



सत्यमेव जयते

नीति आयोग NITI AAYOG



DOCPLAN-FEBRUARY 2024

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AGRICULTURE

1. Gurpreet Singh and Poorvi Kulkarni

[Sustainable Agriculture in Maharashtra: Can the State Budget Offset Climate Vulnerability?](#)

EPW: Vol. 59, Issue No. 7, 17 Feb, 2024

Losses faced by farmers due to consecutive drought years, frequent hailstorms, and unseasonal rain in the past decade were compounded by successive floods during the 2019–21 monsoon. The need to embed climate-resilient practices into agricultural interventions by the government was more acutely felt. Against this backdrop, this article looks at whether the Maharashtra budget has allocated adequately to sustainable agriculture and other community-based agricultural infrastructure development in the recent years. Data show that budgetary allocation towards sustainable agriculture schemes and other long-term, community-based infrastructure development programmes have fallen short. Although these schemes build long-term climate resilience of agriculture and allied sectors, allocations so far have been skewed towards short-term relief. Apart from refocusing on budgetary allocation for community-based infrastructure development schemes, directing attention towards allied sectors and wage employment is equally necessary to increase farmers' income sustainably.

ECONOMICS

2. Rahul Agarwal, Rohan Bansal, Pankaj Kumar, K M Neelima

[Persistence and Volatility-weighted Measures of Core Inflation for India](#)

EPW: Vol. 59, Issue No. 8, 24 Feb, 2024

Unlike exclusion-based measures which remove food and fuel entirely from core inflation, the proposed core measures, using alternative weighting schemes, assign higher weight to the more persistent and less volatile groups in both food and non-food components to capture the more durable part of inflation. We show that our constructed indices satisfy the common properties of core inflation as (i) an unbiased estimate, (ii) a smoother and persistent component, and (iii) a good predictor of headline inflation, thus providing an alternative gauge of underlying inflation.

3. Rashmi Shukla

[Linkage of Multidimensional Poverty and Per Capita Income - A District-level Analysis in Uttar Pradesh](#)

EPW: Vol. 59, Issue No. 5, 03 Feb, 2024

Analysis at macro and micro level reveals that the districts and zones with higher per capita income in Uttar Pradesh have a lower percentage of multidimensional poverty index poor and the condition of non-notified slums in terms of both poverty measures is deplorable. Moreover, an inverse relationship between per capita income and multidimensional poverty exists. So, the government should provide employment-oriented education and technical training for skill development especially for slum dwellers so that they can increase their income and can come out of the poverty trap.

EDUCATION

4. Jean Dreze, Reetika Khera, Rishabh Malhotra

[Health Checkup - The Changing State of Health Centres in North India](#)

EPW: Vol. 59, Issue No. 8, 24 Feb, 2024

The findings of a recent survey of public health centres in five north Indian states (Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand and Rajasthan) are presented, in light of earlier surveys in the same areas from 2002 onwards. Contrary to a common narrative whereby public health services in India have “collapsed,” there is a general pattern of improving quality and utilisation over time. The pace of improvement, however, is far from adequate. The recent conversion of many health centres into health and wellness centres, in particular, has been largely cosmetic so far. In states like Bihar and Jharkhand, the standards of healthcare in public facilities remain abysmal. Hope lies in the experiences of states that have shown how decent standards of healthcare can be achieved in the public sector, notably Himachal Pradesh. Even in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, there have been valuable initiatives in recent years.

FINANCE/BANKING

5. Faisal Bari, Kashif Malik, Muhammad Meki and Simon Quinn
[Asset-Based Microfinance for Microenterprises: Evidence from Pakistan](#)
American Economic Review: Vol. 114 No. 2 February 2024

We run a field experiment offering graduated microcredit clients the opportunity to finance a business asset worth four times their usual borrowing limit. We implement this using a hire-purchase contract; our control group is offered a zero interest loan at the usual borrowing limit. We find large, significant, and persistent effects: treated microenterprise owners run larger businesses with higher profits; consequently, household consumption increases, particularly on food and children's education. A dynamic structural model with nonconvex capital adjustment costs rationalizes our results and allows counterfactual analysis; this highlights the potential for welfare improvements through large capital injections that are financially sustainable.

6. Marzena Rostek and Ji Hee Yoon
[Innovation in Decentralized Markets: Technology versus Synthetic Products](#)
American Economic Journal: Microeconomics: Vol. 16, No. 1, February 2024

Advances in market-clearing technology for multiple assets and synthetic products present alternative ways to leverage complementarities and substitutabilities in asset payoffs. This paper compares their equilibrium and welfare effects. In competitive markets, either instrument can mimic the efficient design. When traders have price impact, however, synthetic products and market-clearing technology provide separate instruments for impacting markets' performance and can generate synergies or trade-offs. Neither instrument can generally reproduce the other's payoffs state by state. Moreover, innovation in market clearing renders additional synthetic products nonredundant. Our analysis points to the advantages of each type of innovation while also exposing potential risks.

HEALTH

7. Marika Cabral and Marcus Dillender
[Gender Differences in Medical Evaluations: Evidence from Randomly Assigned Doctors](#)

Little is known about what drives gender disparities in health care and related social insurance benefits. Using data and variation from the Texas workers' compensation program, we study the impact of gender match between doctors and patients on medical evaluations and associated disability benefits. Compared to differences among their male patient counterparts, female patients randomly assigned a female doctor rather than a male doctor are 5.2 percent more likely to be evaluated as disabled and receive 8.6 percent more subsequent cash benefits on average. There is no analogous gender-match effect for male patients. Our estimates indicate that increasing the share of female patients evaluated by female doctors may substantially shrink gender gaps in medical evaluations and associated outcomes.

8. Shailender Kumar Hooda

[Hospital Network and Healthcare Access - Unequal Opportunity to Use Insurance](#)

EPW: Vol. 59, Issue No. 7, 17 Feb, 2024

The strategies for eliminating financial barriers to medical care work well in an equitably distributed healthcare system. The paper suggests that where healthcare facilities are equally distributed, the benefits of insurance are better utilised. But, more importantly, a good public health system in itself is sufficient to promote equitable access to healthcare. Further, insurance does little to encourage and redirect private healthcare providers to cover the critical gap in the health facilities. The private hospital care providers are located more in areas where (public and/or private) facilities are already concentrated.

9. Manjari Sinha, Mathew George

[Hysterectomy as a 'Magic Bullet' for Gynaecological Morbidities - Commercialisation of Health](#)

EPW: Vol. 59, Issue No. 5, 03 Feb, 2024

The increasing prevalence of hysterectomies among young women in various states of India over the past decade has raised significant concerns. The study on

hysterectomy among rural women from weaker socio-economic backgrounds in a district in Maharashtra examines the factors that shape the choice of healthcare facilities. Existing studies and news reports indicate that among the various stakeholders, private practitioners unnecessarily prescribe hysterectomy for monetary interests.

POLICY

10. Sangeeta Shroff, Deepak Shah, Ramgopal Kundurthi

[Volatility in Edible Oil Economy - Issues for Self-sufficiency](#)

EPW: Vol. 59, Issue No. 6, 10 February, 2024

The per capita consumption of edible oils in India has increased multifold during the last six decades, buoyed by the increase in population, incomes, and preference for processed foods. The impact of the Technology Mission on Oilseeds launched in 1986 to increase production was short-lived as competitive imports increasingly served domestic requirements post-liberalisation. In the absence of a stable domestic policy, the oilseeds/edible oils sector was excessively dependent on international factors. The disruption of global supply chains due to the pandemic followed by the Russia–Ukraine war exposed the sector’s vulnerabilities, highlighting the need for self-sufficiency in edible oils. The analysis of price volatility in the sector reveals the challenges and policies required for achieving such self-reliance.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

11. Abhishek Singh

AI in Indian Governance and public services

Yojana: February 2024

Recognising the transformative potential of AI, the government of India has undertaken concrete steps to encourage the domestic adoption of AI in a responsible manner and build public trust in the use of this technology , placing the idea of ‘AI for All’ at its very core . Large datasets may be utilized to harness the potential of AI to forest data driven perspectives and facilitate the effective development and implementation of robust policies and scheme. As the proliferation of AI in citizens centric public services accelerate , the imperative for establishing robust ethical guardrails becomes increasingly evident to

safeguard against potential misuse and ensure responsible deployment . Towards these ambitions, the government of India has also notified the digital personal data protection act to protect citizens privacy , safety and trust concerning their personal data and enhance the accountability of entities collecting and processing personal data.

12. Debjani Ghosh

India's Tech Services Industry Harnessing Generative Ai For Scalable, Secure, And Human-Centric Solutions

Yojana: February 2024

Companies are now focusing on scaling AI solutions, understanding their real-world impact, ensuring robust security measures, and maintaining human-centric approach. Scaling AI requires robust infrastructure, efficient algorithms, and a clear understanding of market needs. The journey ahead for India's tech services sector is not just about technological adaptation but also about leading the way in innovation and setting a global precedent in the effective and ethical use of Generative AI. India, with its robust tech services industry, able leadership, immense digital data, a strong STEM talent pool, and a thriving DeepTech startup ecosystem, has not just observed but actively participated in this technological renaissance. As Generative AI positions itself as a transformative force, its impact on India's technology services sector is becoming increasingly evident. Most of this value is likely to emerge from a few functions and industries that form the core of the Indian technology services industry. Distinctively, India's approach to digital transformation, grounded in principles of inclusivity and security, has set a global standard in the technological paradigm.