Indian Economy · GS - III

State the objectives and measures of land reforms in India. Discuss how land ceiling policy on landholding can be considered as an effective reform under economic criteria.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2023	GS - III	Indian Economy

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Land reforms sought to remove exploitative intermediaries, secure cultivators' rights and create more equitable ownership; land ceilings can improve distributive justice and productive utilisation when accompanied by effective redistribution and implementation.

Model Answer

Introduction

Land reforms were undertaken after Independence to restructure agrarian relations, reduce concentration of land and improve agricultural productivity and social justice.

Body

Objectives and Measures

Abolition of intermediaries: Zamindari and similar systems were abolished to establish a direct relationship between cultivators and the State.

Tenancy reforms: Security of tenure, regulation of rent and ownership rights were promoted.

Land ceilings: Upper limits were imposed on individual landholdings, with surplus land intended for redistribution.

Consolidation: Fragmented holdings were consolidated to improve operational efficiency.

Cooperative measures: Collective approaches were encouraged in certain contexts to improve access to resources.

Economic Significance of Land Ceilings

Redistribution: Surplus land can be transferred to landless and marginal cultivators, reducing extreme concentration.

Productive utilisation: Large underutilised holdings can potentially be brought under cultivation by redistribution.

Employment: Wider access to land can create livelihood opportunities in rural areas.

Equity and demand: More equitable asset distribution can strengthen rural purchasing power and inclusive growth.

Limitations

Benami transfers, legal loopholes, fragmented redistribution, inadequate land records and weak implementation reduced effectiveness in several States.

Conclusion

Land ceilings can be economically effective when they promote **equitable asset distribution and productive land use**. Their success depends on accurate land records, transparent enforcement, consolidation and complementary access to credit, irrigation and technology.