



International Journal of Advance Studies and Growth Evaluation

Impact of Rythu Barossa Scheme on Agricultural Development in Telangana

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Article Info.

E-ISSN: **2583-6528**

Impact Factor (SJIF): **6.876**

Peer Reviewed Journal

Available online:

www.alladvancejournal.com

Received: 23/March/2025

Accepted: 22/April/2025

Abstract

This paper primarily explores the various welfare schemes introduced by the Government of Telangana to support the farming community and decrease farmers' suicides. Telangana, formed in 2014, is the youngest state in India and has an agrarian-based economy. Agriculture remains the predominant source of livelihood, with over 60% of the population directly or indirectly dependent on the sector. To strengthen and sustain this vital sector, the state government has implemented several farmer-centric initiatives such as Rythu Bandhu, Rythu Bheema, and Mission Kakatiya. These initiatives, along with investments in infrastructure and the adoption of modern agricultural technologies, have contributed significantly to transforming the state's agricultural landscape. A key focus of the paper is the necessity for an agricultural investment support program similar to the Rythu Bandhu scheme present government renamed as Rythu Barossa. The scheme aims to break the cycle of rural indebtedness by providing direct financial support for agricultural investment. By addressing initial input costs, the scheme seeks to enhance agricultural productivity and ensure a stable income for farmers. The Rythu Bandhu scheme (Rythu Barossa), also known as the "Agriculture Investment Support Scheme," is India's first direct farmer investment support initiative and serves as a benchmark for farmer empowerment in the country. Approximately 6.5 million farmers received investment support under the Rythu Bandhu scheme during the 2022 rainy season, of which 73.63% were marginal farmers (holding less than 2.47 acres), and 17.70% were small farmers (holding between 2.48 and 4.94 acres).

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Keywords: Welfare schemes, agrarian economy, suicides, Rythu Bandhu, Rythu bheema, mission kakatiya, Rythu Barossa, indebtedness, empowerment.

Introduction

The Telangana Rythu Bharosa Scheme, launched by the Congress Government of Telangana, aims to provide crucial financial assistance to farmers engaged in agriculture and allied sectors. Under this scheme, both farmers and tenant farmers (those who cultivate on rented land) will receive ₹15,000 per acre annually. Additionally, a bonus of ₹500 per acre is offered specifically for paddy cultivation, recognizing its importance as a major crop in Telangana and across India. The Rythu Bharosa Scheme was a key promise made in the Congress manifesto during the Telangana Assembly Elections of 2023. It is notably the only farmer-centric scheme introduced by the Congress party as part of its electoral commitments. A significant milestone of this scheme is the inclusion of tenant farmers, who are often excluded from similar benefit programs.

While the Rythu Bharosa Scheme shares some similarities with the Central Government's PM Kisan Scheme, its scope is broader due to its inclusion of tenant farmers and additional support for paddy growers. Telangana has approximately 1.43 crore acres of agricultural land. There are around 58.33 lakh farmers in the state. About 55% of Telangana's total population depends on agriculture for their livelihood. The Rythu Bharosa Scheme is poised to make a significant impact, benefiting a majority of the population.

Moreover, recognizing the critical role of agricultural laborers in the farming ecosystem, the scheme also ensures an annual cash benefit of ₹12,000 for agricultural workers.

Since most farmers in Telangana are small and marginal, this financial assistance is expected to help cover investment costs, promote sustainable farming practices, and improve their economic conditions.

Review of Literature

Susan Thomas, Diya Uday, and Bhargavi Zaveri (2020), attempted to map the extent of inclusion and exclusion errors in the delivery of RBS benefits. Since the state relied on land records to identify eligible beneficiaries under the scheme, they compared the original village-level land records, known as Pahani records, with the beneficiary list maintained under RBS.

Souparna Biswas, in his study "SWOT Analysis of Rythu Bandhu Scheme of Telangana," explains that the Rythu Bandhu Scheme (RBS) is a welfare initiative aimed at supporting farmers in Telangana. Under this scheme, land-owning farmers receive ₹5,000 per acre for each crop season. However, the benefit is directed towards landowners rather than landless farmers or actual cultivators. As a result, many farmers who are actively engaged in cultivation but do not own land do not receive financial assistance to purchase inputs for farming. Additionally, due to a lack of monitoring mechanisms, there is uncertainty regarding whether the land for which payments are made is actively under cultivation. Rythu Bandhu is recognized as India's first direct farmer investment support program, wherein financial assistance is provided in cash. Despite its limitations, the RBS is considered a significant welfare initiative by the Government of Telangana to support farmers' investments for the two main crop seasons each year. Furthermore, the scheme contributes to achieving two United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: poverty eradication and zero hunger.

Susan Thomas, Diya Uday and Bhargavi Zaveri, Susan Thomas, Diya Uday, and Bhargavi Zaveri, Linking Welfare Distribution to Land Records: A Case-Study of the Rythu Bandhu Scheme (RBS) in Telangana, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR), Mumbai, 2020, Report No. TR-2020-4-27. In this study, Thomas, Uday, and Zaveri analyze the delivery of benefits under the Rythu Bandhu Scheme (RBS) in Telangana, focusing on the relationship between welfare distribution and land record accuracy. Since the RBS relies heavily on land ownership records to identify beneficiaries, the study compares the village-level Pahani land records with the official RBS beneficiary lists. Their findings highlight significant inclusion and exclusion errors, primarily caused by outdated or inaccurate land records, which affected the scheme's effectiveness and fairness in reaching the intended farming population.

Souparna Biswas, SWOT Analysis of Rythu Bandhu Scheme of Telangana, January 2024, International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews 5(1):2303-2306

Nikita & Satya (2019): The Odisha Government introduced the KALIA Scheme, similar to Telangana's Rythu Barossa scheme. The Rythu Barossa Scheme helped bring political dividends to Reventh Reddy in Telangana but is seen as a short-term solution. Suggested that Odisha focus on: Minimum Support Price (MSP), Loan Waiver, and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) especially to benefit small and marginal farmers.

Ashok Gulati & Siraj Hussain (2018): Rythu Bandhu (presently known as Rythu Barossa) protects farmers from debt burdens. It provides Rs 6,000 per acre per farmer per season for investment in seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and other field operations.

Parag Das (2015): Rural farmers face issues like chronic poverty, illiteracy, poor marketing facilities, and natural disasters (floods, droughts). Creating employment opportunities during off-farming seasons. Providing awareness programs about modern agricultural technologies.

Salve, P. & G. Frank (2013): Economic reforms widened the rural-urban and rich-poor divide in India. Agriculture remains the primary livelihood for a large section of the population.

Pankaj Kumar & Singh R.J. *et al.* (2017): Farmers lack information about appropriate adaptation options. High technology costs are a significant barrier. Urged the government to take steps to make agriculture profitable.

Sonawane S.T. (2016): Small farmers are crucial for society but face problems like lack of investment, technology, and market access. Recommended government policy focuses on supporting small-scale farmers, especially providing initial investment. Lavanya Kumari & Anupama *et al.* (2018): Successful implementation of Digital India initiatives in agriculture needs: Proactive involvement of farmers, NGOs, and government authorities. A well-designed, accessible web portal. Availability of technology and skilled personnel.

GAPS Identified

Although various studies have examined agricultural income support schemes such as KALIA in Odisha and Rythu Bandhu in Telangana, a comprehensive analysis of the Rythu Barosa Scheme particularly after the formation of the new government in Telangana remains unexplored.

Previous research has largely focused on initial impacts, political dividends, and general challenges faced by farmers without providing an in-depth, ongoing assessment of how the Rythu Barossa Scheme has evolved in practice.

Therefore, the Present Study Aims to

- Conduct a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the implementation and impact of the Rythu Barossa Scheme.
- Understand the challenges, successes, and areas for improvement in the scheme.
- Evaluate the scheme's role in supporting agriculture income and farmers' livelihoods post the change in government.

Significance of the Project

In Telangana, where a majority of farmers are small and marginal, financial assistance under the Rythu Bharosa Scheme (RBS) plays a crucial role in supporting farm investments. Recognizing the importance of paddy as the major crop cultivated by farmers for their livelihoods, the scheme also provides an additional Rs.500 per acre for paddy cultivation, further strengthening farm incomes.

The primary objective of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation and impact of the Rythu Bharosa Scheme. Telangana presents a particularly interesting and unique case for studying the implementation of an agriculture income support scheme. Unlike many other Indian states that have launched similar programs, the Telangana government first undertook a state-wide land records updation drive. This massive initiative involved the rectification of land record errors, updating of ownership details, and the issuance of digitally secured Pattadar Passbooks (PPBs) to agricultural landowners. Such a preparatory exercise potentially addresses one of the critical challenges faced in the implementation of income support schemes the accurate identification of beneficiaries.

Objectives

The following are the objectives of the project:

1. To analyze the implementation of the Rythu Barossa Scheme (RBS) in the state of Telangana.

- To summarize the key findings and suggest suitable measures for the better and more effective implementation of the scheme.

Hypothesis

The Rythu Barosa will provide a benefit to the Landholder farmer families who collectively own cultivable land irrespective of the size of land holdings as well as tenant farmers and reduce the farmer's suicides.

Methodology

The study employed a survey and questionnaire methodology to collect data from the target population. The selection strategy for this study was primarily guided by the high prevalence of small and marginal farmers in Telangana, which form the core beneficiaries of the Rythu Barossa Scheme (RBS).

The data collection process was supported by students from selected villages, who assisted in gathering data from their respective localities. This community-based approach ensured greater reach and facilitated the collection of accurate information from farmers in rural areas.

For data analysis, simple statistical techniques were used. A questionnaire was designed to gather essential data from the respondents, and simple percentages were calculated to summarize the responses. Additionally, correlation analysis was employed to assess any relationships between key variables, such as the size of land holdings, the extent of benefits received, and the impact of the scheme on farmers' livelihoods.

Summary of Major Findings

The Indian government, both at the central and state levels, provides extensive support to the agriculture sector through various means. These include subsidies on inputs, access to cheaper capital, loan waivers, and minimum support prices (MSP) for agricultural outputs. Over the past five years, however, there has been a growing emphasis on direct cash transfers as a primary tool for supporting farmer welfare.

One of the most significant steps in this direction is the introduction of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan Scheme) in the interim budget of 2019-20. This is the first fully centrally sponsored income transfer scheme aimed at providing income support to small and marginal farmers. Under this scheme, an annual financial assistance of Rs.6,000 is transferred directly to the bank accounts of eligible farmers. The PM-Kisan Scheme stands out due to its reliance on land records for the identification of beneficiaries, a unique feature that aims to streamline the process and ensure the benefits reach the intended recipients.

The PM-Kisan Scheme Operational Guidelines (2016) specify a cut-off date for eligibility, and the responsibility for identifying beneficiaries is delegated to the respective state governments.

In addition to the central government's efforts, several state governments have also introduced similar income support schemes. Notably, the states of Odisha, West Bengal, and Andhra Pradesh have announced and are at various stages of implementing their own versions of income support schemes for agricultural landholders, further strengthening the push for direct transfers in the agricultural sector.

Table 1: Gives an overview of the features of these schemes.

	Central Government	Telangana	Andhra Pradesh	Odisha	West Bengal
Name	PM Kisan Scheme	Rythu Bandhu Scheme	Rythu Bharosa	Kalia	Krishak Bandhu
Year of announcement	2019	2018	2019	2018	2018
Basis for calculation	Absolute	Per Acre Basis	Absolute	Absolute	Per Acre
Annual Amount	6000/-	10000/-	7500/-	4000/-	5000/-
Number of Instalments	3	2	Unclear	2	2
Eligibility	Land Owner	Land Owner	Land Owner & Tenant Cultivator	Land Owner & Tenant Cultivator	Unclear
Annual Budget (Crore Rupees)	75000	12000	8750	5611	3000
Targeted Number of Beneficiaries (million)	120 (Households)	6 (Farmers)	4 (Farmers)	7.5 (Household)	7.2 (Farmers)

Source: These features are extracted from the scheme documents available in public domain as of January 2023.

The primary objective of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the capacity-building efforts undertaken by the state of Telangana in preparation for the implementation of the Rythu Barossa Scheme (RBS). Telangana presents a unique and compelling case for studying the implementation of agricultural income support schemes, primarily because of the state-wide land records updation drive carried out by the state government. Unlike other states that have rolled out similar schemes, Telangana's government has taken a significant step in ensuring the success of RBS by first addressing foundational issues related to land ownership records. The process involved:

- Rectification of errors in existing land records.
- Updating land records to reflect accurate and current ownership details.
- Issuance of digitally secured Pattadar Passbooks (PPBs) to landowners, ensuring transparency and security in land transactions.

These efforts have laid a solid groundwork for the targeted and effective distribution of benefits under the Rythu Barossa Scheme. This study will explore these preparatory steps and their role in ensuring smooth implementation.

For this research, the study will be approached at the state level, with a focused case study of Sangareddy district, selected for its representative characteristics and agricultural profile.

Historical Background of Rythu Barossa

The Rythu Barossa Scheme (RBS) was officially announced on 25th February at the Rythu Samanvaya Samithi by the Chief Minister of Telangana, Revanth Reddy. The terms and conditions for the scheme were codified in a circular issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation Department.

Objective and Implementation

The Rythu Bandhu Scheme (Presently known as Rythu Barossa), also referred to as the Agriculture Investment

Support Scheme, was first implemented during the 2018-19 Kharif season. Its primary objective is to provide investment support for agriculture and horticulture crops by offering a grant of Rs. 5,000 per acre per season now it is increased to 6,000 per acre per season. This support is intended to cover costs for the purchase of essential inputs such as:

- Seeds
- Fertilizers
- Pesticides
- Labor
- Other field operations necessary for crop cultivation.

Bi-annual Payments

The RBS was structured as a biannual payment system, disbursed to farmers based on the acreage of land owned. These payments are made before the start of both the Kharif and Rabi cropping seasons, respectively. Initially, the scheme provided Rs.4,000 per acre per season, which was later increased to Rs.5,000 per acre starting from the 2019-20 Kharif season. Present Congress government increased it to 6,000/- per acre per season

Eligibility Criteria

- **Landowning Farmers:** The scheme benefits all land-owning farmers in the state, including those residing in scheduled areas, forest areas, and farmers granted rights under the Forest Rights Act.
- **No Upper Limit on Landholding:** There is no floor or ceiling limit on the size of landholdings for eligibility. As a result, the scheme covers small, marginal, medium, and large farmers.
- **Reliance on Land Records:** The scheme relies heavily on the state's land records infrastructure for identifying eligible farmers and calculating the benefits each farmer is entitled to receive.

Exclusions

Tenant Farmers: Tenant farmers and landless farmers are excluded from the benefits of the RBS, as the scheme specifically targets land-owning farmers.

Table 2: Social Status

District/Mandal	SC	ST	BC	General	Total
Kalabgur	7	2	7	3	20
Peddapur	6	10	3	1	20
Kandi	8	1	7	5	20
Total	21 (35%)	13 (22%)	17 (28%)	9 (15%)	60 (100%)

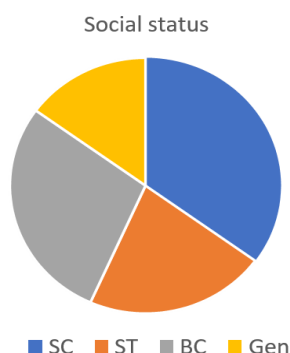


Fig 1: Illustrates the distribution of sample units by social status. It is observed that 31% of the sample units belong to Scheduled Castes (SCs), 28% to Backward Classes (BCs), 22% to Scheduled Tribes (STs), and 15% to Other Castes (OCs)."

Table 1 refers to the distribution of sample units by social status. It is observed that the composition of sample units consists of 31 percent Scheduled Caste, 28 percent of Backward Class, 22 percent of Scheduled Tribes, and followed by 15 percent of Forward caste respondents. Predominant sample units (92 percent) are below the poverty line and 76 percent are married.

Table 3: Gender

District/Mandal	Female	Male
Kalabgur	4	13
Peddapur	5	19
Kandi	4	15
Total	13	47
Percentage	22%	78%

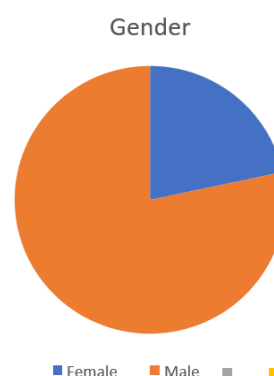


Fig 2: Illustrates the distribution of sample units by gender. It is observed that 78% of the sample units are female, while 22% are male.

Table 2 deals with the distribution of sample units regarding gender. It is observed that 22 percent and 78 percent of sample units belong to females and males respectively.

The present study also intended to examine the trends in farmers' suicides and the impact of government initiatives on their welfare development. To understand the degree of prominence of various causes of suicides of farmers and the backwardness of downtrodden people, a package of three (Social, Farming, and Financial) determinants was provided to the sample units.

Various Causes of Backwardness of Respondents and Suicide of Victims

- Social Causes of Backwardness of Respondents and suicide of victims:** Among the sample respondents, 90% agreed that illness is the cause of backwardness and suicides, followed by 05% family quarrels and 10% that children's marriage causes it.
- Farming Causes for Backwardness and Suicides:** It is observed that 98% said that the failure of crops led to problems, 92% lack of access to expected credit, 75% failure of rain, and 43% the lack of assets leading to backwardness and suicides.
- Economic and Financial Causes for Backwardness and Suicides:** It is observed that 97% of indebtedness leads to backwardness followed by 65% debt pressure, 51% fall in social reputation, 37% social functions, and 15% other reasons leading to backwardness and suicides.

The majority of respondents agreed that suicides and poor economic status within families have a significant negative impact on various aspects of family life, including income sources, health, and overall security. The causes of backwardness and suicides have been detailed as follows:

Table-3 explains the causes of backwardness and suicides among the respondents.

Table-4 highlights the most important effects of backwardness and suicides, as reported by the respondents:

- **Health and Hygiene:** 90% of the respondents indicated that backwardness and suicides adversely affect the health and hygiene of family members.
- **Loss of Reputation:** 80% of respondents noted that the absence of earning members leads to a loss of reputation for the family in the community.
- **Insecurity:** 78% of families experienced a heightened sense of insecurity, particularly after the loss of a family member due to suicide.
- **Discontinuation of Agriculture:** 55% of respondents reported the discontinuation of agricultural activities as a consequence of financial hardship and suicide.
- **Postponement of Children's Education and Marriage:** 40% of respondents mentioned that children's education and marriage were postponed due to the economic strain caused by these issues.

These findings suggest that backwardness and suicides not only disrupt the immediate livelihood of farming families but also have long-term social and economic consequences.

Benefits of Rythu Bharosa: Rythu Bharosa Scheme benefits Include,

- a) Every year farmers including tenant farmers will get the benefit of 15000 Rupees per acre.
- b) Every year agricultural labourers will receive the cash benefit of 12000 Rupees.
- c) Farmers growing paddy crops will receive Rs.500 extra every year.

Documents required for Rythu Bandhu

Aadhaar Card, Proof of residence, Income certificate, proof of agricultural land, Passport size photographs, Bank details and Crop sold proof especially for paddy to get special benefits.

These documents originals and photocopies must be kept ready to get the benefits, if all the criteria are met the cash benefit will be directly transferred to the beneficiary account every year.

Eligibility Criteria for Rythu Barossa Scheme (RBS)

To be eligible for the Rythu Barosa Scheme (RBS), applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. **Residency Requirement:** The applicant must be a resident of Telangana.
2. **Land Ownership or Tenancy:**
 - The applicant must own agricultural land.
 - If the applicant is a tenant farmer, they must present proof of authorization from the original landowner to qualify as a tenant.
3. **Agricultural Labor Card:** The applicant must possess an Agricultural Labor Card to receive cash benefits, especially intended for agricultural laborers.
4. **Crop Sale Proof:** The applicant must provide proof of crop sales, which serves as evidence of agricultural activities.

History of the Rythu Bandhu Scheme

The Rythu Bandhu Scheme (Presently known as Rythu Barossa), officially known as the Agriculture Investment Support Scheme, was introduced by the Government of Telangana starting from the 2018-19 Kharif season. The primary objective of the scheme was to address the initial investment needs of farmers and break the vicious cycle of rural indebtedness. By providing direct financial support, the scheme aimed to boost agricultural productivity and ensure farmers did not fall back into the debt trap.

A budget of Rs.12,000 Crores was allocated for the scheme in the financial year 2018-19. Under this scheme, farmers were given Rs.5,000 per acre each season present government increased it 6,000/- per acre per season, intended to cover the costs of essential agricultural inputs such as Seeds, Fertilizer, Pesticides, Labor, and Other field operations based on the farmer's choice for the crop season.

This initiative was a significant move by the Telangana government to provide investment support for both agriculture and horticulture crops, ensuring timely access to quality inputs and enabling farmers to improve their productivity.

Challenges and Recognition of Tenant Farmers

One of the challenges faced by the Telangana government is the recognition and inclusion of tenant farmers under the scheme. Although the Congress Party in Telangana promised to give recognition to tenant farmers under the Rythu Bharosa Scheme, the implementation of this promise has proven difficult due to the need to identify tenant farmers accurately. Historically, the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) government, led by K. Chandrasekhar Rao, did not recognize tenant farmers as cultivators and excluded them from the benefits of Rythu Bandhu and other agricultural support schemes. However, experts argue that tenant farmers account for a significant portion of the land in Telangana, with estimates suggesting that 14% of the land, approximately 25 lakh acres, are under tenant cultivation. While official figures put the number of tenant farmers at around eight lakh, experts believe this number may exceed ten lakh.

To address this, the Government faces three Possible Options

1. Implementing the Andhra Pradesh Land Licensed Cultivators Act (2012), which recognized tenant farmers and provided them with Loan Eligibility Cards (LEC) for accessing loans and subsidies.
2. Enacting a new law to grant rights to tenant farmers.
3. Exploring alternative options for providing support to tenant farmers without impacting landowners' rights.

In neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, tenant farmers have been granted rights under a new law introduced by Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy in 2019, which gave tenants due recognition and access to benefits. However, in Telangana, tenant farmers have yet to receive such recognition, which remains a significant challenge.

Despite these challenges, recognizing tenant farmers would not impose an additional financial burden on the government, as the extent of land eligible for investment support under schemes like Rythu Bandhu or Rythu Bharosa would remain unchanged. The key challenge lies in the identification of tenant farmers, which remains unresolved.

Rythu Bharosa Scheme and Financial Support

The Rythu Bharosa Scheme is an extension of the Rythu Bandhu Scheme, with a total budget allocation of Rs.6,534 crores. The primary objective of this scheme is to support farmers in meeting their investment requirements during the crop season. The scheme enables farmers to source quality inputs and services timely, thereby increasing their agricultural productivity.

The Benefits of the Rythu Bharosa Scheme Include

- Free power supply for 9 hours a day during the daytime, ensuring farmers have access to electricity for agricultural operations.
- Reopening of closed milk dairies and the provision of subsidies for milk contributors, thereby supporting the dairy industry.
- Discontinuation of road tax for tractors owned by farmers, providing them with financial relief.

Features of Rythu Bharosa Kendras: The services of RBKs include soil testing and advisories, seed certification and supply, quality input supplies (chemical as well as organic) at fair prices; crop and climate advisories, e-crop registration, promotion of modern technologies and crop practices, supply of farm machinery, livestock and fishery services,

The Difference between Rythu Bandhu and Rythu Bharosa: Overall, while both schemes aim to support farmers in Telangana, Rythu Bandhu is more focused on providing direct financial assistance to land-owning farmers, while Rythu Bharosa has a wider range of benefits targeting all farmers, including tenant farmers and those without land ownership.

Disadvantages of the Rythu Bharosa Scheme: The scheme is beneficial, but it requires greater awareness and is only available to a small group of individuals, which prevents proper financial utilization. Additionally, the program's assistance to farmers is only available for a limited number of crops.

The Following Difficulties Faced by the Farmers in Accessing the Benefits under the Rythu Bharosa Scheme

Bank rejections-The majority of the farmers' payments were rejected by the banks due to various technical reasons. The majority of these bank rejections were due to software mapping failures by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

Failure to fix the issues and have their benefits transferred within the stipulated time frame will result in the removal of their names from the beneficiary list.

Tribal farmers find it difficult to resolve bank rejections on their own because of the limited access to banking infrastructure, and mobile and road connectivity.

No clarity of settlement- There is a lack of understanding of the settlement procedure among field functionaries and bank employees.

Neither the Union Government nor the State Government has published written rules for block- and panchayat-level authorities on how to settle bank rejections.

The decision to remove the names of farmers from the beneficiary list without considering field realities is a violation of a provision of the Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act.

Suggestions

Limitations under the new regulations, there may be restrictions on the amount of land eligible for assistance. It's speculated that farmers may be limited to 5 acres of cultivated land, with non-cultivated lands potentially excluded from the scheme.

1. Contrary to speculations, the state government of Hyderabad is considering restrictions on the land extent and eligibility for the 'Rythu Bharosa' scheme. Currently, landowners receive benefits regardless of cultivation. The government is exploring the possibility of removing uncultivated land from the scheme and limiting it to residents of the state. Suggestions to exclude income taxpayers and introduce a cap on land have also been made. The government aims to release guidelines by December 28 as part of the outreach program.
2. Govt may not impose a cap on land extent to be eligible for 'Rythu Bharosa' Scheme.
3. Contrary to speculations about a likely cap on land extent to be eligible for 'Rythu Bharosa', which is the Congress' modified version of BRS 'Rythu Bandhu' Bandhu's scheme, the state government was scrutinising scrutinizing two other reasonable restrictions among the many suggestions it has received so far now officials said the old system will be implemented in the current cycle.
4. According to sources, the two likely restrictions are removing land that was not under cultivation from the scheme and allowing it for only those living in the state.
5. Currently, landowners get the benefit irrespective of whether they are cultivating or not. This was considered by the BRS government too but it later decided not to implement it.
6. "The challenge here is to regularly keep monitoring if a land is under cultivation or not and keep including or excluding the beneficiary. But this might not face stiff opposition," a source said.
7. There were other suggestions too such as not extending the benefit to income tax payers. But officials said the decision was still far away as the old system was being followed for the current cycle.

Findings and Conclusion

Based on the analysis, the results are satisfactory in terms of the positive impacts observed from various schemes, both at the state and central levels, on farmers and the downtrodden sections of society. The support provided through these schemes has improved the financial stability of many, facilitated access to agricultural inputs, and supported income generation. However, long-lasting issues remain, and these need to be addressed to ensure sustained improvement in the lives of farmers.

1. Dependence on Climate

- Agriculture in India remains highly dependent on the climatic conditions, and farmers often face unpredictable weather patterns like droughts, floods, or irregular monsoon seasons. Despite government interventions, the vulnerability to climate change continues to threaten agricultural productivity.

2. Reliance on Private Money Lenders

- A significant number of farmers continue to rely on private money lenders for credit due to the inadequacy of institutional credit or delayed access to formal loans. These lenders often charge high-interest rates, trapping farmers in a cycle of debt.

3. Traditional Farming Methods

- Many farmers still use conventional methods of farming, which are labor- intensive and less efficient compared to modern techniques. The adoption of new technologies and modern agricultural practices remains slow, partly due to lack of awareness and limited access to resources.

4. Small Land Holdings

- A considerable portion of farmers in the region have small land holdings, which makes it difficult for them to achieve economies of scale. This limits their ability to invest in high-value crops, machinery, and other resources that could improve productivity.

5. Unity of Farmers

- Lack of unity among farmers remains a critical challenge. Farmers often struggle to come together to negotiate better prices or gain access to bulk purchasing or cooperative benefits. This fragmentation reduces their bargaining power and limits the effectiveness of many government schemes.

6. Illiteracy and Awareness

- Illiteracy, especially in rural areas, continues to hinder the effective implementation of government initiatives. Many farmers lack the necessary awareness of the benefits available to them through various schemes, as well as the understanding required to implement modern farming techniques.

Conclusion

While government schemes like the Rythu Bharosa and Rythu Bandhu have positively impacted many farmers, there are still significant challenges that need to be overcome for a more sustainable and prosperous future for farmers. Addressing the issues of climate dependency, reducing reliance on private money lenders, modernizing farming techniques, promoting farmer unity, and improving literacy and awareness will be crucial for the long- term success of agricultural welfare programs.

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