

## **S.S.m. 11. JAYALAKSHMY, K.A.—Economic Impact of land reforms in Kerala—1983—Dr. K.C. Sankaranarayanan**

Agrarian relations in Kerala was mainly based on the caste system. It was the ascendancy of the Brahmins (Namboodiries) which led to the feudalistic agrarian relations. Prof. Kunjan Pillai with the help of historical evidence holds the view that the Jenmi-Kudiyan system was the product of a peculiar socio-economic situation of the region. The Sangam period shows no evidence of a land owning Namboodiri class. On the contrary there are evidences to show that land belonged to the Kuravas, the Puliyas and others. With the Aryans' migration temples became the centres of learning and Brahmins were entrusted with the trusteeship. As managers of vast areas of fertile land, the power and influence of Brahmins increased. Various tenure rights suited to their interests were created. The British mistook the jenmi for a landlord of the European type. This upset the customary land relations.

The present study evaluates the economic impact of land reforms in Kerala. The study covers a period of 24 years i.e. from 1956 to 1980.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

A satisfactory system of tenure is an essential condition for an efficient agricultural industry. The implementation of land reform measures helped to increase productivity and capital formation. It also led to a better social and cultural life.

### **Methodology**

The study is partly descriptive and partly empirical. Data for the study are

collected from (I) Published government documents, (II) Survey conducted by the Bureau of Economics and Statistics (III) Land Board and (IV) N.S.S. data pertaining to land reform. The data collected from these sources were supplemented by a survey conducted in two villages.

### **Scheme of the Study**

For the purpose of analysis the thesis is divided into two parts. The first part comprises of nine chapters. The first four chapters provide a sort of introduction to the main body of the thesis and provide the historical background to the land reform measures undertaken in Kerala. The next five chapters discuss the various aspects of the reform measures and their implementation. The second part comprises of three chapters. The first chapter in Part II discusses the economic impact of land reforms, the second chapter presents the results of the empirical study and the final chapter the conclusion of the study.

### **Major Conclusions**

Reforms measures smashed the exploitative social order. The system of joint family was broken and consequently the social influence of jenmi was eroded.

Reforms have not completely succeeded in eradicating oral tenancies and benami ownerships. The register containing authentic particulars about land such as ownership and tenancy, rent and revenue are not updated. This has helped many large land owners to make benami transfer and to evade the ceiling provisions.

If the pressures on land remain unabated and productivity does not increase appreciably land reform will prove only a short-term palliative.