SVAMITVA

Why in news?

The Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas (SVAMITVA) will survey all rural properties.

What are the problems?

- Individual farmers are not able to take land on **lease**, or confidently lease out land.
- Availability of **institutional credit** is constrained by the absence of proper land records.
- The digitisation of land meant for agricultural purposes has been completed to the extent of almost 90%.
- But, demarcating residential properties remains an issue.

What is the problem with tax collection?

- The digitisation of agricultural land records has contributed to the smooth implementation of the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana.
- However, the provision of common amenities is impacted by the lack of demarcation of property owned in the villages.
- Panchayats are **unable to collect** their due share of property tax from residential parcels.
- The Economic Survey 2017-18 said that the house tax collections of panchayats is 20% “relative to potential” (all India), with the southern States doing better in this respect.
- With clear titles and transparent land valuations, these collections could improve.

What is needed?

- A comprehensive digital mapping of rural land categories will help raise rural productivity and incomes in various ways.
- [Rural land categories - Agricultural, residential and commons]

What is SVAMITVA?

- The SVAMITVA seeks to address these problems.

- The plan is to survey all rural properties using drones and prepare GIS-based maps for each village.
- The process begins with the signing of a MoU between the Survey of India (SoI) and the State government concerned.

What is the process?

- The SoI will use technology for **topographical mapping**, including satellite imageries and drone platforms.
- During this financial year, the scheme will be implemented as a pilot in about one lakh villages across eight States.
- The States are Maharashtra, Karnataka, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan.
- SVAMITVA would cover all 6.60 lakh villages in the country by 2023-24.
- Property cards or "**sampatti patrak**" will be made available on digital platforms or as hard copies to the village household owners.

What is the significance?

- Digitisation of personal identity and agriculture land, and now residential property in rural areas through SVAMITVA, will facilitate **transparent** transactions in land parcels.
- Non-farm related activities will benefit from clear title and the removal of land supply constraints.
- According to NITI Aayog's 2016 report on land leasing, 36% of the tenant farmers are landless and 56% are marginal land owners.
- Clear title records, accompanied by legalisation of land leasing, will improve their access to **credit, insurance and support services**.
- With digital records, banks can lend freely without much documentation.
- Formal lease markets and digitisation of personal records can lead to **improved implementation** of schemes like PM-KISAN.
- These can be directed towards the cultivators, instead of absentee landlords.
- The main challenge for SVAMITVA is to ensure Centre-State coordination and smooth working of dispute settlement systems.

Source: Business Line

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