

KARNATAKA HEADS FOR ALL-IN-ONE PROPERTY CARDS

Check on fraudulent property deals

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

Bengaluru, 13 April

Two major initiatives pioneered by the Karnataka government to protect genuine property owners, while preventing fraudulent sales coupled with introduction of paperless certificates, have caught the attention of other states in addition to the Central government.

In the first initiative, under what is called the Urban Property Ownership Record, the government is getting ready to issue property cards which would authentic the ownership details, area and location of each property besides mapping it. The cards will eliminate fraudulent sale of properties, including government land besides enabling online sale by the owners of properties concerned, albeit at a later state.

The model scheme, which has just been rolled out in Shimoga covering 90,000 properties, is set to be initiated in the IT capital. Ultimately, the project would cover over 20 lakh properties in Bengaluru, including flats and apartments, preparatory survey for which should start soon. Once the surveys are completed, the property cards could be issued to Bangaloreans in a matter of two to three years.

Besides Shimoga, the government is set to start

rolling out cards to cover 3.5 lakh properties in Mysuru and another 1.7 lakh in Mangalore, the survey work for which has almost been completed. Similarly, work has started for conducting property surveys in Hubli-Dharwad and Ballari.

In the second development, students and the general public alike who apply for caste, income, residence, or related documents to prove their status as legal heirs, would not need printed certificates anymore.

Instead, they would be provided a unique certificate number attached to each document, akin to what is seen on Aadhar cards. It would be enough to cite this number on the applications they give to schools or government departments for admission, jobs, pensions or, for that matter, the Common Entrance Exams. The ease this system brings about can be gauged from the fact that various departments of the government had to physically verify over 17 lakh certificates before granting scholarships to the deserving students last year. The new system where only the certificate number needs to be mentioned, eliminates all the time consuming process; demystifying the exercise.

Now, nearly two crore people who frequent the

revenue department for such certificates annually would not need to waste their time travelling to government offices and waiting for their documents. Instead they can now walk into a cyber café, cite the unique number of their applications and get the documents relating to their need. This can be done even sitting at home. The verified certificate number would be sufficient proof of its validity, in the process eliminating the need for paper certificates.

According to Mr Manish Moudgil, survey settlement and land records commissioner, the scheme covers nearly 40 types of different certificates from caste to income to land ownership and residence, to name a few. He told The Statesman that the paperless certificates were cross-checked by the user agencies against the data available with the government. A conservative estimate suggests that the government would save nearly Rs 7 crore by eliminating the use of stationary. The paperless certificates, the official explained were like the PNR number of a train or an airline ticket. About the property card, he said this was a combination of textual data regarding ownership and to the scale exact map of the property concerned.