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Land, Law & Login: Ground Realities of Land Record System in India

Prachi Sangwan^a Deepak Sangwan^b

^aAdvocate, Punjab & Haryana High Court, Chandigarh, India ^bAdvocate, Punjab & Haryana High Court, Chandigarh, India

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It's not arcane that 'Land' has always been considered one of humanity's most prized possessions. It is a symbol of wealth, power, stability and identity. No wonder! It is so sacred that we Indians equate our land with our mothers. It has long been an instrument of governance, whether under kings, colonial rulers or modern governments. The control over land has led people to stand against each other, in wars in old times and courtrooms in modern times, struggling to win title to land in suits that linger for ages. The presumptive ownership of land, a mess of unclear titles and inconsistencies in land records, is a serious impediment to reforming the land record system in India. This paper highlights various issues that surface in the daily lives of ordinary people while engaging with the land record system in our country. The paper also runs through the process of digitisation of land records, which, though it helped in revamping the system on one hand, exacerbates the gaps on the other. The government has come up with schemes like the Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme and NAKSHA, which aim to accelerate the use of geospatial technologies to modernise land records and strengthen citizen services nationwide. The initiatives reflect the government's whole-of-government commitment to replacing legacy systems with modern, citizen-centric digital land administration to support the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Keywords: *land records, digitisation, unclear titles, mutations.*

INTRODUCTION

With an ever-booming population, consequent increase in demand and limitations of supply, the value of land as an asset has been increasing rapidly. Access to land has a wide-ranging impact on livelihoods, industrial, economic, and social growth. It has been noted that people with extensive rights to land are better off than the landless due to better economic opportunities that come with land rights. This creates a necessity for having land ownership and its title thereof. Having a clear land title protects the rights of the title holder against other claims made by anyone else to the property. In India, land ownership is determined through various records, such as sale deeds that are registered, property tax documents, government survey records, etc. The variety of documents and other discrepancies in the land record system have created confusion regarding conclusive proof of ownership in the real estate market, which has led to flooding of litigants approaching courts exercising claims over property. Also, the recently pronounced judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court settled its position that entries in mutations in revenue courts are not conclusive proof of ownership. They are recorded and maintained for revenue purposes only. This position opened discussions and debates over the legal value of various documents increasingly used to assert claims over land. More deep discussions helped us to delve deeper into our land record system and its flaws, creating inconsistencies in records and unclear titles in the country. Let's first examine the importance attached to the land in our daily lives.

LAND AS FORTUNE

For ages, land has been the most significant wealth one could own. Its importance spans economic, social, emotional and even spiritual dimensions. Land is the foundation of wealth as it is a tangible asset that often appreciates over time. It directly supports livelihoods in agrarian economies like India and provides for financial security, helping owners access capital. No wonder! Land is often equated with mothers in our country.

Land ownership historically defined one's social rank, especially in rural societies. Consequently, landlords and zamindars held significant influence in society. It has been a key marker of family honour, heritage and lineage inherited from generation to generation. Land, for some, is tied to roots, ancestry and cultural identity, making them feel like losing oneself if they lose a part of their land. This has led to disputes over land, which are the most

common causes of litigation and community tension, especially where ownership records are unclear. As cities grow, the value of land multiplies, leading to speculation, gentrification and displacements. Despite new forms of wealth like crypto, tech, etc, land has remained a stable and coveted asset globally. This warrants a sustainable, updated and clear land record system in place.

LAND RECORD SYSTEM IN INDIA

Land records in India are the official documents that define ownership, possession and other rights over land. They form the basis for land ownership, taxation, transfer and dispute resolution. Land records need to be true and clear in order to avoid legal hurdles while dealing with land property.

Land records include Record of Rights (RoR), which contains details of ownership, tenancy, liabilities and rights over land; Cadastral Maps, which show boundaries and location of individual land parcels; Field Measurement Book (FMB), which contains measurements and survey data; Mutation Register, which records any change in ownership or rights for example, sale, inheritance, etc and Jamabandi, which though varies state to state, list details of owners, cultivators and land area along with other related details.

Maintenance of land records in such a huge country, both by land and population, seems a mammoth task which requires lots of time, energy, skill, personnel, space and strategy. Technology, as it has developed today, is a double-edged sword in this regard. On one hand, it could help in reducing the load to some extent, but it could also otherwise mess things up. Digitisation of records, as we took reforms countrywide, has helped record keeping to some extent, but without proper training of skilled personnel, it has also created serious glitches during digitisation, which have led to more conflicts and litigation today.

The Government of India has set up a comprehensive machinery at all three levels overseeing the task of land record keeping and its digitisation. At the Central level, the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) oversees national policies for land records modernisation. The Department of Land Resources (DoLR) implements the Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP¹). Also, Survey of India, which conducts national

¹ 'DILRMP' (Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development) <<https://dolr.gov.in/programmes-schemes/dilrmp-2/>> accessed 04 November 2025

surveys and mapping, have been the backbone along with National Informatics Centre (NIC), which develops IT systems and software for land records digitisation like Bhulekh, Dharani, etc.

Since land is a state subject under the constitution, each state maintains its own land record and revenue administration. At the state level, the Land Revenue Department is the primary custodian of land records, and the Inspector General of Registration is the one who manages property registration and stamp duties. Directorate of Land Records is responsible for survey, settlement and maintenance of records, while State Land Records Computer Centres handle digital record entry and management under DILRMP.

India, being a large country, its states are themselves the size of European nations. There arises a necessity for decentralisation of land record keeping to the district and local level. At the district level, the District Collector supervises revenue administration and mutation approval. The Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO)/ Tehsildar maintains land records, verifies mutations and manages disputes. Patwari is a ground-level officer responsible for maintaining field records and assisting in surveys. Also, the Registrar/Sub-Registrar handles registration of land sale deeds and ownership transfers. Last but not least are the Gram Panchayat/local bodies, which sometimes maintain land use and common land records in rural/urban areas, respectively.

EVOLUTION OF LAND RECORD SYSTEM IN INDIA

In the pre-independence era, land was mostly concentrated with the landlords or zamindars, who had permanent property rights. The zamindars collected land rent from a given territory and paid a fixed sum as land revenue to the government. This land revenue formed a key source of government income. Since the landlords were primarily interested in maximising rent collection, a system of land records was created and maintained to facilitate this process. These land records furnished information important for land revenue assessment, such as the area of the property and details of the person in possession of the property. Post-independence, the zamindari system was abolished, but land ownership continued to be determined through a combination of these records.

After independence, the responsibility for land administration fell into the hands of states, as land was listed in LIST II of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India². All the records were collected and maintained manually by the respective revenue departments. Further, to maximise welfare, some land reforms were undertaken, which overhauled the land records. They include:

Abolition of the Zamindari System: It helped in eliminating the intermediaries between the cultivators and the state. This change made cultivators directly responsible for paying land revenue to the government, bypassing zamindars. This reform managed to transfer around 63 million hectares of land from zamindars to cultivators, establishing a direct relationship between them and the state. But it led to large-scale manipulation in land records. Zamindars used strategies like registering land under fictitious names or relatives' names to avoid redistribution, reducing the effectiveness of the reform.

Tenancy Reforms: The laws were introduced to regulate tenancy, ensuring security of tenure for tenants, and in some states, conferred ownership rights to tenants. The reforms aimed to eliminate arbitrary evictions and ensure fair rents. But the reform allowed the landowners to retain land if they claimed they would cultivate it personally. The word 'personal cultivation' was often misinterpreted to favour landlords and harm tenants. Moreover, in many regions, poor land records and corrupt practices in maintaining them hindered the full implementation of tenancy rights, preventing many tenants from exercising their legal rights.

Land Ceiling Acts: Laws were introduced to set upper limits on landholdings based on land type and productivity, declaring any surplus land above the ceiling to be redistributed among the landless. Consequently, wealthy landowners found ways to circumvent the ceiling laws, such as through benami transfers, where land was transferred to relatives or fictitious individuals to evade land ceiling limits. Thus, most of the unclear titles in land records can be attributed to the times of these land reforms.

DIGITIZATION OF LAND RECORDS SYSTEM

Digitisation of land records is an e-governance intervention under the Digital India Mission. It represents a transformative approach to address challenges in the system by integrating

² The Constitution of India 1950, art 246

technology into the management of land data and services. This aims to bring transparency, reduce human intervention and ensure accessible, accurate and secure record keeping. It highlights how technology-driven reforms resolve long-standing issues of land ownership, corruption and record maintenance in India.

Its implementation in land administration seeks to achieve several key objectives:

- Making the ownership transfer process transparent and transaction details easily accessible to citizens.
- Streamlining record maintenance and mutation processes.
- Minimise corruption and manipulation of land data.
- Ensuring that both rural and urban people can equally access land-related services online.
- Creating a unified, interoperable system linking land records with registration, revenue and survey departments.

Initially, it was the National Land Records Modernisation Programme (NLRMP), launched in 2008 to digitise land records, integrate textual and spatial data and create a comprehensive land information system. Later, in 2016, NLRMP was revamped as the Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP) under the Digital India Mission.³ It is a centre sector scheme under the Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development. This initiative involves the computerisation of land records and registration offices, the digitisation of cadastral maps, the integration of land registration and mutation systems, the development of a unique Land Parcel Identification Number (LPIN) and real-time updating of land records. It has been extended from 2021-22 to 2025-26 with the addition of two new components, which include computerisation of all revenue courts in the country & their integration with land records. Also, an initiative is taken for consent-based linking of the Aadhaar number with the Records of Rights (RoR).⁴

In line with the mission, the states such as Karnataka (Bhoomi), Madhya Pradesh (Bhulekh MP), Odisha (Bhulekh Odisha) and Uttar Pradesh (Bhulekh UP) have developed state-

³ DILRMP (n 1)

⁴ 'Year End Review 2023: Achievement of Department of Land Resources' (PIB, 22 December 2023) <<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1989671>> accessed 04 November 2025

specific portals enabling online access to ownership, mutation and transaction data. Notably, substantial progress has been achieved under the DILRMP Programme. Computerisation of land records, i.e. 95.08 % Record of Rights (RoR) has been completed, 68.02% of cadastral maps have been digitised, 94.95 % of total computerisation of registration has been completed, and 87.08 % of the total integration of sub-registrar offices with land records has been completed.⁵

In furtherance of the mission, a Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN) system is a 14-digit Alphanumeric unique ID for each land parcel. It is based on an international standard and is being implemented across the country. It will have ownership details of the plot, besides its size and longitudinal and latitudinal details. It has so far been adopted in 29 states/UTs and is running as a pilot project in the remaining ones. Apart from this, to solve the issue of land records in local language, 17 states/UTs have now been using a transliteration tool, due to which the Records of Rights are available in the local language.

LEGAL STANDPOINT

In a recent judgement, **Smt. Bhimabai Mahadeo Kambekar (D) Th. LR v Arthur Import and Export Company & Ors.**⁶, the law on the question of mutation in the revenue records about any land and what is its legal value while deciding the rights of the parties is fairly well settled by a series of decisions of the Supreme Court. This court has consistently held that mutation of a land in the revenue records does not create or extinguish the title over such land, nor does it have any presumptive value on the title. It only enables the person in whose favour the mutation is ordered to pay the land revenue in question. The same position was held in *Sawarni (Smt.) v Inder Kaur*⁷ and *Balwant Singh & Anr v Daulat Singh (Dead) by L.Rs. & Ors*⁸ etc.

While not a guarantee of title, proper registration of documents is a necessary legal requirement for establishing ownership rights. The Registration Act⁹ mandates the compulsory registration of non-testamentary instruments related to immovable property

⁵ '95% of Land Records in Rural India Digitized' (PIB, 26 October 2024) <<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2068408®=3&lang=2>> accessed 04 November 2025

⁶ *Smt Bhimabai Mahadeo Kambekar (Dead) Th LR v Arthur Import and Export Company & Ors* (2019) 3 SCC 91

⁷ *Smt Sawarni v Inder Kaur & Ors* (1996) 6 SCC 223

⁸ *Balwant Singh & Anr Etc v Daulat Singh (Dead) by L Rs & Ors* (1997) 7 SCC 137

⁹ The Registration Act 1908

valued at Rs. 100 or more. Moreover, an unregistered document cannot be used as evidence for a transaction affecting immovable property, though it may be admissible for 'collateral purposes'. Thus, a complete set of ownership documents includes a registered sale deed, title deeds showing the history of ownership, encumbrance certificates, property tax receipts, and the mutation certificate.

It has also come to the surface that under the Registration Act,¹⁰ registration of property is not mandatory for all transactions. These include acquisition of land by the government, court decrees, land orders, heirship partitions, and property that is leased for less than a year. Since heirship partitions do not require registration, several property divisions are not recorded, and hence, do not correctly reflect who is in possession of the property. This often leads to litigation related to the rightful owner among heirs.

Moreover, concerning mutations based on disputed wills, it is opined that mutations solely based on wills without proof in a civil court were incorrect. In cases where the will is disputed, the party claiming the title under the will must approach the appropriate civil court to establish their right before a mutation can be made.¹¹ Also, it is held that the tehsildar is an administrative authority and cannot decide mutation applications based on disputed testamentary documents, particularly a will.¹²

ISSUES WITH THE LAND RECORD SYSTEM IN INDIA

With such a cumbersome and mammoth-sized land record system, perfection is nearly impractical and unfeasible. But when facing ground realities, one can always try to identify issues in the system. One cannot find solutions to the problems if they are not clearly and specifically identified. Once identified, more and more people could deliberate and discuss the solutions. Below are some issues that people face in their daily lives while dealing with the land records in our country. These are issues encountered by people with a traditional land record system and amplified by the digitisation of these records:

The discrepancies in maintaining and handling Land Records like Jamabandi, Mutation Registers, etc. have led to many issues, which, though they seem minor on the face of it,

¹⁰ The Registration Act 1908

¹¹ *Jitendra Singh v State of M P* (2021) SLP (C) No 13146/2021

¹² *Anand Chaudhary v The State of MP* WP No 3499/2022

actually create a lot of inconvenience in daily lives. Some of those issues I came across are as follows:

Not Proof of Ownership: The land records, such as Jamabandi, cannot be used as proof of ownership. There are records only for revenue purposes. This misleads many people who end up buying unclear titles in good faith.

Complexity: The land records are not simple and comprehensive enough for a common person to easily understand. Not all persons are capable of reading their own land records.

Outdated Format and Information: The format of Jamabandi, for example, is clearly outdated, and it seems like authorities at the local level are not willing to update it. For instance, most of the land still appears to be rainfed as per Jamabandi records, while in reality, it is now irrigated by canals.

Frequent Changes in Khewat/Khatauni Numbers: Entries like Khewat and Khatauni numbers are changed every four years, leading to a lot of confusion among the masses who fail to remember them every time they get updated.

Delay in Updates: There have been inordinate delays in updating the entries in land records like Jamabandi, etc., for example, the 11th column in Jamabandis states sales, mortgages or any third-party rights in the property; the authorities fail to update them even after informing them multiple times.

Do not Represent Ground Realities: Lack of updated records has resulted in records not being representative of the ground realities relating to possession and ownership. Mostly, common lands belonging to the state or for community ownership are grabbed by people in power, thus causing loss of land to the state.

Wrongful Entries: There have been so many wrongful entries which snowballed after many years, and no person is left to testify to the truth. There have been large-scale spelling mistakes, even the short ones; it takes ages for people to clear their titles.

Translation Issues: The old records have been in a different language from the present ones, which still exist in their original form. If one wishes to trace down ownership of their

property, he needs to find a learned translator, which is not readily available. Translation many times causes a wrongful entry, which could later cause disputes between people.

Though digitisation of land records has aimed to reduce discrepancies, it has created new concerns that require specific interventions to reap benefits. These concerns are listed below:

Lack of Centre-state Cooperation: Land being a state subject, the digitisation of land records depends on the willingness of state governments and centre-state cooperation. Lack of coordination and standardisation among the states in terms of land laws, policies and systems also hinders digitalisation.

Data Mismatch: There has been a large-scale data mismatch between physical and digital records. Large-scale disparities can be seen between land, paper and digital realities, which are not duly updated.

No Opportunity of being Heard: No parties were allowed to be present while digitising their records. The wrongful entries made by negligence while digitising the records have created a lot of conflicts between people. One simple error in the entry has led to multiple suits flooding the courtrooms. Recently, the Madhya Pradesh High Court reprimanded Naib Tehsildars for not impleading a necessary party while deciding over a mutation entry. The court stated, Plight of a common man did not cease to exist at the office of Naib Tehsildar but continued to exist even before the Sub-Divisional Officer and the collector. All the authorities were oblivious of the fact that respondent no. 1 never impleaded the necessary parties, and he cleverly impleaded the State of Madhya Pradesh without referring to any authority. It was empty formality.¹³ The court criticised the conduct of the tehsildar who decided the question of will in a mutation proceeding in undue haste and without the authority of law. The court strongly held that all authorities discharging public duties must be sensitive to the cause of justice because every 'FILE' carries a 'LIFE'.¹⁴

Multiplicity of Digital Platforms: Multiple platforms for digitised records across the country have led to confusion and raised serious questions about their authenticity. The

¹³ *Geeta Paliwal v Sitaram* (2023) SCC OnLine MP 811

¹⁴ *Ibid*

state-specific portals create a multitude of platforms, often leading to doubts about official portals and private sites.

Misuse of Digital Platforms: Digital platforms like 'Meri Fasal Mera Byora' require registration of crop based on land records, khasra number, etc., which is misused by a lot of people by registering themselves for other people's land, thus committing cyber fraud.

Apart from these, there seem to be quite a few confrontations between people handling the entire land record system. The issues below pertain to personnel, officers & departments maintaining land records:

Lack of Departmental Coordination: There is a lack of updated laws and coordination between the revenue, registration, and survey departments. Land ownership is established through multiple documents maintained by different departments, making it cumbersome to access them. Various officers and departments that handle record-keeping work in silos and do not communicate with each other to verify the records, leading to a mismatch of data between different authorities. For example, Sale deeds are stored in the registration department, maps are stored in the survey department, and property tax receipts are with the revenue department. There has been a lack of integration between survey maps and textual records.

Jurisdictional Overlapping: There is jurisdictional overlapping among various officers handling land records, and they consequently end up with different approaches and data, leading to confusion and conflicts.

Lack of Experience and Technical Knowledge: Though the officers and personnel in these departments are government employees, they do not have relevant experience and technical knowledge regarding the records. Local officials and intermediaries often resist technological interventions that reduce their discretionary powers.

Corruption in the Department: There is rampant corruption in these departments, where people with money can have their work done in a few days, while others have to wait for ages to get it done.

Lack of Accountability Mechanism: There is no accountability mechanism for local officers like Patwaris and Registrars who deal with local people daily, and no action can be taken

against them if they negligently make errors in records. The burden of clearing the error again falls on the person in the records. There are no genuine audits conducted over these local officials. No receipt is provided to the applicant who approaches them for the work. There is no mechanism to check the loss to the state treasury caused by the non-recording of details of money received by local people for work so handled.

Moreover, when it comes to legal apparatus, these issues burden the courts with plenty of civil suits lingering on for ages without cogent solutions coming up at the end. Some of these are listed below:

Lack of Legal Literacy: Insufficient knowledge about legally acceptable documents as proof of ownership has led to sales and purchases, mortgages, etc, with unclear titles. The Supreme Court has reiterated that mutations or entries in revenue records do not by themselves confer ownership/title. They are fiscal/ administrative tools, not definitive proof of ownership.

Lack of Conclusive Titling: The lack of a conclusive titling, illegal land acquisition through forgery and Benami Property have led to increased land ownership disputes. More than 60 % of the litigation in India is Land-related. Most people who have inherited the property for generations do not have records of their property. They lack cogent title documents like registry, etc, to prove their ownership or fight for inheritance if they claim so.

Unclear Land Titles: Unclear land records have led to flooding of civil suits in courtrooms where extended family members are fighting against each other for decades to get inheritance rights. It is maintained that survey records may help with establishing boundaries, giving rise to presumptions under law, but do not establish title. The title requires more (chain of deeds, registrations, etc).¹⁵

Discrepancies in Data: Mismatch in even the slightest entries, like spelling mistakes in names of owners, have made people turn to courtrooms for corrections, as there seems to be no other way. When ownership/title is disputed, the proper forum is a civil court of competent jurisdiction and not the revenue authorities or the revenue record alone.

¹⁵ 'Land Records and Tiles in India' (PRS India) <<https://prsindia.org/policy/analytical-reports/land-records-and-titles-india>> accessed 04 November 2025

High Court Fees for Land Suits: Each civil suit involving land requires respective court fees to be paid, which once gets into the treasury stays for decades till finalisation of the suit and gets forfeited if one loses to prove their stand. There is no account of loss of that money for the period of time till the finalisation of the suit takes place.

All these issues pile up to multiply the struggles of ordinary people who toil from one officer to another, from department to department, thus encountering more tribulations as listed below:

Tedious System: The system of updating and correcting land records is very complex, elaborate and tedious, which can lead to corruption, land grabbing, etc. Though literacy seems to be increasing in the country, the common man still needs a lawyer to read and interpret the contents of land record documents. A common man needs to pay officers at every level, from Patwari to Tehsildar to employees at the computer centre to the registrar, to get his work done.

Monetary Difficulties: High stamp duty and registration fees discourage formal registration of property transactions, leading to discrepancies in the reflection of the ground realities of land records.

Hindrance in the Sale/Purchase of Immovable Property: It is a heavy task to sell or purchase land with clear titles today. Every other buyer or seller is engaged in litigation due to unclear titles marked in the land records.

Exclusion from Rural Development Schemes: Exclusion errors in rural development schemes linked with land ownership due to a lack of effective land titling hinder the social justice objectives. For example, under the PM-KISAN Scheme, the government provides income support to all land-holding farmers' families.

Loss of Social Justice Benefits: Lack of digital land records literacy makes people lose the government benefits under various schemes for fertiliser subsidies, etc., as they require online registration of land records on the portal like Meri Fasal Mera Byora, etc. Many complaints have been received of errors made by computer operators in entering land records, thereby registering another person's land in the name of the other. This even is

surfacing as one facet of cyber fraud, and there has been an increase in such complaints in many areas.

Loss of Institutional Credit Facility: The land is used as collateral for obtaining loans by farmers. It has been observed that disputed or unclear titles inhibit the supply of capital and credit from formal sources, such as banks for agriculture. Small and marginal farmers may not hold formal titles and are unable to access institutionalised credit, thereby pushing them more towards informal sources of credit.

SUGGESTIONS

It is pertinent to mention some suggestions to resolve the plethora of issues. Some of them are listed below:

Inter-Department Coordination: A Pragmatic approach is required to be adopted to solve issues related to land records maintenance. More focus is required at the grassroots level, overseeing local officers. It requires inter-department coordination between the registry, revenue and survey departments so that data mismatch can be readily checked.

Technical Education and Upskilling of Local Officials: Proper training and skilling for ground-level officers like Patwaris, computer operators and other local officers dealing with people daily.

Accountability of Local Authorities to Check Corruption: Proper maintenance of receipts of fees taken from people daily. The state treasury should oversee the same to check rampant corruption among local-level officers.

Principles of Natural Justice to be Followed: An opportunity of hearing should be given to all those mentioned in revenue records before any correction is made in any of the records, like Jamabandi, Mutations, etc.

Regular Update and Proper Mechanism of Correction: A regular update is required to keep land records up to date. Also, a proper mechanism and channel should be provided through which one could be allowed to correct wrongful entries within a reasonable period of time.

Conclusive Titling System: Moving towards a system of conclusive land titling and state-guaranteed ownership will aid in improving the transparency and accuracy of land records.

The laws should be made specific, recognising cogent documents as proof of ownership, thereby providing clarity and filling loopholes in the legal process. A quite fair example can be taken from the **Torrens System of Land Titling**,¹⁶ which was originally established in Australia in 1858 and later adopted in many other countries, such as England, Canada, Singapore, etc. Under this system, the state provides guaranteed titles to all property owners. It has created a central registry where all transfers of land are recorded in one register, thereby producing a single title with a unique number that also records easements, mortgages and discharges of mortgages. Several committees have referred to this system as an example when suggesting moving to a conclusive titling system.

Improving Efficiency in Data Collection: Improving the efficiency of GIS technology for geo-referencing of cadastral maps, National Generic Document Registration System (NGDRS), etc.

Legal Awareness: An awareness campaign is required for legal literacy among the masses to impart basic knowledge for understanding land records. Even judges in the lower judiciary are required to be trained and specialised in reading and understanding the land records so that proper adjudication of land disputes can take place within a reasonable time period.

CONCLUSION

India is a vast country both by land and population. It requires a sustainable land record system to improve the real estate market and reduce land disputes in the country. It requires a proper mechanism to resolve mutation-related discrepancies through inter-department and intra-department coordination to bear the fruits of the digitisation of land records in the country. Moreover, it could be a moot question to bring 'Land' under the Union List to streamline and centralise the land record system rather than dealing with different portals and record keeping in different states. Some examples from the international community, like the Torrens System of Land Titling from Australia, could come in handy. Most importantly, India needs to work out a system suited to its population and conditions. It could be noted that recently, the Department of Land Resources has convened a National Symposium where a detailed review of the NAKSHA pilot was presented. It uses modern

¹⁶ Joseph Herron Crowley, 'The Torrens System' (1922) 6(3) Marquette Law Review
<https://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4857&context=mulr> accessed 04 November 2025

aerial surveys and feature-extraction technologies to map over 157 cities. Deliberations will address technical challenges, including accuracy in dense urban clusters and alignment of aerial data with existing cadastral maps. Also noteworthy is the UrPro Card, envisioned as a single digital property document. Sessions will explore the legal reforms needed to embed the UrPro Card into registration, mutation, property tax and building permission workflows, enabling secure and transferable digital property rights for citizens. Similar initiatives are needed across the country to maintain uniformity and avoid glitches in land records.