

Pakistan: 125 acres retrieved after 64 years

Wednesday 10 February 2021, by [SAEED Tariq](#) (Date first published: 5 January 2021).

TOBA TEK SINGH: The district administration with the help of a heavy contingent of police retrieved 125 acres out of 800 acres agriculture land at Chak 405-JB, 64 years after it was illegally occupied.

About 800 acres state land was fraudulently registered in the name of the late Noor Muhammad and others in 1956 under the 'grow more food scheme' introduced by the then government. A number of allottees were later found fake but they continued occupying the land through stay orders of courts.

The revenue administration declared this registration a fraud in 1963. However, during the course of next 57 years, a long court battle ensured that the land remains in occupancy of the late Noor Muhammad's family. The land is worth Rs2bn according to present market price.

In 2004, a stay order was issued by the revenue department that went on further 16 years before it was decided against the occupiers. On Dec 7, the revenue department again gave a decision against the occupiers.

In the present government, some local PTI leaders were putting pressure on the district administration not to take over the land. However, Governor Chaudhry Sarwar had given the order to the district administration to go according to the decision of the revenue department during his visit to his hometown of Pir Mahal on Jan 2 in presence of all the elected representatives of the district. He had assured former MPA Mian Muhammad Rafiq that the state would not side with the land mafia.

On Monday, action was taken for the occupation of 125 acres. However, the rest of about 675 acres land is still in possession of the occupiers.

In a press statement, Farooq Tariq, the general secretary of Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee, thanked the governor for taking immediate action on the orders of the revenue department. He said the government must allot this land to those who were cultivating it before it was occupied but they were thrown out of it.

Mr Tariq said the late Chaudry Fateh Muhammad, the farmer leader, and Mian Muhammad Rafique, the former MPA, fought this long battle against the land mafia for over six decades.

Tariq Saeed

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