

Review of
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Articles:

Two Locations of Injustice: Present and Posterity

Gopal Narayan Guru

Professor, Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Science, JNU, New Delhi

Malcolm Adiseshiah Memorial lecture delivered on 21 November 2013 at Chennai. "Malcolm Adiseshiah Memorial lecture delivered on 21 November 2013 at Chennai."

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Conflict or Coexistence? A story of big and small retailers

Tanushree Haldar,

Doctoral Scholar, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore

Saumya Chakrabarti,

*Associate Professor of Economics, Department of Economics and Politics, Visva-Bharati
(University),
Santiniketan, West Bengal*

Abstract :

In the light of ongoing debates on allowing FDI in Retail sector, it becomes important to understand the interaction of organised and unorganised retail trade, particularly for a developing country like India with huge employment in retail trade and supply chain. This study is an attempt towards addressing the issue. Our study has found that the unorganised micro retailers are facing the challenge of the giant supermarkets. But, they are also devising various business strategies to woo the consumers and thereby are able to grow even in presence of mall using the advantages of the overall economic expansion. The study has also highlighted differential impact of this development on low and high income retailers using quantile regression, and competition among them. We have a situation of both conflicts and co-existence of organised and unorganised retail segments. Besides we have also studied certain interesting characteristic features and certain changing patterns – though tentative – about these unorganised small retailing units. These characteristics are essential in understanding the viability of micro-retail in the era of corporatization of retail trade and in devising appropriate policies.

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Skill Development and Employment Opportunities in Three Southern States of India

K. Sivasubramaniyan

Assistant Professor, Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS), Adyar, Chennai 600020

Email : siva@mids.ac.intc

Abstract :

Poverty and unemployment contribute to slow progress in many spheres of our nation. To address this problem, suitable jobs for the unemployed youth with adequate skills need to be created. To meet this objective, the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India initiated skill development programmes to alleviate poverty and create employment potential in 2007. With the help of the ministry funding, the Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) through its initiative Skills Programme for Inclusive Growth (SPRING) endeavours to catalyze, facilitate and manage large-scale, demand-driven skills training and placement programmes, with the twin objectives of enabling poverty alleviation in rural areas and meeting requirements of various industries for skilled workers. The study evaluates the quality of infrastructure available for trainees, the effectiveness of post-training placement and tracking system, identifies the extent of drop-outs and reasons for the same and suggests measures for improving the training. The empirical analysis of the study is based on a random sample of trained employees. The results of the study indicate that the twin aims of poverty alleviation and meeting skilled labour requirements of various industries have been achieved in rural areas of three states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, where the study has been conducted.

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The Experience of India's Inclusive Growth

L.G. Burange

Professor, Department of Economics, University of Mumbai.

Neha N. Karnik and Rucha R. Ranadive

Research Scholars, Department of Economics, University of Mumbai.

Abstract :

Strategies of inclusive growth and development have become important in the development policies of Emerging Market Economies (EMEs) that have higher economic growth rates. With India's accelerated economic growth rate, Indian policy makers have also shifted their focus to inclusive growth and development while formulating the 11th Five-Year Plan. This paper describes flagship programmes that cover education, health, employment, rural-urban infrastructure, women and child development and social security measures from 2007-08 to 2011-12 under the 11th Five-Year Plan and evaluates some schemes based on their targets versus their achievements. Despite the numerous measures taken by the government, their effectiveness remains low due to lack of co-ordination between the schemes and poor implementation.

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Urban Water in India: Pricing and Challenges

Rashmi Tiwari,

Research Scholar, Department of Economics, B.B.Ambedkar University, Lucknow

Sanatan Nayak,

Associate Professor, Department of Economics, B.B.Ambedkar University, Lucknow

Abstract:

Provision of adequate water supply to a growing urban population is a daunting task. This paper makes an attempt to assess the status of drinking water in urban India, analyze the existing price structure and identify the major issues of urban water supply. The data has been collected from various secondary sources, viz., the NIUA Report, Data Book of Water Utilities in India, CWC Report, TERI Report and Census. The data reveals that more than 70 percent of households in urban India depend on municipal tap water supply for their daily needs. It shows that the provision of piped water supply still remains an unachieved goal in many states. At present, no state in India has been able to ensure 24 hour water supply. On the other hand, water is a state subject. So tariff structures used in urban water supply also vary across states according to the institutions involved in its provision. There is no uniformity in the principles being followed by the states for fixation of water rates. Average tariffs in India are low relative to costs. Therefore, revenue from tariffs is inadequate to contribute to new capital investment. Poor cost recovery has rendered most of the water utilities in the country as financially unsustainable. According to service level benchmarking data, only 67.2 percent of the cost is recovered by sampled utilities. One of the main problems in the urban water sector is the high level of unaccountability for water (UFW). The UFW in many Indian cities is as high as 40 to 50 percent while the acceptable level is about 15 per cent. The study suggests that pricing of water on cost basis is essential because it not only helps in resource generation but also results in efficient usage of water and discourages wastage of water. Consumption based tariffs should form the basis of charging while flat rates for charging should be discouraged by making flat rates unattractive.

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Dying Tanks in Urban Areas: What can be done with them?

R. Seenivasan,

Ph.D Candidate, School of Law, University of Westminster. Email : r.seenivasan@gmail.com

J. Kanagavalli,

Programme Leader, DHAN Foundation, Madurai, India

Abstract:

Cities in Tamil Nadu grow out of agricultural villages with least attention to adopt and modify their past land uses productively. In the process, the water bodies such as tanks, ponds, and networks of channels that once served agriculture are converted for undesirable uses. Madurai, the second major city in the state, has developed most of its important civic infrastructures, educational facilities, bus stands, and public office complexes on tank beds and thus is losing many of them forever. The few surviving tanks and channel networks are encroached for slums and buildings, to make roads and sewage networks. Consequently, the city faces frequent floods, rapidly falling groundwater tables, declining water quality and increased health

hazards. While the law and policy expressly claim the tanks to be saved, the case study shows the practice to be just contrary and it calls for protecting the dying tanks.

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