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Q6(b)

Do you think MSP (Minimum Support Price) Scheme for ag can help in rural development? Elaborate your response with suitable examples.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2020 · Sociology GS 2 · 15 marks · Rural and Agrarian transformation in India

Rural and Agrarian transformation in India: Programmes of rural development, Community Development Programme, cooperatives, poverty alleviation schemes; Green revolution and social change; Changing modes of production in Indian agriculture; Problems of rural labour, bondage, migration.

Core demand of the question

- Do you think **MSP** (Minimum Support Price) Scheme for agriculture can help in rural development? Elaborate your response with suitable examples

Revision summary

MSP can floor farmer income and reduce distress sales.

Punjab-Haryana show mandi-town development around procurement.

Landless labour and unrecorded tenants gain little directly.

Regional and crop skew limit it as all-India rural development.

Water mining is the ecological bill of a narrow **MSP** success.

Introduction

Yes, **MSP** can help rural development when it is a real floor for the kisan's marketed surplus. It cannot develop the village if it is a wheat-rice privilege for a few belts and leaves mazdoors and rainfed farmers out.

Body

How **MSP helps**

- A predictable price cuts distress sale to traders and can fund education, wells, and panchayat taxes, a household dimension of rural development.
- Punjab and Haryana illustrate how procurement plus **MSP** thickened commercial farmers, cooperatives, and mandi towns.
- **It is a planning tool in a mixed economy:** the state enters the grain market so that industry gets cheap food without crushing the grower entirely.

Limits as rural development

- **Thorner's map:** maliks and surplus kisans capture procurement. Landless labour needs wages, not a support price they do not sell.
- **Regional skew:** coarse grains, pulses, and eastern paddy often lack the same machinery, so **MSP** on paper is not **MSP** in the cart.

- **Ecological cost:** guaranteed rice-wheat can mine groundwater, a development that degrades the field.
- Tenant farmers without records miss the sale window.

Examples of wider use

- Expanding procurement of millets and pulses, and linking **MSP** to PM-AASHA-type operations, would spread the rural-development effect.
- Farmer movements around **MSP** show it is now a citizenship claim of the agrarian class, not only a food-policy lever.

Verdict

- **MSP** is a necessary rural-development instrument, not a sufficient village programme.

Flow diagram

MSP procurement procurement -> Kisan income

Kisan income -> Some rural development

Labour tenants dryland -> Gap

Conclusion

MSP can help rural development by securing the commercial peasant's income and food supply for the nation. Examples from north-western procurement show both prosperity and skew. Without tenants, labour, and dryland crops, it is regional class policy, not full rural development.

Facts & figures

MSP

State-announced floor at which designated agencies may buy specified crops.

FCI procurement

The machinery that makes MSP real in some belts.

Millet gap

Nutri-cereals often lack the same purchase certainty as rice-wheat.

Farmer unions

Political example that MSP is now a development-and-dignity demand.