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Agrarian crisis in India and the way forward

Jayati Ghosh'

The agrarian crisis has finally grabbed the attention of political parties and policy makers. It is unfortunately not new — it was essentially a gift of the neoliberal reforms, as it festered from the mid to late 1990s and then exploded in the mid-2000s. It had its origins in the combination of trade liberalisation (which exposed Indian cultivators to highly subsidised yet volatile global prices) and reduction in public expenditure for agriculture. The Modi government came to power on the basis of claims that this would change: a promise of "*achhe din*" for farmers who would see their real incomes double in five years. The reality has been the opposite— things have deteriorated for agriculture even during relatively good monsoons, and cultivators and rural workers are reeling under conditions that are making farming simply unviable.

In the first two decades of the reforms, rural distress was reflected more in significantly increased suicides among farmers and distress migration, than in mass protests. Even so, simmering rural resentment helped to turn two crucial national elections, in 2004 and 2014. Now we have entered another phase of open protests by farmers. All over the country, cultivators are angry, upset and even desperate — and they are expressing it in local, regional and national agitations: from the incredibly impressive long march in Maharashtra in late 2017 to the huge coming together of peasants and workers last month in Delhi, as well as many local protests in different parts of the country.

I will first briefly consider the state of agriculture in mid-2014 when the Modi government came to power, and then analyse what the Modi regime promised and achieved in the past four and a half years. Finally, I will examine the possible strategies to revive agriculture and the rural economy.

Economic Convergence: Evidence from the Growth Experience of Nine Indian Regions

Kannan Perumal'

Abstract

This study applies β and σ convergence concepts using cross sectional and time series data to empirically evaluate the convergence in percapita state net domestic product among nine Indian regions. Most of the post liberalization period i.e. from 1991 to 2018 is covered under this study. Results indicate that the regions under study have absolute β and σ convergence implying that these regions have similar steady state economic determinants apart from experiencing a steady decline in the dispersion of percapita state net domestic product over the period of time.

Keywords: β and σ convergence, steady state, regional disparity, neo liberalism)

World Economy through the onslaught of COVID-19

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Abstract

The asynchronous spread of Corona virus worldwide has impacted the economies of countries around the globe very significantly. The countries are experiencing severe financial issues along with health and livelihood crisis. GDP growth around the globe has contracted; employment reduced to its lowest level ever. Based on secondary data from various sources, the present study attempts to explore these issues and whether this crisis will provide these countries with new opportunities to come up with more inclusive policies. While it is suggested that the Governments should focus on the liquidity with the small business and upgrading the healthcare infrastructure to counter this problem. It is also understood that the economic impacts, which are felt across all segments of society and all sectors of the economy in

countries across the world, will impact all segments of the population, but the hardest hit will be those working in the informal sectors.

Keywords: COVID-19; GDP; Unemployment; Infrastructure; Recession.

Assessing Elementary Education in Rajasthan A District Level Analysis

Sanjay Kumar¹ and Sachidanand Sinha²

Abstract

Elementary education in Rajasthan is characterized by low rate of enrolment, high discontinuity and low level of educational achievement. The present study focuses its analysis on supply side aspects of elementary education of state using DISE, 2013-14 data. This study is quantitative in nature. The study reveals that enrolment in elementary schools in Rajasthan is lower than the national average. The availability of various infrastructures in schools of Rajasthan revealed a mixed picture. It shows that there is higher number of single teacher schools and low percentage of female teachers present in elementary schools than the national average. But the availability of toilets, drinking water, classrooms, boundary wall around schools etc. are better than national average. There are regional variations across districts of Rajasthan regarding enrolment, availability of various types of amenities, availability of teachers, classrooms etc. in elementary schools. The Scheduled caste concentrated districts are performing better in Rajasthan than the Scheduled tribe concentrated districts. Therefore, the study recommended that for the improvement of elementary education in the state, the number of teachers should be increased particularly female teachers. The infrastructures in schools of tribal dominated regions of Rajasthan needs to be enhanced more particularly the number of teachers and availability of toilet facilities.

Keywords: Elementary school, Enrolment, School Infrastructure, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Rajasthan.

Pattern of Health Care and Health Outcomes in World Health Regions

Experiences from India and South East Asia

Farhat Hossain¹

Abstract

This article explores the pattern of health care and health outcomes in selected four world health regions with fourteen selected countries. The objectives of this study are to understand the differences in health availability and health outcomes in World health regions with reference to South East Asia and India and identify the factors responsible for changing health status in the world health region. The findings of the study suggest that health outcomes and health infrastructure for both physical and manpower are very poor in the African Region in comparison to other WHO regions. European Region and Region of America have performed very well in most of the indicators of health profile and health infrastructure. The health indicators of South East Region are not comparable with the European Region and Regions of America but for certain indicators, it can be compared with African Region. Immunization coverage among the one-year-old in the South-East Region is lowest amongst the other world health region. The underweight children less than five years are quite high in the South-East Region and it is comparable and close to African Regions. The population using improved sanitation in the South-East Region is only 45 percent and it is incomparable to the Region of Americas and European Region. Further, the Coefficient of Variation (C.V) indicates the disparity of health workforce in world health regions and fourteen selected countries in the world.

Keywords: Health Profile, Health Infrastructure, Health Expenditure, Health Care, Utilisation.

Regional Disparity in Occupational Structure and Gender Segregation in Bihar Analysis based on Census of India 2011

Pooja Royl

Abstract

The proportion of workers engaged in various occupations reflects the socio-economic development of a region. Gender segregation in occupational structure is said to exist when women and men are distributed across occupations disproportionately without considering the nature of the distribution of occupations. The study focuses on four categories of occupation i.e. cultivators, agricultural labourers, household industry workers and non-household industry workers in all districts of Bihar and determines the occupational diversity as well as gender segregation on the basis of quantitative techniques. The high value of segregation in the economically developed districts in Bihar like Patna rejects the widely held belief that economic growth lowers Gender occupational segregation. Although engagement of females in economic activities are much higher in frontline districts of Bihar, but are not in proportionate to gender segregation.

Keywords: Socio-economic Development, Gender Segregation, Occupational Structure, Occupational Diversity, Labour Market