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NITI AAYOG



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AGRICULTURE

1. Singh, Sukhpal & Bhogal, Shruti

[MSP in a Changing Agricultural Policy Environment](#)

EPW: Vol. 56, Issue No. 3, 16 Jan, 2021

The minimum support price and the public procurement system are indispensable for national food security, public distribution system, farmer livelihood and welfare, and agricultural growth. Over time, the MSP regime has been beleaguered with weaknesses. Thus, agricultural reforms are essential to rectify these primarily by firming the government's role in agricultural marketing to ensure farmer welfare. However, the new farm laws foster a policy environment based on the laissez-faire approach that will be inimical to farmers' interests.

2. Mishra, J.P.

[Recent Farm Bills and Benefits to Farmers](#)

Kurukshetra: January 2021

J P Mishra, Former Adviser, NITI Aayog

The Government by enhancing three recent bills for agricultural marketing, contract farming and essential commodity, has tried to eliminate the unhealthy and exploitative rules and procedures. The APMCs not only remain functional as a platform for marketing of agricultural produce will be strengthened and become more transparent due to increased competition which is a pre-requisite for a well-meaning market. The Government is committed to make investments for the alternative system for marketing, better than the existing ones, as provided in the new Acts. These provisions must be implemented with vigor for making, better than the existing one, as provided in the new Acts. These provisions must be implemented with the vigor and objectivity.

3. Lauren Falcao Bergquist and Dinerstein Michael

[Competition and Entry in Agricultural Markets: Experimental Evidence from Kenya](#)

American Economic Review: Vol. 110, no. 12, December 2020

African agricultural markets are characterized by low farmer revenues and high consumer food prices. Many have worried that this wedge is partially driven by imperfect competition among

intermediaries. This paper provides experimental evidence from Kenya on intermediary market structure. Randomized cost shocks and demand subsidies are used to identify a structural model of market competition. Estimates reveal that traders act consistently with joint profit maximization and earn median markups of 39 percent. Exogenously induced firm entry has negligible effects on prices, and low take-up of subsidized entry offers implies large fixed costs. We estimate that traders capture 82 percent of total surplus.

4. Manish Kumar

[The Government's Retreat from Agricultural Policy - Experiences from Bihar](#)

EPW: Vol. 56, Issue No. 4, 23 Jan, 2021

The Government of Bihar repealed the Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) Act in 2006 intending to encourage private parties in agricultural marketing, which was supposed to provide more options to farmers to sell their produce. The experience from the state suggests that repealing the APMC Act did not persuade private entities to set up agricultural markets. This saw the number of mandis remaining stagnant, and with poor agricultural market density combined with negligible public procurement, it led to a lower price realisation by farmers in the state.

ECONOMICS

5. Kant, Amitabh

Fiscal federalism

Yojana: January 2021

Amitabh Kant is Chief Executive Officer of NITI Aayog

With constantly changing economic conditions, development of new technologies and an evolving new governance structure, new reforms are required in public financial management system both at Centre and State level. In India, fiscal federalism as it stands today is a result of historical evolution which originated in pre-independence India. Over time, through various commissions, committees and parliamentary enactments, a rigid unitary system with immense scope of discretionary power to the Central Government was transformed into a constitutionally regulated federal system.

6. Martellini, Paolo and Menzio, Guido

Declining Search Frictions, Unemployment, and Growth

Journal of Political Economy: Vol. 128, No. 12 December 2020

For a search-theoretic model of the labor market, we seek conditions for the existence of a balanced growth path (BGP), where unemployment, vacancy, and worker's transitions rates remain constant in the face of improvements in the production and search technologies. A BGP exists iff firm-worker matches are inspection goods and the quality of a match is drawn from a Pareto distribution. Declining search frictions contribute to growth with an intensity determined by the tail coefficient of the Pareto distribution. We develop a strategy to measure the rate of decline of search frictions and their contribution to growth.

EDUCATION

7. Pokhriyal, Ramesh 'Nishank'

Education for new India

Yojana: January 2021

Education develops cognitive, social and soft skills including cultural awareness and empathy, perseverance and grit, teamwork, leadership, communication, among others. Thus by 2022, new India will provide a strong foundation for an education system based upon the principles of accessibility, equity, quality, affordability and accountability. The education of New India will enable learners to foster character making while preparing for gainful and fulfilling employment.

8. Mathews, Eldho

[Leveraging International Influence through Higher Education - An Opportunity in Disruption for India](#)

EPW: Vol. 56, Issue No. 1, 02 Jan, 2021

An analysis of state and institutional responses to COVID-19 demonstrates the importance of global interconnectedness of the goals and targets to prevent the pandemic's spread. These rationales also underline how select Indian higher education and research institutions, with the support of the government, could play an important

role to leverage their international influence in the emerging situation by tapping into new academic partnership opportunities in the global South.

9. Banasree P

Education in Rural Indi: Scheme for Women and Youth

Kurukshetra: January 2021

The Government for rural India's such as Samagra Shiksha and beti Padhao are playing a major role in ensuring quality education for rural India, especially among the disadvantaged girls. The newly launched Padhna Likhna Abhiyan is now set to carry forward the message of education among rural adults in a similar Fashion.

10. Maya Escueta, Andre Joshua Nickow, Philip Oreopoulos and Vincent Quan

Upgrading Education with Technology: Insights from Experimental Research

Journal of Economic Literature: Vol. LVIII, No. 4 December 2020

In recent years, there has been widespread interest around the potential for technology to transform learning. As investment in education technology continues to grow, students, parents, and teachers face a seemingly endless array of education technologies from which to choose—from digital personalized learning platforms to online courses to text message reminders to submit financial aid forms. Amid the excitement, it is important to step back and understand how technology can help—or in some cases hinder—learning. This review article synthesizes and discusses rigorous evidence on the effectiveness of technology-based approaches to education in developed countries and outlines areas for future inquiry. In particular, we examine randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity studies across the following categories of education technology: (i) access to technology, (ii) computer-assisted learning, (iii) technology-enabled behavioral interventions in education, and (iv) online learning. We hope this synthesis will advance academic understanding of how technology can improve education, outline key areas for new experimental research, and help drive improvements to the policies, programs, and structures that contribute to successful teaching and learning.

HEALTH

11. Bhargava, Balram
Public Health Innovation
Yojana: January 2021

For a sustainable and effective model for health for All, maintaining synergy between cost, quality and access to essential health care services is crucial. Alongside efforts to strengthen primary health care, raise public health expenditure and provide greater financial coverage, we also need an enabling environment for public health innovation through collaborative action to provide affordable tools to those who need it the most. Unless everyone is protected, no one is left behind for essential health care, we cannot dream of achieving the target of 'Health for All'

12. Dutt, Pankhuri
Rural Healthcare in India
Kurukshetra: January 2021
Pankhuri Datt, Public Policy Consultant, NITI Aayog

Healthcare is like a public good that is highly associated with a country's economic growth. As we move towards gaining from our demographic dividend in the next 20-30 years, we must ensure quality and timely delivery of services across the country. The National Rural Health Mission of 2005 has been rightly explained to provide healthcare services to the urban poor who are under-nourished and under served as well. However, The rural focus of the programme has gap that must be bridged.

MONETARY POLICY

13. Gopinath Tulasi, Samantaraya, Amaresh Rajeshwar, Thangjam & Chaubey, Abhishek
Understanding Inflation Dynamics in India - A Revisit
EPW: Vol. 56, Issue No. 2, 09 Jan, 2021

The flexible inflation targeting framework was formally adopted by India in 2016 with an amendment to the Reserve Bank of India Act. This paper attempts to throw light on

the dynamics of consumer price index headline, core, and food inflation, using a relatively young and atheoretical approach pioneered by Stock and Watson in 2007. The empirical results, indicating that the behaviour of core inflation is different from that of headline and food inflation, have implications for the conduct of monetary policy.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

14. R. Ramanan and Yadav, Manglesh

Adopting a Holistic Approach towards rural development

Kurukshetra: January 2021

R Ramanan, Mission Director, Additional Secy-Atal Innovation Mission, and Manglesh Yadav, Innovation Lead- AIM, NITI Aayog

Today, India is well known globally for its rapid growing digital prowess, technological capabilities and its innovative spirit. With Over 55000 + Startups, 400 + incubators and over 34 Unicorns, the country is rightly being perceived as one of the fastest growing Startups nations of the world. Since ancient times, the Indian rural ecosystem has been an agrarian economy which has been predominantly dependent on agri and allied activities. The rural workforce has always been dependent on agriculture as its primary source of income. But now, a shift in the recent few years has been witnessed as the rural youth have started engaging themselves in various sectors which are not directly aligned to the agriculture sector.

15. Dhaktode, Nitin

Caste in MGNREGA Works and Social Audits

EPW: Vol. 56, Issue No. 2, 09 Jan, 2021

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is known as a demand-driven programme introduced with the legislative backing of Parliament of India. It has contributed significantly to provide the “freedom of choice” of work and dignified work opportunities along with rights and entitlements especially for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, women, landless, and other marginalised groups that depend on traditional caste-based occupations and agricultural landlords in the villages for their livelihoods. This has largely contributed to protecting their self-respect

and dignity in workspaces and helped control migration. However, the deep-rooted caste system as well as the caste-based political domination in villages affects the implementation of MGNREGA severely. This paper examines the caste-based exclusion in the implementation of MGNREGA, and the social audit and follow-up action taken by the vigilance wing.

TAX

16. Youssef Benzarti, Dorian Carloni, Jarkko Harju, and Tuomas Kosonen

What Goes Up May Not Come Down: Asymmetric Incidence of Value-Added Taxes

Journal of Political Economy: Vol. 128, No. 12 December 2020

This paper provides evidence that prices respond significantly more strongly to increases than to decreases in value-added taxes (VATs). First, using two plausibly exogenous VAT changes, we show that prices respond twice as much to VAT increases as to VAT decreases. Second, we show that this asymmetry results in higher equilibrium profits and markups. Third, we find that firms operating with low profit margins are particularly likely to respond asymmetrically to VAT changes. Fourth, these asymmetric price effects persist several years after VAT changes take place. Fifth, using all VAT changes in the European Union from 1996 to 2015, we find similar levels of asymmetry.