managed through co-operatives.

4. With a view to assuring a fair return to the teller, a minimum floor price should be fixed reasonably in advance of the sowing season with respect to each crop.

As far as progress of co-operative farming in India was concerned, first attempt at a systematic and coordinated type of co-operative farming was made in the Jhansi district of Uttar Pradesh. After some time a number of co-operative farms had been organized in other districts of U.P. In Uttar Pradesh co-operative farming societies had reclaimed large tracts of land in the terai region.

Indian co-operative congress passed a resolution in February 1952 that active and vigorous steps should be taken by the state and co-operative movement to organize co-operative farming societies should be formed whenever desirable and feasible. Inspired by this resolution the government in September 1953 arranged a conference of state ministers of agriculture and co-operation. The Indian Planning Commission has agreed that co-operative farming should be developed as rapidly as possible. In Karve Committee there was a general agreement that co-operative farming should be developed as rapidly as possible the practical achievements in this field were however meagre. The main task during the second five year plan was provide sound foundations for the development of cooperative farming so that a substantial proportion of agricultural lands could be cultivated on
cooperative lines. The question was sometimes raised as to what precisely was meant by cooperative farming, co-operative farming necessarily was pooling of land and joint management.\textsuperscript{10}

In the first five year plan a number of suggestions were made for encouraging and assisting small farmers to group themselves voluntarily into cooperative farming societies. State governments were requested to draw phased programmes for co-operative farming; planned experiments were recommended with a view to evolving suitable methods. Thousands of co-operative farming societies were functioning in all parts of the country. Efforts were made to educate the people in the advantages of co-coperative farmings. In national extension and community project areas, in particular facilities such as the following were recommended.

1. Credit from government or from co-operative agencies and preference generally in financial assistance from the government for approved agricultural programmes.

2. Facilities for consolidation of lands comprised in a co-operative farm.

3. Preference in the grant of leases of lands culturable waste lands, land whose management is assumed by the government and lands under the management of village panchayats.

4. Technical assistance of personal in form operations, marketing, and preporation of production programmes.

5. Technical or financial assistance in developing non-agricultural employment for members of the cooperative farming society and others associated with them.
Besides in implementing a programme for the development of co-operative farming it was important to emphasise the need for widespread training special courses in cooperative farming, both theoretical and practical should be organized. To develop co-operative farming at large scale some surplus areas were made available; settlements of there lands were made on co-operative lines. In tribal areas special attention was paid to develop the lands on co-operative lines. With the growth of co-operative farming societies and the development of co-operation in various non-farm activities became stronger and the production and rural incomes were also increased. Artisans and surplus workers were introduced with new techniques, including the utilization of power and of improved equipment. The work of co-operative faring was use of improved seeds, common buying and selling, conservation of soil with co-operation etc.

During the transition of co-operative village management, lands in the villages were managed in three different ways. Firstly, there were the individual farmers cultivating their own holdings, secondly there would be groups of farmers who were pooling their lands voluntarily in their own interests into cooperative working units. Thirdly there were some lands which were under the control of the village community as a whole; or the common lands of the village, culturable waste lands assigned to the villages, lands available for the settlement of the land less. Credit work, marketing and processing were also done with cooperation. All these activities were inter-related to each other. The main instruments for achieving co-operative village management were-

1. The national extension service and programmes for increasing agricultural production and developing other allied activities.
2. The village panchayat and the functions assigned to it as the development agency at the village level.

3. Steps taken to develop cooperative credits, marketing, ware housing, processing etc.

4. Programmes for the development of village industries, specially for meeting local needs and for producing work opportunities to all persons in the village.

5. Programmes for promoting and assisting voluntary cooperative farming societies etc.

6. Development of a ‘community sector’ within the village economy; that was, of land belonging to the village community as a whole and activities organized for the village as a whole.

Agrarian experiments were recommended for evolving techniques of co-operative farming but unfortunately during the first plan period little action was taken in this direction. The second five year plan provided some foundations for the development of co-operative farming so that by the end of the third plan period a substantial proportion of agricultural land is cultivated on co-operative lines. The estimated expenditure in the second plan for the development of co-operation was 34 crores, which was increased up to 80 crores in the third plan. By the end of fourth plan co-operative were expected to handle fertilizers work 650 crores, improved seeds 50 crores, pesticide Rs. 50 crores and implements Rs. 15 crores.

By the end of 1967 8,254 co-operative farming societies had been setup. Since January 1959, when the congress party at Nagpur announced its
decision to implement as early as possible a new agrarian organizational pattern based on joint co-operative farming, a good deal of activity started on the co-operative front. In this connection National Co-operative Farming Advisory Board at the centre and the states to promote co-operative farming and encourage voluntary organization of 318 planned pilot projects were two imported steps taken by the government in the sphere of co-operative farming.

The Planning Commission not only wants to achieve rural progress and reorganization through co-operation, but as the second and third five year plan co-operation was destined to play the most distinct role in the field of small scale and cottage industries. Over the period of the first two plans, the member Primary Agricultural Credit Societies rose from about 105,000 to about 213,000 and their membership increased from 4.4 million to 14.4 million order this period the total loans advanced by Primary Agricultural Societies rose from about Rs. 23 crores to about Rs. 200 crores.  

Since 1959, when the congress party announced a new agrarian organizational pattern, co-operatives became the keystone of the main structure of our programme for rural dynamization. It should be noted that 52,000 Primary Co-operative Societies were aimed for the third plan, but the progress achieved in this period was not fully satisfactory.

**Agricultural Marketing and Rural Credit**

Indian agriculture would not have renovated and reorganized unless the problems of agricultural marketing and rural finance were effectively solved. The All India Rural Credit Survey report of 1951-52 for the
first time probed deep into the problem of agricultural marketing and rural credit and make the important recommendation that for an effective solution of the marketing and credit problems, there should be a proper integration of co-operative credit societies and co-operative marketing societies in the rural areas.¹²

Inspired by the Rural Credit Survey report the government decided to provide credit facilities to a large number of agriculturists as possible. In most cases credit societies granted loans against anticipated crops; and the produce raised with the help of the loan were taken to the nearest marketing society. And the products which were of high quality a seal of “AGMARK” was put on them by the recommendation of Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act, 1937.

After independence, inspired by the report of the All India Rural Credit Survey, the government initiated new measures for reorienting the work of agricultural marketing and for coordinating agricultural marketing development policy. Prior to launching of the first five year plan, seven states had taken steps for the implementation of the agricultural produce (markets) Acts, passed by their respective legislatures. During the first plan period three more states enacted similar legislations so that the number of regulated markets increased from 286 to 471.¹³

In the first plan it was stressed that the Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act passed in 1937 should have a wider scope; because earlier grading was confined to Ghee and Vegetable Oils; besides laboratory facilities for testing quality and purity were also organized. As a result central quality Central Laboratory at Nagpur was established with eight
other regional subsidiary quality control laboratories. During the first plan period, the Central Agricultural Marketing Organization undertook marketing studies of about 40 principal commodities. In this way number of regulated markets increased from about 470 at the end of the first plan to 730 at the end of second plan and programme for grading commodities under the agricultural produce (Grading and Marking) Act, was also expanded during the third plan.

In the second five year plan special emphasis was placed on co-operative agencies for handling marketable surplus. The official data shows that about 1,743 marketing societies were organized and the amount of assistance to them amounted to Rs. 5.28 crores. It is expected that co-operative agencies would have dealt with about 25% of the marketable surplus during the fourth plan period. During the second half of the sixties two major developments on the Indian economic scene with a direct bearing on agriculture took place. The first was the much talked about green revolution in the wake of adoption of the new agricultural technology. The second was the social control over commercial banks which finally resulted as nationalization of 14 major commercial banks in 1969.

The nationalization of commercial banks was seen as an opportunity to bring these banks to arrist agricultural finance. The availability of inputs like irrigation, HYV seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides, machinery etc. was possible only with the help large investments which were provided by commercial banks. After that multi-agency approach (MAA) was adopted in the field rural credit, which was a overall national policy. In the wake of this policy commercial banks began to participate in the agricultural finance as equal partners of co-operatives. Not only this, two new
institution known as Regional Rural Banks and the Farmer’s Service Societies were also established during this period; whereas RBI and NABARD was supporting this policy at the national level.

Green revolution picturised the heralding of a phase of modernizing of India’s agricultural economy which showed up in the rapid growth in the use of modern inputs; hybridization, tube well irrigation, pump sets, electric energy, fertilizers, pesticides and tractors where required. It was during the mid sixties that the high yield variety seeds of wheat were evolved, since then a number of HYV seeds of Wheat, Paddy and other cereals have been developed. Order a period of three decades the use of HYV seeds has widely progressed and spread. In 1966-67 1.88 million hectares of land had been brought under HYV seeds. National Seeds Corporation was involved in the production of HYV seeds state governments, registered seed growers etc.¹⁷

At the same time world Bank was aiding the national seeds corporation.

HYV seeds were distributed to the stores and depots of agricultural departments of the state governments, co-operative seed stores, and panchayats block level workers; whereas main agencies were the government depots and co-operatives. A new policy on seed development with effect from 1988 is aiming to secure the farmer high quality seeds available anywhere in the world to maximize his yields, increase productivity and farm income.¹⁸ The use of chemical fertilizers was now widely accepted as one of the key elements in the strategy for accelerating the growth of agricultural output. Efforts have been made since the beginning of first plan to promote the consumption of chemical fertilizers in the country. In the mid sixties with the evolution of the HYV seeds that the
consumption of fertilizers also increased. The intensity of fertilizer use has gradually gone up from about 3 kg. per hectare in the early 1960s to about 16 kg per hectare in the early 1970s, 34 kg. per hectare in the early 1980s, to more than 70 kg per hectare in the 1990s.

**PROGRESS IN CONSUMPTION OF CHEMICAL FERTILIZERS**

(Million Tonnes)

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(*Target- The national informatics Centre has estimated it at 20.54 million tonnes in 2004-05.)

(Source – Economic Survey, 1995-96)

This dramatic increase of fertilizers was due to easy availability of fertilizers, stable prices, adequate availability of credit, supporting infrastructure in terms of transportation, extension and promotion efforts through demonstration and training etc. Along with the HYV seeds and fertilizers, water forms and the important input of the package of new technology. Therefore was an increased need for providing assured supplies of water through irrigation systems.

Growth to irrigation in the Indian subcontinent to this day is an unparalled human achievement. The total area irrigated in India stood at 22 million hectare in 1950-51. An additional irrigation potential of 68 million hectares had been created during the nearly four and a half decades of.
planning. During the first four plans additional potential was being created at the rate of one million hectares per annum. The most distinguishing feature of the first plan’s irrigation and power program was the inclusion of five major irrigation and power projects viz (i) Chambal Project, (Total cost Rs. 35 crores) in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, (ii) Kosi Project (Total cost Rs. 60 crores) in Bihar. (iii) Rihand Project (Total cost Rs. 45 crores) in U.P.21 During the first plan period there was considerable activity in all parts of the country on irrigation projects. The total cost of irrigation and power projects, initially included in the first five year plan, was about 970 crores of which irrigation accounted for about Rs. 620 crores.

Besides these the total cost of 195 new irrigation projects included in the second plan amounted to about Rs. 370 crores. Rs. 5 Crores were also spent during the second plan for major irrigation works. The third plan allotted Rs. 650 crores for major and medium irrigation projects. In this connection it is said, if the investigation units were set up in each state, the work in the irrigation projects would have speeded up.

Multi purpose projects allow a more comprehensive use of physical potentialities of a river basin them single-purpose projects. Multi purpose projects developed the facilities and involved considerable servings in the total cost. Multi purpose projects prevented the damage of crops of neighboring lands. It had provided large number of irrigation facilities, which result increased economic activity.

Hydro-electric power benefits provided cheap electricity for the industries. The increase in available power at reduced rates boosted up
additional economic activity. In U.P. Ganga Canal Hydro-Electric station was established in the year 1928; in which electricity production was started from Haridwar to Aligarh. 13 electric power station had started production about 44 thousand K.W. electricity. About 13 districts of western Uttar Pradesh have been benefited by the project.

Banbasa and Khatia were the two important hydro-electric schemes launched on Sharda River which produces about 41 thousand KW electricity, providing cheap electricity to Lucknow and Rohilkhand areas.

Rihand multi purpose project established on river Son at Mirzapur it providing 3 lacs KW electricity and benefitting eastern U.P., Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Yamuna project launched on the river Taunce (at tributary to Yamuna) started electricity production in the year 1961 providing electricity to the industrial areas of Hardiwar, Dehradun and Jwalapur. Ram Ganga electricity scheme launched at Kalagarh in Uttaranchal region is also providing irrigation facilities and hydro-electricity to the nearby areas.

Besides Nayar Project Owyra Project and Betwa Projects are also producing hydro-electricity in Uttar Pradesh. In the due course of time good took several measures to improve agricultural industries; so as to upgrade technology in education. At the end of second five year plan 55 colleges were established in all over India, where 56,000 students were trained in agricultural education, which increased 75,000 in the year 1973-74.

Besides 19 agricultural universities were established, among them Pantnagar (in Uttar Pradesh), Ludhiyana (in Punjab), Udaipur (in Rajasthan), Bhubneshwar (in Orissa) were the main which had contributed a lot in the
development of agriculture in India. Agriculture of India had also experienced problem of landless labour in rural areas. They used to get a part of agricultural production and had no right to interfere or take any decision regarding sowing and harvesting of agriculture. They could only get the small part of the production; it was not in the form of profit. These were 28 million agricultural labours in the year 1951 which increased 31.5 million in 1961 and 47.5 million in 1971.

Bihar and U.P. were the two main states where agricultural labours were in large numbers. There agricultural labours used to get only 197 days work in a year; they had to seek self employment for at least 40 days. In 1956-57 their average annual income of their family was 437 rupees; whereas their annual expenditure was about 617 rupees. As a result they were poor victims of rural indebtedness. In 1956-57 64% families of the agricultural labours were badly affected by indebtedness.23

The per capita annual income of agricultural labour families declined from Rs. 104 in 1950-51 to Rs. 99.4 in 1956-57. Again there labours were classified in “casual” labour households (employed on daily wages for short unspecified periods) and “attached” labour house holds (on a contract of employment for specified periods). The ratio of “attached” labourers rose from 10 to 26.6% between 1950-51 and 1956-57.24 The above mentioned facts were the result of the findings of the two agricultural labour enquiries; first in 1950-51 and second din 1956-57, conducted by the ministry of labour and employement. The agricultural labour enquiry found that the daily wage rate of adult male agricultural labourers declined from 109 paise to 96 paise in 1956.
The second enquiry report notes that agricultural labours, particularly those who are landless, generally belong to backward communities. Their socio-economic status in the rural community mostly depends upon the sub-communities from which they are drawn, institutional rigidities prevailing in the area, as for instance, land tenures and systems of tenancy, heredity occupations, economic stats of land owing classes, crops grown in the area and additional employment opportunities available to them in rural industries.

Since village and small industries in their different aspects were the integral and continuing both in the economic structure and in the scheme of national planning tradition industries had to be given immediate consideration. In the regard two important steps were taken during the first plan period were the setting apart by the central government of substantial finance for the development of village and small industries and the building up of a network of all India boards to deal with the problem of the handloom industry, khadi and village industries, handicrafts, small scale industries, sericulture and the coir industry. All the expanding activities of the All India Boards had increased production and employment in a number of industries. The handloom industry, which was in a difficult situation at the commencement of the plan, in 1950-51 742 million yards handloom was produced which increased up to 1354 million yards in 1954-55 and 1450 million yards in 1955-56. The All India Handicrafts Board has assisted research in new designs and patterns and in a improved processes, organized a survey of marketing of handicrafts. Exhibition of handicrafts was also arranged within the country and abroad.
The Coir Board was promoted; cooperative societies were made for the collection of husk and for supply. In this regard twelve state finance cooperative had been established and rules and procedures gorering the administration of state Aid to Industries Acts were liberalised. Another important step had been the government’s acceptance in principle of the stores purchase committee’s recommendation that certain classes of stores should be reserved exclusively for purchase from village and small industries and that price differentials should be allowed to them over the products of large scale industries. As a result the value of purchases made from cottage and small scale industries by the Directorate General of Supplies and disposals had increased from Rs. 66 lakhs in 1952-53 to Rs. 105 lakhs in 1954-55. The first five year plan had already initiated the process of increasing productivity in agriculture. Food grains production increased by 11 million tons (which was 20%) and increase in agricultural production as a whole had been of the order of 15%. The provision of irrigation facilities, better seeds, fertilizers and the spread of improved techniques of cultivation had offered scope for expansion.

The second plan was related to the institutional arrangements for promoting land use and land management on more efficient lines and for ensuring a greater degree of social justice among the classes dependent on land. The target for additional production of food grains in the second plan was placed at 10 million tons i.e. on increase of 15% from 65 million tones in 1955-56 to 75 million tones in 1960-61. The provision for agriculture and community development was increased from Rs. 357 crores in the first plan to Rs. 568 crores in the second plan.\textsuperscript{26} The allocation was exclusive of
increased facilities for short term credit which was afforded by the Reserve Bank, the State Bank and the Cooperative movement.

Among the program which were taken in hand for increasing agricultural production, was the provision of irrigation facilities; the target of additional area to be brought under irrigation being 21 million acres. The consumption of nitrogenous fertilizers was expected to increase from 610,000 tones in 1995 to 1.8 million tons in 1960. Some 3,000 seed multiplication farms covering a total area of about 93,000 acre were expected to be established.

The second five year plan also provided opportunities for considerable increases in the supply of protective food like fruits and vegetables; a sum of Rs. 8 crores had been provided for promoting fruit and vegetable cultivation. The provision for animal husbandry and fisheries in the second plan was about 68 crores as compared to 28 crores in the first plan. During the first plan 600 key villages and 150 artificial insemination centers were established, these were expected by 1258 and 245 respectively. Veterinary dispensaries which were increased from 2000 to 2650 in the first plan were expected to increase by another 1900 during the second plan. The second five year plan also contemplated the establishment of 36 urban milk supply unions, 12 cooperative creameries and 7 milk drying plants.

The second plan had a provision of Rs. 47 crores for cooperation, marketing and warehouses. The integrated scheme of credit, marketing and production was recommended by the Rural Credit Survey Committee and State Banks were asked to assist them. It was estimated that cooperative
agencies would be able to handle about 10% of the marketable surplus by the end of the second plan.

The development of village’s panchayats was an important constituent of the programme of fostering corporate life in the rural areas and of promoting among the rural community active interest in the development programme of the village. In the first plan period the number of village panchayats increased from 83,000 to 117,000 and the aim in second plan was to increase it further to 245,000. About 12 cores Rs. Were provided to promote the development of village panchayats. There was also a provision of 15 crores for local development works. The object of this programme was to enable village communities to undertake works of local benefit mainly with their own labour.

The total area under irrigation in the country had increased from 51 million acres to 67 million areas over the first plan period. An additional area of 21 million acres was expected to come under irrigation by the end of second plan with the result that the irrigated area in the country will increase by almost 75% in ten years. In view of the need for a steady increase in agricultural output it was proposed to devote increasing attention to medium sized projects. The first five year plan provided for seven irrigation projects costing more than Rs. 30 crores.

Among program of minor irrigation 3,581 tube wells were proposed with a view of providing irrigation facilities for 916,000 acres. In the beginning of the first five year plan, the total installed capacity for the generation of electricity in the country was 2.3 million KW. Since there was
a need to enhance the capacity of Indian agriculture to provide the surpluses needed to support industrial development and the wider economic considerations. So the land policy in the plan was emphasised on the social aspect. And the objectives of the land reform were two fold. Firstly to remove such impediments upon agricultural production as arise from the character of the agrarian structure, and secondly to create conditions for evolving as speedily as may be possible an agrarian economy with high levels of efficiency and productivity. Thus, the abolition of intermediaries and the protection given to tenants were intended to give to the tiller of the soil his rightful place in the agrarian systems and by reducing or eliminating burdens he has borne in the past.  

For building up a progressive rural economy it has essential that disparities in the ownership of land should be greatly reduced. Thus, program for abolishing intermediary tenures, giving security to tenants and bringing tenants into direct relationship. During second five year plan a series of measures which would lay the foundations for the cooperative re-organization of the rural economy were proposed.

There considerations had been kept in view during the first five year plan in the work of the central committee for land reforms, which includes members of planning commission and the principal central ministers concerned, and reviews from time to time the progress of the land reform. Besides the aim was that the distribution of land in excess of the ceiling among the landless and land hungry peasant would substantially benefit agricultural production.
The proposals for land reform and cooperative development set out in the plan were therefore in the nature of a broad common approach which has to be adopted and pursued in each state as part of the national plan with due regard to local conditions. Legislation for the abolition of intermediaries was enacted before 1951 and most of work relating to the enactment of laws and the acquisition of intermediary areas had however been undertaken during the period of the first plan intermediaries had been almost entirely abolished. The abolition of intermediaries was an essential step, but it imposed a heavy strain upon the administrative resources of state governments. Nagpur resolution of the congress party in 1959 stated that surplus land should vest in the panchayats and should be managed through cooperatives consisting of landless labourers.

Besides intermediaries were compensated and managements were done for the proportion of revision of records showing the names and holdings of tenants and the rent or revenue which they were liable to pay to the state government as a result of the abolition. This progress was comparatively very easy in the temporarily settled areas, such as Uttar Pradesh where adequate records and machinery of the administration has existing. Common lands such as waste lands, forests, abadi sites etc. which belonged to the intermediaries were vested in the state government for purposes of management and development.

At the same time the land policy was aimed to do better for the peasant economically, culturally and socially and policy must safeguard our precious democratic way. Home-Farm lands and lands under the personal
cultivation of intermediaries were generally left with them and lessees of home-farms continued as tenants under them.

In Uttar Pradesh tenants of home farms of intermediaries were also brought into direct relation with the state and the rights of intermediaries over their tenancy lands were abolished. The total amount of compensation and rehabilitation assistance payable to intermediaries is estimated to be in neighbourhood of Rs. 450 crores. Uttar Pradesh and Bihar together account for about 70% of the total amount of compensation. As a rule the rate of compensation has been fixed as a multiple of the net income of the intermediaries from their estates. Compensation payments were financed out of such increases, because abolition of intermediary rights leads to increase in the amount of revenue.

Compensation was paid in cash but generally in the form of bonds which were transferable and negotiable and were also redeemable over a period which may vary from 10 to 40 years. The compensation was assessed by the government which was really a task of considerable magnitude. With the abolition of intermediaries the existing tenures were broadly classified into two main categories namely, owners who hold land directly from the state and tenants who land from owners. Their rights and obligations had generally been regulated under tenancy laws enacted from time to time. The bulk of the tenants had acquired security of tenure and their rents had been regulated. Even they had obtained considerable rights of transfer on abolition of intermediaries, the multiplicity of tenures had been greatly reduced and for the most part tenants holding land under intermediaries had become owners of land. It was desirable that a fairly uniform pattern of
ownership should be evolved which conforms to certain commonly agreed rights and obligations. Ownership of land entails certain obligations.

The most important of these concerns the use and management of land. So laws were passed relating to consolidation of holdings, measures for preventing fragmentation had been adopted, because provisions against the creation of fragments or their further splitting up by transfer or partition and regulation of the transfer of existing fragments were very eventual in the interest of agricultural development. And over a considerable areas if a person hold land directly from the state do not possess the right of transfer; such owners can obtain short terms loans on the security of the crop but, in the absence of alternative security, they may not be able to avail of facilities offered by cooperative credit institutions for medium and long term loans. It was therefore, desirable that every individual who holds land directly from the state should have the right to mortgage land in order to obtain loans from government and from cooperatives on the security of land. Over the years the tenancy problem grew in magnitude from three different directions. Firstly, intermediaries did not always cultivate their home-farm lands and frequently these lands were let out to tenants. Secondly tenants, holding lands from intermediaries, who have now come into direct relation with the state, sometimes leased lands to subtenants.

Thirdly ryotwari areas a considerable proportion of land held by ryets had been cultivated by tenants. The U.P. state tenants were brought into direct relations with the state. They were given permanent and heritable rights. The recovers rent from them and pays compensation in the form of bonds to owners. It was also noticed that there had been instances of large
scale ejectment of tenants and of voluntary surrender of tenancies. The main causes were ignorance on the part of the people of legislative provisions regarding security of tenure, possible lacunae in the law, inadequate land records and defective administrative arrangements. In the second plan it was recommended that action should be taken to stay ejectment of tenants and subtenants except on ground of non-payment of rent or misuse of land. Ejectments which and surrenders of the part three years were asked to be reviewed with a view of restoration whenever circumstances justify such a course, and in order to discourage voluntary surrender of land under undue pressure for the future, provision would be made that surrender of land by a tenant will not be regarded as valid unless it is duly registered by the revenue authorities. In such cases the landlords should be entitled to take possession of the land only to the extent of his right of resumption.

In giving effect to legislation for the protection of tenants some difficulties had arisen which can be traced to the definition of the expression “personal cultivation” which was frequently used, but not always with the same meaning. In all states personal cultivation includes cultivation through servants or hired labourers. There were variations, however in respect of the nature of supervision over cultivation and the mode of payment to servants or hired labourers which were prescribed by legislation. As regards the mode of payment can be made in cash or in kind but not by way of a share of the produce.

There were no restrictions on the supervision regarding payment to labour class. In the second five year plan “personal cultivation” was said to have three elements, namely, risk of cultivation, personal supervision and
labour. A person who does not bear the entire risk of cultivation or parts with a share of the produce in favour of another can not be described as cultivating. The land personally, and the expression personal supervision may include supervision by the owner or by a member of his family. In order to be effective, supervision should be accompanied by residence during the greater part of agricultural season on the part of an owner or a member of his family in the village in which the land is situated or in a nearby village, within a distance to be prescribed.

In the first five year plan it was stated that a rate of rent exceeding one fourth or one fifth of the produce should be regarded as requiring special justification. Progress in the regulation of rents had been uneven and in several states legislation lags behind. There were variations in that time; some states were taking one fifth and the other were taking one fourth. Some states were extracting 60% of the total produce and other were taking 40% of the total produce. The Planning Commission of India recommended that rents should be brought down to the level recommended in the first five year plan.

It was an agreed objective that early steps should be taken to enable tenants of non resumable areas to become owners of their holdings. Progress in this direction was very slow. As an immediate measure, it was recommended that all tenants of non-resumable areas should be brought into direct relationship with the state. In this context reduction of rents has high priority.
After bringing down the rents to reasonable levels it was important that each state should have a programme for converting tenants of non-resumable areas into owners and putting an end to vestiges of the tenant landlord relationship. In Uttar Pradesh all tenants have been brought into direct relationship with the state.

The first five year plan had also accepted the principle that there should be an absolute limit to the amount of land which an individual may hold. It was also suggested that each state this limit should be fixed by each state having regard to its own agrarian history and its present problems. Attention was drawn to the lack of reliable information concerning the distribution and size of holdings and it was proposed that a census of land holdings and cultivation should be undertaken. In 1954 state governments were requested to undertake such a census. It was agreed that in respect of areas where annual village records were maintained, the census should be conducted generally through the revenue agency of the state government on the basis of complete enumeration of data contained in the village records supplemented by such other enquiries as might be necessary. To expedite the census it was later agreed at an inter state conference in 1954 that state governments could, if they felt necessary, restrict the census to holdings of 10 acres and above. The main concepts employed in the census were the following.

1. The census related to agricultural land comprised in owner’s holdings, agricultural land being defined as the cultivable area comprised in a holding, including groves and pastures. Unoccupied area such as
forest land and other uncultivable land was too excluded. Land held in urban areas has also outside the scope of the census.

2. The expression area owned was defined so as to include lands held by owners as well as those held under occupancy (permanent and heritable) rights.

3. The entire agricultural land held by a person as owner throughout the state constituted a single holding. In the case of joint holdings, the share of each co-sharer was treated as a separate holding.

The census of land holding and cultivation had been carried out in all states. The data generally relate to the year 1953-54. In Uttar Pradesh where annual village records were maintained, the state government decided to have a sample survey as the revenue staff was pre-occupied with work relating to consolidation of holdings.

In the settlements of land acquired in consequence of the application of ceilings, tenants displaced as a result of resumption of land for personal cultivation, farmers with uneconomic holdings and landless workers should receive preference. Settlements should be made as far as possible on cooperative lines. Farmers with uneconomic holdings below the basic level should be admitted into co-operatives constituted with surplus lands if they also agree to pod their lands. In such cases the tenants should not have the right to claim partition of the surplus lands which were allotted to co-operatives. The problems of landless workers were also to be considered. It was therefore recommended that in each state after the data relating to the census of land holding and cultivation have been studied and the areas likely
to become available assessed, detailed schemes for the resettlement on land of agricultural workers should be drawn up. The plan stated that each state should have a special board, including non-official members, for advising resettlement schemes, for landless workers and reviewing progress from time to time. In this connection, reference may be made to the Bhoodan Movement, so far over four million acres of land had been collected by way of gift for the rehabilitation of landless workers and about 300,000 acres of land had been distributed. State Governments was passing laws to facilitate redistribution of Bhoodan lands. The progress of tenancy reform as well as the imposition of ceilings on agricultural holdings will lead to a substantial increase in the number of small peasant owners. In eliminating rent receiving interests and reducing the burden on the tiller of the soil land reform pares the way for the reconstruction of the agrarian economy. It has to be made very clear that land reform programme and measures for agrarian re-organization were the parts of the same integrated approach. Land reform could not have become successful without considerable extension of credit facilities and without a programme for eliminating the weaknesses which were the result of uneconomic and fragmented holdings and deficiencies in the use and management of land.

Here it is necessary to review briefly the four main aspects of agrarian reorganization namely (i) consolidation of holdings, (ii) land management practices, (iii) development of co-operative farming and (iv) development of co-operative village management on the objective towards which the village economy was to be reorganized.
Consolidation of holdings

In the first five year plan, it was urged that in all states programme for consolidation of holdings should be expanded and pursued with vigour, which saves time and labour, facilities improvement of land through irrigation as well as dry farming practices provides on opportunity for re-planning individual holdings, provide roads and other amenities.

In Uttar Pradesh consolidation was in progress in 21 districts. In national extension and community project areas consolidation of holdings was token as a task of primary importance in the agricultural programme.

Land Management Practices

The planning commission was engaged with in a comparative study of methods and solutions and various problems connected with consolidation of holdings. In this connection in the first five year plan the principle was commended that in the cultivation and management of land, individual owners should conform to standards of efficiency determined by law. In the second five year plan standards efficiency and management have to be conceived from a more general stand point. All agricultural holdings respective of size, should be efficiently managed. And a committee of the panel on land reform had recommended the following:-

1. All cultivations should have an obligation to maintain reasonable standards of production and to preserve and develop the fertility of the soil. Land management, legislation should provide the necessary incentives and sanctions for the performance of this obligation. And prescription of standards should be linked with the fulfillment of
certain conditions such as security of tenure, consolidation of holdings, progressive development of co-operation and government assistance in the provision of financial resources technical guidance and supplies.

2. Land management, legislation should provide for standards of efficient cultivation and management which would permit objective, qualitative judgments, suitable encouragements and recognition, steps should be taken to insure the standards of improving the land.

**Co-Operative Farming**

There was general agreement that co-operative farming should be developed as rapidly as possible. The main task of the second plan was to take such essential steps which would provide sound foundation for the development of co-operative farming; so that over a period of 10 years or so a substantial proportion of agricultural lands should be cultivated on co-operative lines. To bring about improvements in the economic conditions of agricultural labourers and to remove the social disabilities from which they have suffered in the past were among the major tasks of planned development.

As a result various measures of social reform and efforts were made after independence. The primary objectives of the five year plan was to ensure full opportunities for work and a better living to all sections of the rural economy and in particular to assist agricultural labourers and the backward classes to come up to the level of the rest. The size of the problem of agricultural labour were varied depending on such factors as pressure of
population, availability of land cultivation, differences in the extent of irrigation and double cropping, fertility of land etc. In this connection all India Agricultural Labour Enquiries undertaken in 1950-51 and 1956-57 brought out the fact that there was widespread under employment and the fact that increase in population has borne harshly on this section of the population.

With the development of agriculture and irrigation, there had been increase in production and the work of the agriculture was shared among much larger numbers, but those sections of the rural populations who were landless and were not actual cultivators had benefited much less than others. The basic problems of the agrarian economy were low income, low productivity and lack of continuous employment. And to the extent these problems were aimed to solve through the more intensive programmes of development.

The first five year plan included proposals for the settlement of agricultural labour and protection against ejectment from homesteads. The Minimum Wages Act, 1948 emphasised on the greater use of money as the medium of exchange. In the second five year plan, in addition to programmes of development in agriculture and irrigation and the expansion of the community development programme; Rs. 200 crores were provided for the development of village and small industries. In rural programmes high priority was suggested for schemes intended to give benefit the weaker sections of the population like agricultural labourers and artisans and others.

The plan also envisaged a member of special schemes for the benefit of agricultural labourers, including schemes for resettlement, grant of house
sites, formation of labour co-operatives etc. In September, 1957, the national development council proposed that farm lands obtained through the application of agricultural ceilings and those donated in Gramdan, a programme for resetting 300,000 families of landless workers should be undertaken legislation regarding ceilings was still in its early stages and the scheme has also promoted.

During the second plan, a number of state governments took steps to provide house sites free or on a subsidized basis to landless agricultural labourers and protected them from forced ejectment. The third five year plan provided for large investments in the development of the rural economy. The total outlay in the public sector on agriculture, community development and irrigation was about to over 1700 crores. With which agricultural production was expected to increase about 30%. About 20 million acres of land was target to be benefited by irrigation and 11 million acres of agricultural land was estimated to come under soil conservation.

In the village and small industries programme there was about a provision of 92 crores for Khadi, Ambar Khadi and village industries and small scale industries. In this way through the village and small industry programme maximum past time employment or fuller employment for 8 million persons and whole time employment for about 900,000 persons was estimated in the third five year plan.

Through the extension of educational facilities to the entire age group of 6 to 11 years and development of other social services some of the handicaps of the weaker sections were tried to diminish. A village water supply programme at a total cost of Rs. 35 crores was being taken up with
the object of providing good drinking water in all villages by the end of third five year plan.

This plan included programmes estimated to cost Rs. 114 crores for the welfare of backward classes and it has estimated that a considerable part of the amount would benefit agricultural workers. In the community development programme, under the village housing project Rs. 5 crores had been allotted for the acquisition of land in villages for allotment as house sites to agricultural labourers. The planers of states provided for about Rs. 4 crores for resettlement schemes. It was expected that when surplus lands becomes available and a result of the imposition of ceilings, such additional resources were required for their settlement by landless persons and other will be made available by the states through the annual plans.

In addition at the centre a sum of Rs. 8 crores had been allocated for resettlement schemes for landless labourers. The central advisory committee on agricultural labour recently set up by the planning commission had a target to settle about 700,000 families of landless labourers in the course of the third plan over an area of 5 million acres. In some other ways the most significant development proposed in the third plan, whose benefits had gone to agricultural labour was the programme for undertaking works projects in rural areas which had been called Employment and Men power. Under this programe it was hoped to provide additional wages employment in rural areas for about 100 days in the year.

The programe had concentrated on schemes for agricultural development like irrigation, food control, land reclamation, afforestation and soil conservation, road development projects, provision of rural amenities
and village housing projects. In the rural works programme labour co-operatives and other construction organizations were expected to play a large rule.

In a real sense, the problems of agricultural labour were to be traced to the long period of stagnation in the rural economy and the persistence of a rigid social structure largely based on caste, reorganisation of the rural economy along co-operative lines and emphasis on the role and obligations of the community were intended not merely to raise agricultural productivity and diversity the rural economic structure but equally to being about as rapidly as may be possible on integrated society in which there will be equal opportunity for every member of the community irrespective of caste or states.

In other words, in the structure of the rural economy which the five year plan attempted to build up, agricultural labourers participated fully and on equal terms with others, and achieved effective economic and social equality with rest of the rural population. Thus the Indian political situation of post 1947 led the Indian National Congress to attempt to ameliorate the problems of the Indian Country side because India had inherited one of the most depressing scenarios in Asia a fairly densely populated nation with a pitiful urban base, a rural infrastructure in wrecks, a huge mass of population forces to survive exclusively on agricultural production-yet cynically oppressed by petty zamindars and feudal intermediaries.

So congress government gave priorities to the improvements in agriculture and made huge investments in irrigation, agro research agro-modernization and mechanization of the agriculture. All the banks were
nationalized and were required to set up more branches in rural areas so that loans for seeds and form equipment could be purchased through loans at more reasonable interest rates.

These measures allowed the country’s farmers to gradually liberate themselves from the clutches of the old parasitic intermediaries and moved towards mechanized farming. Overtime, peasants put further pressure on the government leading to periodic waiving of loans, and easing to credit norms so that even middle farmers could get loans from government banks and rural credit unions. Subsidies were also provided for electricity and water use, as well as on the sale price of fertilizers and pesticides.

Thus, a combination of people’s pressure and the gradual expansion of industrial capitalism had brought about significant changes in the country side; even middle layer of farmers had also developed.
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