

Bill No. 16 of 2025

THE RIGHTS OF TENANT FARMERS BILL, 2025

By

SHRI LAVU SRI KRISHNA DEVARAYALU, M.P.

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BILL

*to confer certain rights on every tenant farmer without affecting the rights of title holders
and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.*

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Seventy-sixth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the Rights of Tenant Farmers Act, 2025.

Short title,
extent and
commencement.

(2) It extends to the Union Territory only.

5 (3) It shall come into force on such date as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

Definitions.

(a) “agricultural land” means land used or capable of being used for agricultural purposes, excluding land allocated by the Central Government for such purposes;

10 (b) “agricultural Officer” includes officers designated by the Central Government for the implementation of agricultural policies under this jurisdiction;

(c) “agricultural year” means the year beginning on the 1st of May;

(d) “card” means Tenant Farmers’ Rights Card issued under section 4;

(e) “crop” includes any crop notified by the Central or State Government, such as food grains, oilseeds, vegetables, and horticultural products;

(f) “tenant Farmer” refers to any person who cultivates land belonging to others with written or oral permission for a crop season or up to one year, excluding family members of the landowner; 5

(g) “family member” means spouse, sons, daughters, and parents;

(h) “portal and database” means any system set up by the Central Government for the registration, accounts, audit, and any other details of the tenant farmers as may be prescribed by the Central Government; 10

(i) “public Financial Institution” refers to any financial institution defined under sub-section (72) Section 2 of the Companies Act, 2013; 18 of 2013.

(j) “prescribed” means prescribed by rules made under this Act; and

(k) “title Holder” refers to a person having legal ownership of agricultural land.

Registration of
Tenant Farmers.

3. (1) The Central Government shall ensure that every tenant farmer shall under its jurisdiction in April each year, register the details of his cultivation arrangements, including particulars of the agricultural land under cultivation, on the digital portal and database established for this purpose under this Act. 15

(2) Upon registration, the title holder of the agricultural land shall be notified through the digital portal and database who shall communicate his consent or objection to the cultivation arrangement within three days from the date of such notification: 20

Provided that if the title holder fails to respond within the aforesaid period, it shall be deemed that the title holder has granted consent to the cultivation arrangement.

Issuance of
Tenant Farmers’
Rights Card.

4. (1) The agricultural Officers shall upon registration of the tenant farmer under sub-section (1) of section 3, issue a Tenant Farmers’ Rights Card both digital and hard to the tenant farmer in such manner as may be prescribed. 25

(2) The Card issued under sub-section (1) shall be proof of the entitlement of tenant farmer to benefits under this Act.

Rights and
Benefits through
the Tenant
Farmers’ Rights
Card.

5. (1) Every tenant farmer who has been used the Card shall,—

(a) be eligible to apply for crop loans from public financial institutions without the requisite of any other revenue records or guarantees; and 30

(b) be entitled to all benefits of government schemes, including but not limited to crop insurance, financial assistance, input subsidies and crop loss compensation, subject to prevailing laws and regulations in this regard.

(2) The financial institutions of the Central Government shall be provided with a database of Tenant Farmer Rights Cards to facilitate loan applications. 35

(3) The Card issued under sub-section (1) of section 4 confers rights solely over the crops grown and does not entitle the holder to any rights over the agricultural land itself:

Provided that title holders may avail loans other than crop loans while the land is under cultivation by a registered tenant farmer. 40

Grievance
Redressal
and Appellate
Authority.

6. (1) Any person aggrieved by the decision of the Agricultural Officer with respect to the issuance of the Card may appeal to the designated authority appointed by the Central Government in such manner as may be prescribed.

(2) Every appeal under sub-section (1) shall be disposed of within forty-five days through a summary hearing in such manner as may be prescribed. 45

Nodal Agency.

7. The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare shall be the nodal agency for the implementation of this Act which may issue guidelines and instructions from time to time, to ensure effective implementation of the process of this Act.

8. The Central Government shall, after due appropriation made by Parliament by law in this behalf, provide adequate funds to the National Commission for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

Central Government to provide funds.

5 **9.** If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the Central Government may make such order or give such direction, not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, as may appear to be necessary or expedient for removing the difficulty :

Power to remove difficulties.

Provided that no such order shall be made after the expiry of a period of two years from the date of commencement of this Act.

10 **10. (1)** The Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

Power to make rules.

15 (2) Every rule made under this Act shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule or both the Houses agree that the rule should not be made, the rule shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be, so, however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

India's agrarian economy relies heavily on the contributions of tenant farmers. Despite their significant presence in the agriculture sector, they face systemic challenges in accessing financial support and Government welfare schemes, due to their informal land arrangements. The lack of formalization of tenant farmers entails that they bear all the risks associated with crop failure while having no legal claim to compensation or benefits. Their exclusion from insurance to welfare schemes leaves them without financial support, specifically after disasters. They do not receive benefits under Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi also, adding to their vulnerabilities. There is also a lack of reliable data on the number of landless and tenant farmers across India, complicating the efforts to address their needs through policy measures.

A comprehensive legislation is necessary to protect these tenant farmers' rights and ensure that they have access to Government support systems.

This Bill aims to address the longstanding issues faced by tenant farmers by establishing a legal framework that recognizes their status and guarantees them access to welfare programs designed for the agricultural sector. It aims to strengthen their resilience, reduce economic disparities, and promote a more equitable agricultural system across India.

Hence this Bill.

NEW DELHI;
November 11, 2024

LAVU SRI KRISHNA DEVARAYALU

FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

Clause 3 provides for establishment of digital portal and database by the appropriate Government to ensure registration of details of agricultural land by Tenant farmers. Clause 4 provides for issuance of both digital and hard card to tenant farmers. Clause 8 provides that Central Government shall provide funds for carrying out purposes of this Act. The Bill, therefore if enacted, would involve expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India. It is estimated that a recurring expenditure of rupees one hundred crore will be involved.

A non-recurring expenditure of about rupees fifty crore is also likely to be involved.

MEMORANDUM REGARDING DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Clause 10 empowers the Central Government to make rules for carrying out the purpose of this Act. As the rules will relate to matters of detail only, the delegation of legislative power is, therefore, of a normal character.

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