

**WEST BENGAL LAND DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING ACT,  
1948**

**21 of 1948**

**[7th October, 1948]**

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**WEST BENGAL LAND DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING ACT,  
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**[7th October, 1948]**

An Act to provide for the acquisition and development of land for public purposes. WHEREAS it is expedient to provide for the acquisition and development of land for public purposes; It is hereby enacted as follows:

**1. Short title, extent and commencement :-**

(1) This Act may be called the West Bengal Land Development and

Planning Act, 1948.

(2) It extends to the whole of West Bengal; but it shall not apply to the Calcutta Municipality as defined in clause (b) of section 2 of the Calcutta Improvement Act, 1911, or to any area to which that Act has been extended under sub-section (3) of section 1 thereof before the commencement of this Act.

Explanation I. For the purpose of this Act, the Calcutta Improvement Act, 1911, shall not be deemed to have been extended under sub-section (3) of section 1 of that Act to any area if section 167 only of that Act has been extended to such area.

Explanation II. Notwithstanding any amendment made, after the commencement of this Act, to clause (b) of section 2 of the Calcutta Improvement Act, 1911, this Act shall apply and be deemed always to have applied to the area which was comprised within the municipality of Tollygunge immediately before the issue of a notification under section 594 of the Calcutta Municipal Act, 1951.

(3) It shall come into force on the date on which the West Bengal Land Development and Planning Ordinance, 1948, ceases to operate.

## **2. Definitions :-**

In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context,

(a) the expressions "land", "Collector" and "Company" respectively have the same meanings as in the Land Acquisition Act, 1894;

(b) "development scheme" means a scheme for the development of land for any public purpose;

(c) "notified area" means an area declared under sub-section (1) of ' section 4 to be a notified area;

(d) "public purpose" includes

(i) the settlement of immigrants who have migrated into the [State] of West Bengal on account of circumstances beyond their control,

(ii) the establishment of towns, model villages and agricultural colonies,

(iii) the creation of better living conditions in urban and rural areas, and

(iv) the improvement and development of agriculture, forestry, fisheries and industries;[but does not include a purpose of the Union;]

(e) "rules" means rules made under this Act.

### **3. Appointment of the prescribed authority :-**

The [State] Government may appoint, in accordance with the rules, an authority (hereinafter referred to as the prescribed authority) for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

### **4. Declaration of notified area :-**

(1) The [State] Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, declare any area specified in the notification to be a notified area if it is satisfied that any land in such area is needed or is likely to be needed for any public purpose and the Collector shall cause public notice of the substance of such notification to be given at convenient places in the locality in such manner as he may think fit.

(2) Thereupon it shall be lawful for any person either generally or specially authorised by such Government in this behalf and for his servants and workmen, to enter upon and survey and take levels of any land in such area; to dig or bore into the subsoil; to do all other acts necessary to ascertain whether the land is suitable for such purpose; to set out the boundaries of the land proposed to be taken and the intended line of the work (if any) proposed to be made thereon; to mark such levels, boundaries and line by placing marks and cutting trenches; and where otherwise the survey cannot be completed and the levels taken and the boundaries and line marked, to cut down and clear away any part of any standing crop, fence or jungle: Provided that the person so authorised shall, at the time of such entry, pay or tender payment for all necessary damage to be done as aforesaid, and, in case of dispute as to the sufficiency of the amount so paid or tendered, he shall at once refer the dispute to the decision of the Collector <sup>1</sup> \* \* \* \* \*, and such decision shall be final.

1. Words "or other chief revenue officer of the district" om. by W.B. Act 23 of 1955.

### **4A. Hearing of objections :-**

(1) Any person interested in any land within a notified area may, within thirty days from the date of issue of the notification specifying the area to be a notified area, object to the acquisition of the land in which he is interested.

(2) Every objection under sub-section (1) shall be made to the Collector in writing and the Collector shall give the objector an opportunity of being heard and shall, after hearing all objections and making such further inquiry, if any, as he thinks necessary, submit the case to the State Government together with the record of the proceedings held by him and a report containing his recommendations on the objections.

1. Sec. 4A ins. by W.B. Act 23 of 1955.

## **5. Preparation and sanctioning of development scheme :-**

(1) The <sup>1</sup>[State] Government may direct the prescribed authority, or, if it so thinks fit in any case, authorise any Company or local authority, to prepare, in accordance with the rules, a development scheme in respect of any notified area and thereupon such scheme shall be prepared accordingly and submitted, together with such particulars as may be prescribed by the rules, to the <sup>1</sup>[State] Government for its sanction:

<sup>3</sup>Provided that no scheme shall be necessary for acquisition of land for the public purpose specified in sub-clause (i) of clause (d) of section 2.

(2) A development scheme submitted to the <sup>4</sup>[State] Government under sub-section (1) <sup>5</sup>[may after taking into consideration any report submitted under sub-section (2) of section 4A, be sanctioned] by it either without any modification or subject to such modifications as it may deem fit.

<sup>6</sup> (3) Notwithstanding anything contained in the foregoing sub-sections or any rules made under this Act or in any judgment, decree or order of any court, any development scheme prepared, approved or sanctioned by the State Government before the commencement of the West Bengal Land Development and Planning (Amendment) Act, 1957 shall be deemed to be and to have always been a scheme duly sanctioned under sub-section (2).

1. Word subs. for the word "Provincial" by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950.
3. Proviso ins. by W.B. Act 23 of 1955.
4. Word subs. for the word "Provincial" by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950.
5. Words subs. for the words "may be sanctioned" by W.B. Act 23 of 1955.
6. Sub-sec. (3) ins. by W.B. Act 29 of 1957.

## **6. Declaration of acquisition of land needed for development scheme :-**

(1) When a development scheme is sanctioned under sub-section

(2) of section 5 and the <sup>1</sup>[State] Government is satisfied that any land in the notified area for which such scheme has been sanctioned is needed for the purpose of executing such scheme, a declaration to the effect that such land is needed for a public purpose shall, unless already made in pursuance of section 7, be made by the <sup>1</sup>[State] Government.

<sup>3</sup>(1a) When the State Government is satisfied, after taking into consideration any report submitted under sub-section (2) of section 4A, that any land in the notified area is needed for the public purpose specified in sub-clause (i) of clause (d) of section 2, a declaration to the effect that such land is needed for the said purpose shall <sup>4</sup>\* \* \* \* \* be made by the State Government.

(2) The declaration shall be published in the Official Gazette, and shall state the district or other territorial division in which the land is situate, the purpose for which it is needed, its approximate area, and, where a plan shall have been made of the land, the place where such plan may be inspected.

<sup>5</sup> (3) When the State Government makes a declaration under sub-section (1) or sub-section (1a), it may, if it thinks fit, insert in the declaration a statement that the mines of coal, iron-stone, slate or other minerals lying under the land or any particular portion of the land are not needed for the purpose for which the land is being acquired.

1. Word subs. for the word "Provincial" by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950.
3. Sub-sec. (1a) ins. by W.B. Act 23 of 1955.
4. Words and figure ", unless already made in pursuance of section 7," om. by W.B. Act 29 of 1957.

5. Sub-sec. (3) ins. by W.B. Act 23 of 1955.

**7. Special provision in cases of urgency :-**

In cases of urgency, if in respect of any notified area the [State] Government is satisfied that the preparation of a development scheme is likely to be delayed, the [State] Government may, at any time, make a declaration under section 6, in respect of such notified area or any part thereof though no development scheme has either been prepared or sanctioned under section 5.

**8. Application of Act I of 1894 subject to special provision for compensation :-**

<sup>1</sup>(1) <sup>2</sup>[After making a declaration under section 6] the <sup>3</sup>[State] Government may acquire the land and thereupon the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 (hereinafter in this section referred to as the said Act), shall, so far as may be, apply:

Provided that

(a) if in any case the <sup>3</sup>[State] Government so directs, the Collector may, at any time after a declaration is made under section 6, take possession, in accordance with the rules, of any beel, baor, tank or other watery area, or <sup>5</sup>[any waste or arable land] in respect of which the declaration is made and thereupon such land shall vest absolutely in the <sup>6</sup>[Government] free from all encumbrances; <sup>7</sup>\*

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(b) in determining the amount of compensation to be awarded for land acquired in pursuance of this Act the market value referred to in clause first of sub-section (1) of section 23 of the said Act shall be deemed to be the market value of the land on the date of publication of the notification under sub-section (1) of section 4 for the notified area in which the land is included subject to the following condition, that is to say, if such market value <sup>8</sup>[in relation to land acquired for the public purpose specified in sub-clause (i) of clause (d) of section 2], exceeds by any amount the market value of the land on the 31st day of December, 1946, on the assumption that the land had been at that date in the state in which it in fact was on the date of publication of the said notification, the amount of such excess shall not be taken into consideration.

<sup>9</sup> (2) When the amount of compensation has been determined under sub-section (1), the Collector shall make an award in accordance with the principles set out in section 11 of the said Act,

"[and the amount referred to in sub-section (2) of section 23 of the said Act shall also be included in the award].

1. Sec. 8 renumbered as sub-sec. (1) of that sec. by W.B. Act 23 of 1955.

2. Words and figure subs. for the words and figure "A declaration under section 6 shall be conclusive evidence that the land in respect of which the declaration is made is needed for a public purpose and, after making such declaration," by W.B. Act 23 of 1955.

3. Word subs. for the word "Provincial" by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950.

5. Words subs. for the words "any other waste or arable land" by W.B. Act 23 of 1955.

6. Word subs. for the word "Crown" by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950.

7. Explanation to clause (a) om. by W.B. Act 23 of 1955, which was as under: "Explanation. For the purposes of this clause the decision of the Provincial Government as to whether any land is or is not waste or arable land shall be final;"

8. Words, figure, letters and brackets ins. by W.B. Act 23 of 1955.

9. Sub-sec. (2) ins. by W.B. Act 23 of 1955.

## **9. Power to dispose of land acquired under the Act :-**

**1**

(1) Where the State Government decides to lease or sell any land acquired in pursuance of this Act, the person or persons from whom the land was so acquired shall, in such manner as the State Government may direct, be offered a prior right to take on lease or to purchase the land on such terms and conditions as may be determined by the State Government.

(2) If, in any case, two or more persons claim to exercise a right offered under sub-section (1), the right shall be exercisable by such of the claimants as the State Government may determine after such inquiry as it thinks fit.

1. Sec. 9 subs. by W.B. Act 23 of 1955 which was earlier as under: "9. Power to dispose of land without development. Notwithstanding anything elsewhere contained in this Act or in any rule or order made thereunder, the Provincial Government may, if it so considers expedient, retain, let on hire, lease, sell, exchange or otherwise dispose of any land acquired in pursuance of this Act: Provided that (a) where the Provincial Government decides to lease or sell any land acquired in pursuance of this Act, the person or persons from whom the land was so acquired shall, in such manner as the Provincial Government may direct, be offered a prior right to take on lease, or to purchase the land on such terms and conditions as may be determined by the Provincial Government; (b) if, in any

case, two or more persons claim to exercise a right offered under clause (a), the right shall be exercisable by such of the claimants as the Provincial Government may determine."

**10. Execution of development scheme and disposal of land :-**

(1) The <sup>1</sup>[State] Government may direct the prescribed authority to execute any development scheme sanctioned under sub-section (2) of section 5 or cause it to be executed in accordance with the rules and upon the execution of the scheme as so directed the lands comprised therein shall be disposed of by the Collector in such manner as may be directed by the <sup>1</sup>[State] Government.

(2) If the <sup>1</sup> [State] Government so thinks fit, it may also empower a Company or a local authority to execute, at its own cost, any such development scheme and to dispose of the lands comprised therein on such terms and conditions including conditions relating to the manner of disposal of land as may be settled by the [State] Government and embodied in an agreement to be entered into by the [State] Government and the Company or local authority, as the case may be.

1. Word subs. for the word "Provincial" by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950.

**11. Withdrawal of power from Company or local authority to execute development scheme or to dispose of land :-**

If, at any time, the <sup>1</sup> [State] Government is satisfied that any of the terms or conditions contained in an agreement referred to in sub-section (2) of section 10 is not being complied with, it may, by order served in accordance with the rules on the Company or local authority, as the case may be, withdraw the power conferred on it to execute any development scheme or to dispose of the lands comprised therein or both and may thereafter make such arrangement in that behalf as it may deem fit and proper.

1. Word subs for the word "Provincial" by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950.

**12. Protection of action taken under this Act :-**

No suit, prosecution, or other legal proceeding shall lie against any person for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done in pursuance of this Act or any rule or order made thereunder.

**13. Delegation of powers :-**



The <sup>1</sup> [State] Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, direct that any or all of the powers conferred upon it by this Act shall be exercisable also by such authority subject to such conditions, if any, as may be specified in the notification.

1. Word subs. for the word "Province" by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950.

#### **14. Power to make rules :-**

(1) The <sup>1</sup> [State] Government may make rules for carrying out the purposes of the Act.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely:

(a) the designation, constitution and manner of appointment of the prescribed authority;

(b) the preparation of development schemes and the particulars to be submitted with development schemes referred to in sub-section (1) of section 5;

(c) the manner of taking possession of land referred to in clause (a) of the proviso to section 8;

(d) the execution of development schemes referred to in section 10;

(e) the manner of service of orders referred to in section 11.

1. Word subs. for the word "Province" by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950.

#### **15. Continuance of action taken under West Bengal Ordinance 2 of 1948 :-**

Any appointment or rules made or any notification issued or anything done or any action taken or any proceeding commenced in exercise of any power conferred by or under the West Bengal Land Development and Planning Ordinance, 1948, shall, on the said Ordinance ceasing to operate, be deemed to have been made, issued, done, taken or commenced in exercise of powers conferred by or under this Act as if this Act had commenced on the 27th day of April, 1948.