ECO SHASTRA

The Economics Society | Sri Aurobindo College Evening

ANNUAL MAGAZINE 2025

HORIZON

VOLUME 1

Nothing so weakens a government as inflation.

ECO
EST 2017
SHASTRA

ECOSHASTRA

Table of Contents

About Ecoshastra 01

Principal's Message 02

Convener's Message 03

Our Faculty 04

Our Core Team 05

Editorial Team 06

07 Executive Board

08 Annual Report

10 Ecomania '25

11 Electric Vehicles and The Future of Mobility in India

12 The Economics Of Election Spending In India

13 Make in India: Success, Setbacks, and the Way Forward

Table of Contents

14 Demographic Dividend or Burden: India's Population Puzzle

16 The Evolution of Economic Planning in India: From Five-Year Plans to NITI Aayog

17 Poverty Elevation Programmes: How Effective They Have Been

19 A Decade of GST: Hits, Misses, and What's Next

20 India's Digital Public Infrastructure: UPI, Aadhaar, and Beyond

21 Regional Disparities in India's Economic Growth

One Nation, One Election: Economic Impacts and Some Insights 22

Reserve Bank of India: Leading change and Ensuring Stability 24

Feminist Economics and Unpaid Labour 25

When money is a matter of time 26

From Shadows to Strength: India's Journey Through the 2008 Recession 28

Glimples of this tenure

ABOUT ECOSHASTRA

The Economics Society
SACE | University of Delhi

Established in 2017, Eco-Shastra, the Economics Society of Sri Aurobindo College (E), is dedicated to fostering a holistic understanding of economics among its members. We strive to transcend traditional textbook learning, by embracing a hands-on, practical approach that connects economic concepts to real-world scenarios.

Through engaging events, social media platforms, and collaborative discussions, Eco-Shastra aims to cultivate a vibrant economic community. Our diverse team of 60 students shares a common vision: to promote economic awareness, critical thinking, and innovative problem-solving.

By empowering students to analyze, express, and view economics from multiple perspectives, Eco-Shastra seeks to inspire a new generation of economically conscious and socially responsible individuals.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the third edition of Horizon, the annual magazine of Ecoshastra, our college's Economics Society. This publication stands as a testament to the curiosity, dedication, and creativity of our students, who continue to explore the real-world impact of economic thought.

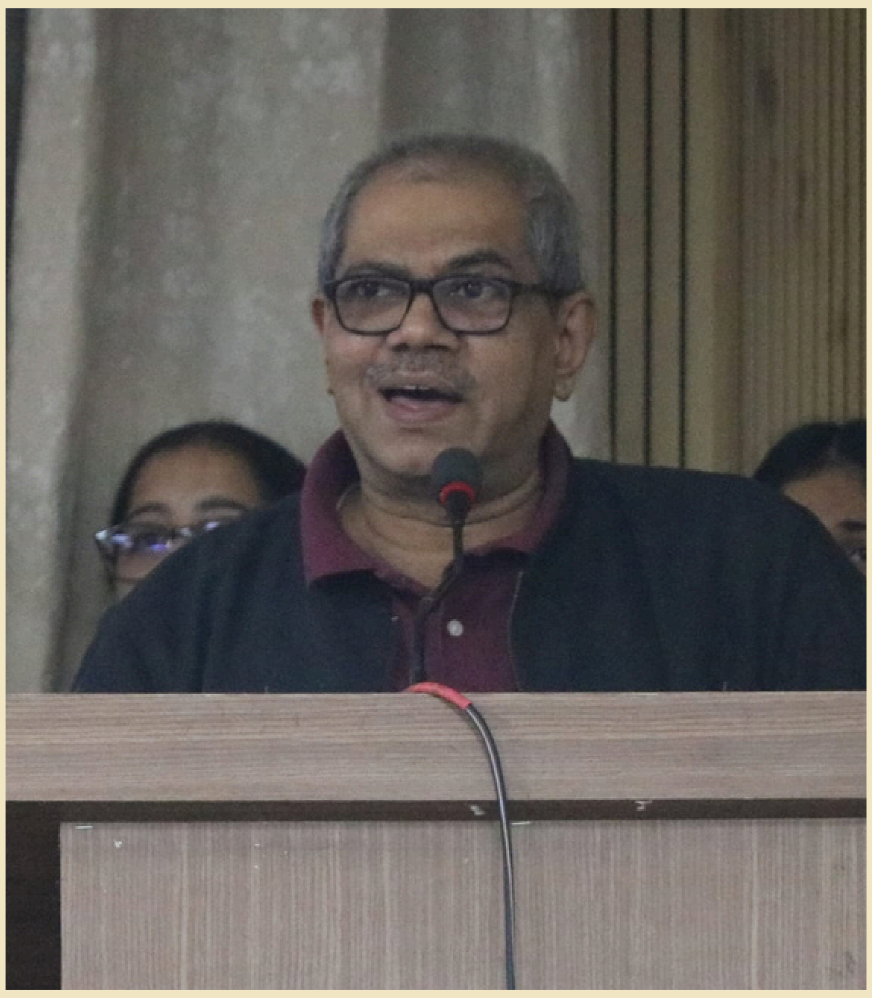
In a world shaped by rapid change, the ability to understand and interpret economic realities is more important than ever. Ecoshastra has consistently provided a platform for meaningful dialogue, encouraging critical thinking and collaborative learning.

Horizon reflects the vibrant academic culture nurtured by the society and showcases the depth of thought our students bring to contemporary issues.

I congratulate the entire team behind this edition and wish them continued success in their academic and creative pursuits.

Best regards,
Prof. Vipin Aggarwal

FROM THE DESK OF THE TEACHER IN CHARGE



It is with immense pride and joy that I present to you the third edition of Horizon — the annual magazine of Ecoshastra, the Economics Society of our college.

As teacher-in-charge of Ecoshastra, I've witnessed the enthusiasm and commitment of our student members in the field of economics. Ecoshastra serves as a vibrant community that encourages academic exploration and fosters an environment where ideas flourish. Through seminars, discussions, and collaborative initiatives, students are empowered to connect economic concepts with real-world issues, enhancing their understanding and contributing to broader societal dialogue. This edition of Horizon exemplifies this spirit, featuring thoughtful contributions that link theory and practice, inviting diverse readers to engage with economic forces shaping our world. I commend the students for their dedication and vision, and I encourage us all to continue nurturing our passion for economics while building a knowledgeable and curious community.

Warm regards,
Mr. Tapas Ranjan Saha

OUR FACULTY

MR. TAPAS RANJAN SAHA

DR. RIJU KAMAL MISHRA

MS. ISHITA DUTT

MR. SWAGAT RAUT

MRS. ANISTA CHAUHAN

MR. RAKESH KUMAR

MS. ANU SINGH DESWAL

MR. RAJIV VERMA

OUR CORE TEAM

Being a part of Ecoshastra has been a truly transformative experience. This society has not only sharpened my academic understanding of economics but also shaped my leadership, teamwork, and creative thinking. From brainstorming Econoweek articles to organizing seminars, debates, and our flagship event ECOMANIA, every moment has been a journey of growth and learning. I feel immensely proud of what we've built together - a platform where voices are heard, knowledge is shared, and future leaders take shape. Ecoshastra will always remain close to my heart.

-RAJEEV
PRESIDENT

I became a part of Ecoshastra in my first year as a member, took on the role of event head in my second year, and had the privilege to serve as Vice President this year. Leading such an amazing team has been a wonderful experience. Ecoshastra has been like family to me, and I truly hope its inspiring legacy continues for years to come.

-HARSH
VICE PRESIDENT

Being the part of Ecoshatra has been a journey of small wins, late-night planning, and constant learning. It's had its challenges, but that's what makes it meaningful. Surrounded by passionate people, I've grown with every step—and I'm genuinely excited for what's still to come.

-SEVYA
JOINT SECRETARY

Ecoshastra will always hold a special place in my heart. This role gave me the chance to connect, collaborate, build friendships, and grow in countless ways. From leading teams and hosting meets to organizing successful events and setting new benchmarks—we've done it all !! Together, we've handled last-minute blunders, late-night meetings, and chaotic moments that turned into unforgettable memories. This journey has shaped me both personally and professionally, and I'll always cherish every bit of it.

-NEHA GULLIYA
JOINT SECRETARY

Ecoshastra — The economics society has been very different for me right from the very first day. I have personally treated this society as a family. It has been a wonderful time with each and every member. I worked hard, built relationships, and learned a lot. This journey made me more confident, vocal, and knowledgeable. The past three years have been great. I wish you all the very best for the upcoming years.

-ADITYA SAINI
GENERAL SECRETARY

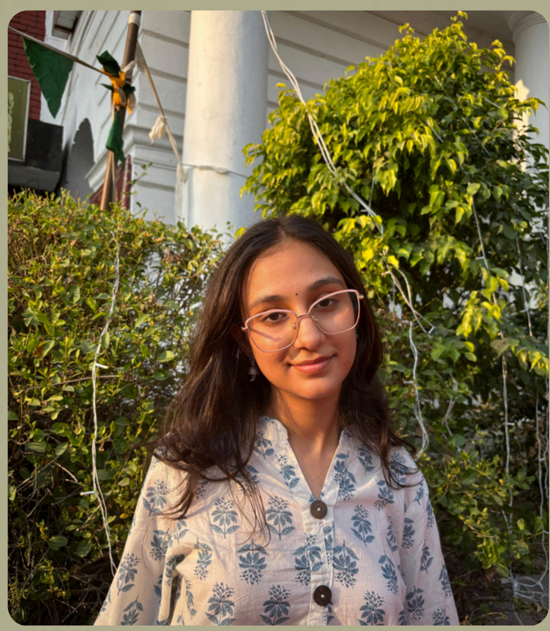
From a curious first-year member to the General Secretary of Ecoshastra, this society has been my home, my inspiration, and my greatest teacher. Every role, every moment has shaped me deeply. I carry with me memories, friendships, and a heart full of gratitude.

-TUSHAR
GENERAL SECRETARY

EDITORIAL BOARD


PALAK GUPTA


PIYUSH AHUJA


MEHAK AHI


NISHIKA


AMAN BHATNAGAR


NEELSH

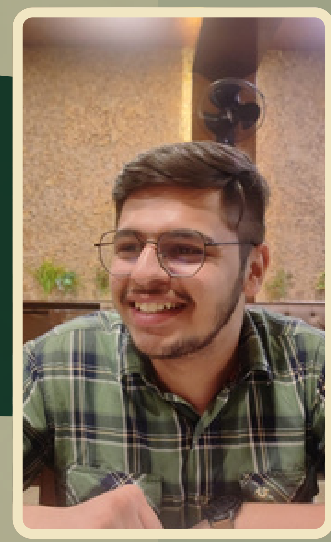

DYUTI PRASAD

Being the editor of Ecoshastra has been an incredible journey. From writing articles to curating visuals, every step taught me the power of collaboration and creativity. This magazine reflects the passion and hard work of our society. I am grateful for this opportunity and proud to contribute to showcasing the vibrant spirit of Sri Aurobindo College Evening.

-EDITORIAL TEAM

EXECUTIVE BODY

EVENT&MARKETING



DIGITAL DEPARTMENT

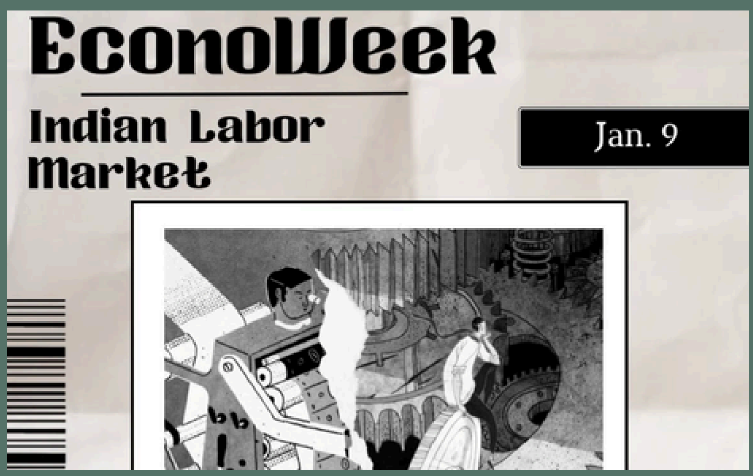
CONTENT DEPARTMENT

SOCIAL&CREATIVE

HR & PR

ANNUAL REPORT

Ecoshastra, the Economic Society of Sri Aurobindo College Evening, unveiled the **Econoweek Series**, offering weekly articles exploring critical economic topics, current issues, and the affiliation between social and economic factors. This initiative aims to engage readers with regular insights and foster insightful discussions on economic trends, policies, and their broader societal implications, enhancing understanding and exposure.



On 14th November 24, a seminar was successfully organised in the seminar hall on the topic "**CAREERS IN ECONOMICS & POLICY**" in collaboration with **WiEP**- Women's in Economics & Policy delivered by expert esteemed speaker **Merlin Thomas** & **Vatsla**. This seminar was hosted by Prof. Arun Chaudhary, Principal of Sri Aurobindo College (Evening), on career opportunities in the field of economics and policies. The seminar successfully engaged participants on essential topics such as networking, building professional connections, and CV development. Attendees gained valuable insights through interactive, exciting and inclusive discussions through expert presentations by the speaker, equipping them with tools to enhance their career trajectories in the field of economics.

A successful Event, "**ECONOVERSE**”, was organised on 26th November 2024 in the seminar hall. The event featured two engaging events: "**Treasure Tribunal**", a competitive treasure hunt endorsing teamwork and intellect, and "**Sansad Samvad**", a debate competition fostering critical thinking, creativity and evaluation. Esteemed chief guest Prof. Arun Chaudhary, Principal of Sri Aurobindo College(Evening) inspired the participants with his insights and felicitated the winners. Participants elevated their team spirit and critical analytical skills, developing analytical ability and Rhetorical abilities in the competition which fostered overall intellectual growth.

Ecoshastra published an explicit analysis of the Union Budget2025-26, highlighting key allocations, fiscal policies, and anticipated economic impacts. The report dismantles sector-specific initiatives and revenue generation strategies, offering insights into government priorities aimed at fostering growth and sustainability for the financial year 2025-26.

A speaker session was successfully organised on 3rd March 2025 in the seminar hall on the topic "Exploring the Real and Financial Sector Interlinkages" presented by Prof. Ananya Ghosh Rastidar (Department of Business Economics UOD). Prof. Vipin Aggarwal, Principal of Sri Aurobindo College(Evening) addressed the seminar. The session provided insights into the mutual association of economic sectors, enhancing participants' understanding of financial dynamics and their implications.

Eco-Shastra is set to host its annual event, “ECOMANIA 25”, on 16th April 2025, featuring exciting competitions in policy fabrication and policy bidding. This annual event aims to foster Cutting-edge solutions and engage participants in critical discussions on policy development. It promises to be a platform for aspiring and making future policymakers to enhance and showcase their skills and ideas.

Ecoshastra conducted an online webinar in collaboration with WIEP, which touched upon the topics of CV writing, networking, applications for jobs, and interview tips.

ECOMANIA '25

ECOMANIA'25, an innovative event organized by the Economics Society of Sri Aurobindo College Evening, emerged as a dynamic platform that combined education, creativity, and critical thought in the realm of economics. One of the central features was the Eco-Summit Competition, which provided students with the unique opportunity to assume the roles of policymakers. Participants were tasked with devising bold and thoughtful solutions to real-life challenges in their communities and beyond. This competition encouraged participants to think outside the box, applying theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios while advocating for sustainable development and social justice. The caliber of ideas presented showcased the potential of youth in driving forward meaningful change, reflecting a deep commitment to addressing environmental and economic issues that resonate with the global community.

Another captivating event was the Indian Policy League Auction, where teams engaged in a competitive yet educational atmosphere, bidding on a range of economic policies. This simulation provided a hands-on experience of the complexities involved in economic decision-making. Participants were challenged to evaluate the impacts of different policies related to current economic disruptions, enhancing their understanding of the Indian economic landscape. The auction format fostered teamwork and negotiation skills, pushing students to articulate their viewpoints effectively while responding to real-time scenarios. The event not only made economics accessible but also ignited passion and discourse around pressing issues such as inflation, unemployment, and sustainable growth. Overall, ECOMANIA'25 successfully fulfilled its mission to engage the student body in meaningful economic discussions, blending competition with collaboration, and empowering the next generation of economic thinkers and leaders in this ever-evolving discipline. The society's commitment to fostering a nuanced understanding of economics underscored the significance of such initiatives in shaping informed, proactive citizens.

Electric Vehicles and The Future of Mobility in India

India is stepping into a new era of transportation, and electric vehicles (EVs) are right at the heart of this shift. With growing urban populations, rising pollution levels, and soaring fuel costs, EVs are emerging as a cleaner, more sustainable, and affordable way to travel. The Indian government has big ambitions—by 2030, it hopes to see 30% of private cars, 70% of commercial vehicles, and 80% of two- and three-wheelers running on electricity, according to NITI Aayog.

The momentum is already building. In 2025, India’s EV market was worth about USD 54.41 billion, and it's expected to more than double to USD 110.74 billion by 2029, growing steadily at around 19% each year. Among the various segments, electric two-wheelers are leading the pack, with players like Ola Electric, Ather Energy, and TVS Motors gaining major traction. On the four-wheeler front, Tata Motors has taken the lead, holding over 70% of the electric passenger car market as of 2025.

To push this transition further, the government rolled out the FAME II scheme, allocating ₹10,000 crore to make EVs more affordable and to build the much-needed charging infrastructure. So far, over 7,000 public charging stations have been set up across the country—and many more are in progress.

~**Utsav Sharma**

The Economics Of Election Spending In India

The economics of election spending in India is a significant aspect of its political landscape, along with substantial financial implications and socio-economic impacts.

Election spending in India has seen a dramatic increase over the decades, which is a major issue of Indian election system.The total expenditure for the 2024 Lok Sabha election was estimated to be around ₹1,00,000 crore to ₹1,35,000 crore,makes it a potentially the most expensive election globally, surpassing the US presidential elections.

This marks a significant rise from the ₹55,000-₹60,000 crore spent in the 2019 elections and a massive jump from the ₹9,000 crore spent in 1998. The cost per vote in the 2024 election was approximately ₹1,400.

The economic impact of this spending is multifaceted. A significant portion of the expenditure goes towards the campaigns, rallies, advertising, and payments to workers, which can temporarily boost consumption, especially in rural areas. Some economists estimate a potential 0.2-0.3% boost to GDP due to election-related spending.But concerns remain about the lack of transparency in funding, the potential for illicit activities like bribing voters, and the creation of a nexus between big donors and political parties, which could lead to policy distortions.

~Rupali

Make in India: Success, Setbacks, and the Way Forward

The "Make in India" initiative, launched on September 25, 2014, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, aimed to transform India into a global manufacturing hub by increasing the manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP from 16% to 25% by 2022 and creating 100 million jobs. The initiative has seen notable successes, including significant foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows, particularly in sectors like electronics and automobiles, with companies such as Foxconn and Mercedes-Benz establishing production facilities in India.

Additionally, India's ranking in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index improved significantly during this period. However, the initiative has faced several setbacks. The manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP remains around 17%, falling short of targets. Challenges such as complex regulatory environments, inadequate infrastructure, and skill mismatches have hindered progress.

Moreover, the rise of automation poses a threat to job creation in manufacturing, as many industries increasingly rely on technology over human labor. Looking ahead, the way forward:

Make in India involves addressing these challenges through continued policy reforms and investments in infrastructure. Emphasizing skill development aligned with industry needs is crucial for enhancing productivity. Additionally, fostering innovation and improving the ease of doing business will be essential for attracting further investment and ensuring sustainable growth in India's manufacturing sector.

~Nishika

Demographic Dividend or Burden: India's Population Puzzle

India, with over 65% of its population under 35, possesses a significant demographic dividend – a potential for economic growth due to a larger working-age population. This bulge, however, is a double-edged sword, teetering between a boon and a burden.

Currently, India adds approximately 12 million people to its working-age population annually. This surge could fuel economic expansion through increased productivity and consumption.

For instance, studies have estimated that the demographic dividend contributed about 2 percentage points to India's annual GDP growth between 2000 and 2010. Realizing this potential hinges on job creation and skill development. The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) indicates an unemployment rate of around 3.1% (as of 2023), but underemployment remains a significant concern.

Millions lack the skills demanded by a rapidly evolving economy. According to the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), only a small fraction of India's workforce has undergone formal skill training.
India's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has declined to 2.0, below the replacement level of 2.1. While this signals progress in population control, it also implies a future aging population, potentially increasing the dependency ratio. States like Kerala and Tamil Nadu are already experiencing this shift.

To transform its demographic dividend into a sustained economic advantage, India must prioritize investing in quality education and vocational training to enhance employability. Creating an environment conducive to job creation, particularly in manufacturing and services, is crucial.
Empowering women's participation in the workforce, which currently stands at around 37% (PLFS 2023), can significantly boost productivity.

Failure to address these challenges risks turning this demographic advantage into a burden of unemployment, social unrest, and a strained economy unable to support its rapidly expanding youth population. The coming decade is crucial in determining whether India effectively harnesses its demographic potential or sufferrs from its pressures.

~Aayan Khurram

The Evolution of Economic Planning in India: From Five-Year Plans to NITI Aayog

India's economic planning began in 1951 with the launch of the First Five-Year Plan, under the guidance of the Planning Commission, established in 1950 by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Modeled on the Soviet Union's centralized planning model, these plans aimed to boost economic growth, achieve self-sufficiency, and reduce poverty through state-led development.

Twelve Five-Year Plans were implemented between 1951 and 2012. The Second Plan (1956-1961), based on the Mahalanobis model, focused on rapid industrialization. Later plans, such as the Fifth (1974-1979), prioritized poverty alleviation and employment generation. Over time, especially after the 1991 economic reforms, the need for a more adaptive and inclusive planning approach became evident.

Recognizing the limitations of the Planning Commission, particularly in a liberalized and globalized economy, the Government of India replaced it with NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) on January 1, 2015. Unlike its predecessor, NITI Aayog functions as a policy think tank. It emphasizes cooperative federalism, participatory development, and evidence-based policy-making.NITI Aayog does not formulate Five-Year Plans but provides strategic and directional inputs for policy. It promotes innovation, sustainable development goals (SDGs), and real-time monitoring of government programs. This transition reflects India's shift from a rigid, centralized planning structure to a more dynamic and decentralized policy framework suited to 21st-century challenges.

~Rishabh Baluja

Poverty Elevation Programmes: How Effective They Have Been

National Food for Work Programme (NFWP): Launched in 2004 in 150 backward districts, it aimed to provide wage employment and free foodgrains. In 2004-05, Rs. 2020 crore and 20 lakh tonnes of foodgrains were allocated. While ambitious, the reliance on state-level logistics often slowed delivery. Though it provided food grains and jobs, it relied heavily on state implementation, leading to variable outcomes.

2. Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY): Introduced in 1999, it focused on self-help groups and micro-enterprises for poor families. It successfully mobilized rural poor but lacked consistent credit linkage support from banks.

3. Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY): Initiated in 2001 to combine wage employment with food security. It functioned well in reaching the poor but duplication with other schemes reduced efficiency.

4. Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY): Operational since 1999-2000, aimed at free housing for the rural poor. While it constructed lakhs of houses, poor-quality construction and corruption were concerns.

5. Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY): Envisaged Additional Central Assistance (ACA) for primary services. In 2003-04 and 2004-05, Rs. 2,800 crore was allocated. Implementation varied across states.

6. Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP): Started in 1995 to promote self-employment. By March 2004, 1.86 lakh projects and 22.75 lakh jobs were created. Yet, loan recoveries remained low.

7. Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY): Launched in 1993, created 4.34 lakh jobs in 2003-04. It helped educated unemployed but often lacked proper training support.

8. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY): Started in 2000 to improve rural connectivity. By October 2004, 60,024 km of roads were built at a cost of Rs. 7,866 crore.. Despite its success works were abandoned or remained incomplete due to incorrect alignment, land disputes etc.

9. Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY): Provided foodgrains at subsidized rates. In 2003-04, 45.56 lakh tonnes of food was distributed to 1 crore families, scaling up to 2 crore in 2004-05. Effective in food security but limited in empowering beneficiaries economically.

10. Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY): Launched in 2001 to upgrade urban slum housing. By 2004, 1.06 lakh dwelling units and 29,130 toilet seats were constructed under Rs. 223.66 crore allocation but fragmented implementation and slow progress reduced their reach.

~Sanjana Tripathi

A Decade of GST: Hits, Misses, and what's Next

The Goods and Services Tax (GST), introduced in india on July 1, 2017, was envisioned as a revolutionary step to streamline the country's complex indirect tax structure. As it nears a decade, GST has certainly made strides - but not without facing its share of hurdles.

Hits:

One of GST 's biggest successes has been the unification of the national market.

It replaced a labyrinth of taxes with a single , transparent system, reducing cascading taxes and improving logistics efficiency.the GST Network brought technology into tax administration, improving compliance through e- filing and e- invoicing. States have also seen a boost in revenue due to broader tax base.

Misses:

However, GST's implementation was not seamless. The frequent rate changes, initial tech glitches, and a complex filing process, especially for small businesses, led to confusion and compliance burdens. The promise of "one nation, one tax " still feels distant due to multiple slabs and exceptions. Revenue shortfalls have also strained centre - state

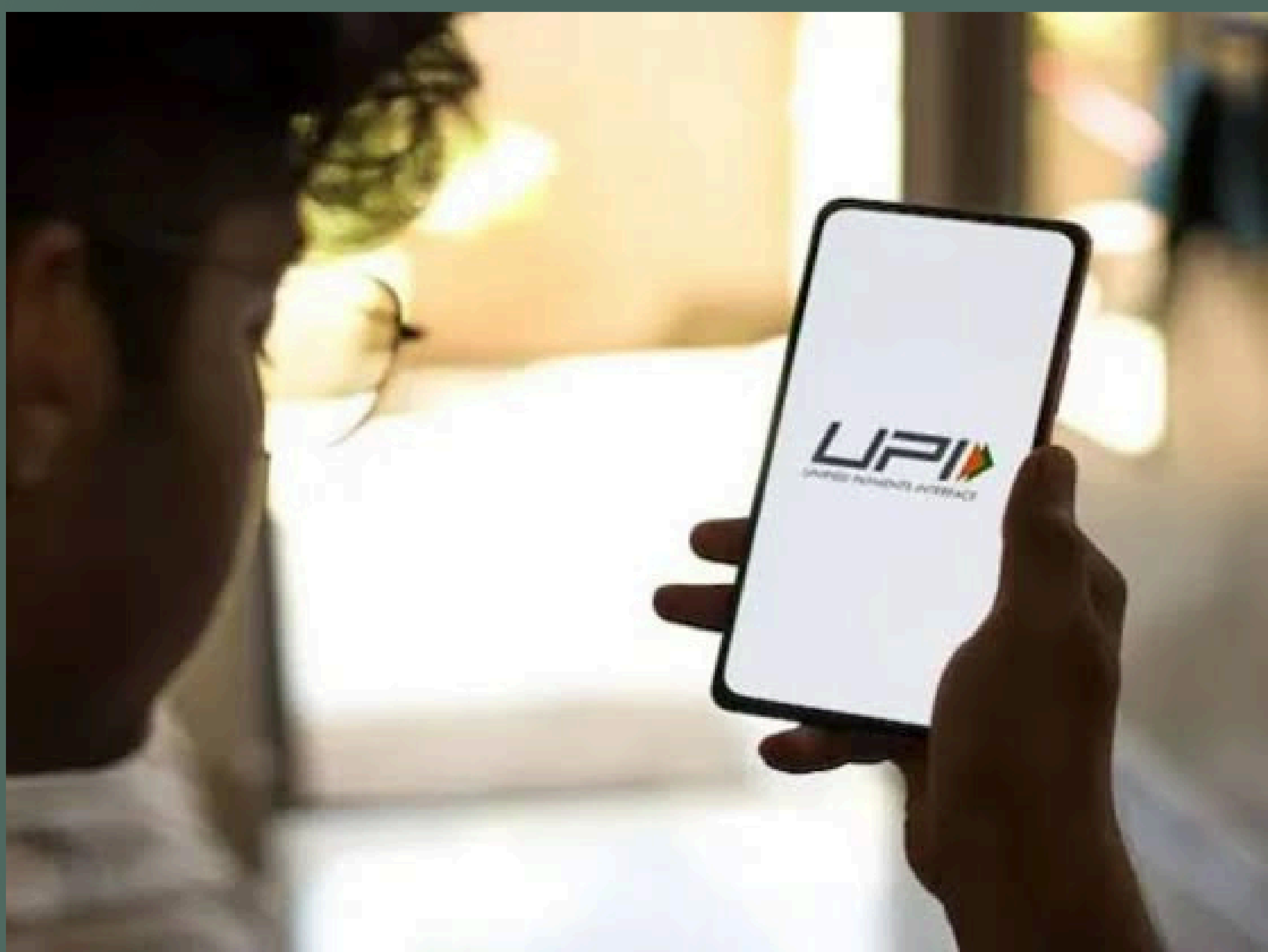
What Next?

To fully realize GST's potential, simplification of rate structures, expanding the tax base , and improving tech infrastructure are crucial. Inclusion of petroleum and real estate under GST could further boost its efficacy . As india moves ahead, a more stable and predictable GST regime can drive growth and enhance investor confidence.

~DIVPRIY

India's Digital Public Infrastructure: UPI, Aadhaar, and Beyond

India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) has emerged as a transformative force driving development, inclusion, and innovation. It consists of a set of shared digital systems aimed at enhancing trust, competition, and respect for human rights. The three foundational pillars of DPI—identity, payments, and data management—have been robustly established through India's India Stack platform.

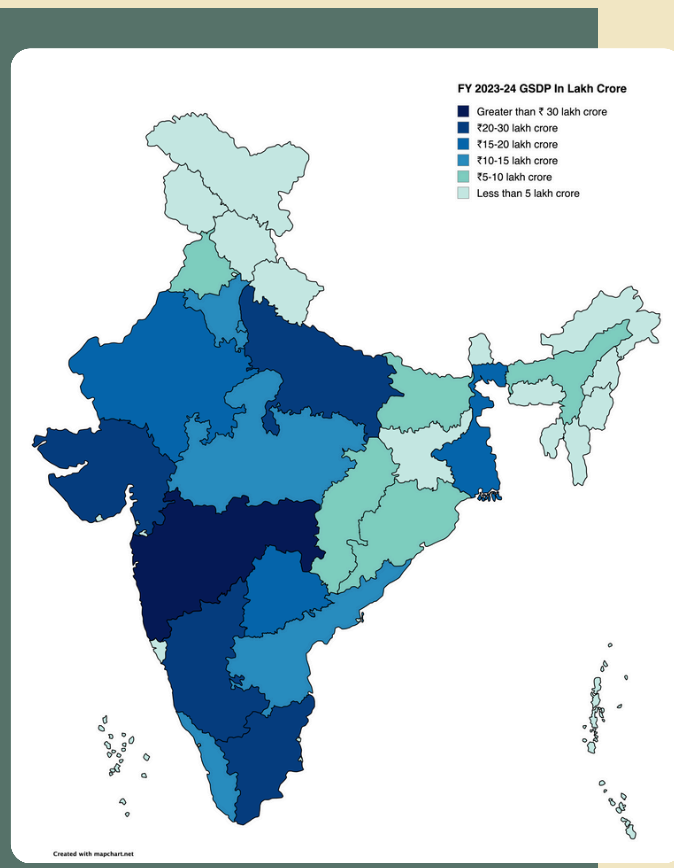


The Aadhaar system serves as the Digital ID framework, providing over 1.3 billion residents with a unique identification method. This initiative streamlines access to services and supports an average of 10 million electronic Know Your Customer (eKYC) verifications daily. In the realm of payment systems, the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has revolutionized transactions across the nation, from street vendors to large retail outlets.

Today, UPI accounts for nearly 46% of global digital transactions, showcasing its widespread adoption and efficiency. Additionally, India has implemented the Data Empowerment Protection Architecture (DEPA), a consent-based data sharing system that empowers citizens to control their data. This comprehensive approach to DPI has proven essential during crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, where the country facilitated the transfer of $4.5 billion to 160 million beneficiaries and managed the distribution of vaccination certificates digitally. As highlighted by Shri Nandan Nilekani, the Co-Chair of the Task Force, the foundational role of DPI is vital for achieving Sustainable Development Goals and fostering inclusive growth. With these advancements, India showcases how digital infrastructure can enhance the lives of citizens and transform governance for the better.

~Aman

Regional Disparities in India's economic growth



The contemporary world is growing rapidly in the field of urbanization, liberalization, globalisation and modernization, but on the other hand, all this development has emerged as a worldwide phenomenon regarding regional disparity. Regional disparity is a common fact in both developing and developed economies. Across India's different regions and states, development and growth has not been distributed fairly and has given rise to the threat of regional inequality.By 2023-24, southern states like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu accounted for 30% of India's GDP, all with per capita incomes above the national average.

Telangana led with 193.6%. Western states Gujarat and Maharashtra also maintained strong performance, as did Delhi (250.8%) and Haryana (176.8%). In contrast, Punjab stagnated, and eastern states like West Bengal and Bihar lagged, with Bihar at just 32.8%. Uttar Pradesh's share in GDP declined significantly. Sikkim and Goa emerged as the richest states per capita, at 319% and 290% of the national average, respectively, reflecting stark regional disparities. Government organisation often blames these disparities on historical events and Geographical regions in India, it might be one of the reasons for slow pace of growth but not a stagnant growth.

Government's failure to provide basic amenities like health,education, transportation, and employment opportunities has further widened the gap between regions. The lack of targeted policies to uplift backward areas, inadequate implementation of welfare schemes, and corruption at various levels have compounded the issue. While metropolitan cities have witnessed unprecedented growth in terms of infrastructure and economic opportunities, rural and underdeveloped regions continue to grapple with poverty, unemployment, and poor living conditions. The uneven distribution of industries and services also contributes to the imbalance. States that have become hubs for IT, manufacturing, and services naturally attract more investments, skilled labor, and development projects. In contrast, states with agrarian economies and limited industrialization lag behind, both in terms of economic output and quality of life indicators. This has also resulted in large-scale internal migration, putting immense pressure on urban infrastructure while draining human capital from rural areas.
Only through inclusive and balanced development strategies can India hope to reduce these gaps and move towards a more equitable growth model.

~Dyuti Prasad

One Nation, One Election: Economic Impacts and Some Insights

What is One Nation, One Election?

"One Nation, One Election" (ONOE) is a proposal to integrate India's national, state, and local elections into a single cycle, reducing their frequency. Currently, elections occur in different phases and intervals like state elections, central elections, MCD elections and panchayat elections, leading to near-constant campaigning and governance disruptions. ONOE seeks to streamline this process by enhancing efficiency and reducing costs drastically.

History and Background in India

India conducted simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha and state assemblies from 1951 to 1967. This practice ended due to political instability, premature dissolutions, and the rise of coalition governments. The idea resurfaced in 2014 under PM Narendra Modi, who advocated for ONOE to reduce electoral expenses and improve governance continuity, reigniting a debate dormant since the 1980s.

Economic Impacts

ONOE promises several economic benefits. The 2019 Lok Sabha elections alone cost ₹60,000 crore, with state polls adding furthermore to the expenses. Synchronizing elections could save over ₹45 billion annually by consolidating logistics, staff, and security arrangements. The Kovind Committee estimates a potential GDP boost of 1.5 percentage points due to reduced governance paralysis during the Model Code of Conduct periods, which halt policy decisions. Initial investments in infrastructure like EVMs and VVPATs could strain budgets but it will be quite a beneficial policy to implement in terms of economic gain. Critics argue election spending drives consumption, benefiting local economies, a dynamic ONOE might curb.

Will It Lead to Political Instability?

Economically, One Nation, One Election (ONOE) could yield gains by saving over ₹45 billion annually, reducing election costs, and minimizing governance disruptions during frequent Model Code of Conduct periods, potentially boosting GDP by 1.5%. However, political instability emerges if the mid-term government collapses disrupt synchronized cycles, requiring ad-hoc polls or President's Rule, which could erode federal autonomy and spark unrest. A focus on simultaneous elections might divert economic resources—labour, security, and funds—toward a single, high-stakes event, neglecting regional economic priorities and risking voter fatigue, thus undermining democratic balance and local economic dynamism.

Conclusion

While ONOE offers economic efficiencies, its success depends on balancing cost savings with political harmony and federal integrity.

~**Aman Bhatnagar**

Reserve Bank of India: Leading change and Ensuring Stability

Developmental Role:
Priority Sector Lending: Promoting lending to priority sectors like agriculture, small businesses, etc.
Lead Bank Scheme: Coordinating banking services in rural areas.
Consumer Protection:
• Safeguarding the interests of consumers in financial transactions.
• Setting guidelines and regulations to ensure fair practices and transparency in the financial sector.
• Resolving disputes and grievances between funancial institutions and their customers.

Consumer Protection:
• Safeguarding the interests of consumers in financial transactions.
• Setting guidelines and regulations to ensure
fair practices and transparency in the financial sector.
• Resolving disputes and grievances between financial institutions and their customer.

As of February 8, 2024, the current rates set by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) are as follows:
Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR): 4.50%
Saturated Liquidity Ratio (SLR): 18.00%
•Repo Rate: 6.50%
• Reverse Repo Rate: 3.35%
These rates play a crucial role in regulating the flow of money in the economy, managing liquidity, and influencing lending and borrowing activities. The RBI carefully adjusts these rates to maintain stability Repo Rate: 6.50%.

CONCLUSION
In summary, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
serves as India's financial cornerstone,steering the nation's economic trajectory. Its multifaceted functions, from monetary policy to banking supervision and development, underscore its vital role in maintaining stability and fostering growth. With a mandate for price stability, financial regulation, and inclusive progress, the RBI safeguards the nation's well-being. Its meticulous oversight of currency, foreign exchange reserves, and banking operations reflects its commitment to a resilient financial system. In essence, the RBI's unwavering dedication sustains India's prosperity and fosters trust.

~Roshni

Feminist Economics and Unpaid Labour

Feminist ,economics analysis gender and the economy are interconnected . Feminist economics takes the unpaid, nonmarket intermediate part of the economy and society into account. It criticises that economic phenomena relating to all should not leave out women for having different ideas.

One area feminist economics is focused on is why have housework and care not been recognized as work in economics since the 19th century, and why are they not dealt within economic theories?

It can be seen that because of their unpaid labour, women are confined to their homes leading to less mobility, so there is less social interaction, less access to paid employment, less income, less decision making power, and therefore, less social and economic status.

The work done by men is largely paid, however women provide a lot of unpaid labour. Their limited participation in the spheres of paid labour was justified by alleged biological dispositions. Reproductive labour includes raising children, caring for the elderly, preparing meals,cleaning;however generative reproduction denotes the bearing of children. Because of this, women get the whole responsibility of caregiving and are seen as responsible for taking care of the family.

Consequently when women enter the workspace, their contribution is devalued and is considered that it can be done for free, making such activities low paying. This lowers their status and makes their contributions overlooked. When calculating national income the unpaid work is not even recognized, when a significant portion of their contribution comes from it.

In conclusion, the undervaluation of unpaid labour leads to gender inequalities and distorts economic measures. To solve this, policies should recognize the unpaid work in the economy. By valuing the labour provided by women, spreading awareness and promoting equal share in domestic responsibilities, societies can help in empowering people irrespective of gender.

~Sevya

When money is a matter of time

The IST Problem

India, the seventh-largest country globally, stretches over 3,000 kilometres from its eastern to western borders. This vast expanse results in a two-hour difference between the time of sunrise in eastern and western most parts of India. Despite this geographical diversity, India operates under a single time zone throughout its entirety, making it geographically the second largest country without multiple time zones. This extreme time difference not only poses psychological strain, and environmental damage, but also huge economic loss to the country. Researchers at the CSIR-NPL (official timekeepers of India) said the single time zone was "badly affecting lives" in the eastern parts, as the sun rises and sets much earlier than official working hours, which affects productivity and makes electric consumption much higher. Early sunrise leads to loss of daylight hours by the time offices or educational institutions open.

In winter, this problem gets even more severe as the sun sets much earlier and therefore, more consumption of electricity is required "to keep life active". According to Maulik Jagnani, later sunset in the west leads to prolonged wakefulness, causing sleep deprivation, particularly among children in poorer families. This impacts their study efforts, resulting in fewer years of education and lower completion rates for primary and middle school. All this sums up to a loss of around Rs 29,000 crore (US$4.1 billion) per year due to India's single time zone system. A study by the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay found that India could save up to Rs 10,000 crore ($1.4 billion) per year in energy costs if it switched to two time zones.

Proposed Solutions:

Before Independence, India operated under three major time zones: Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras Time. Interestingly, there was no official nationwide time zone until 1906. The country followed the local times of these three presidencies, which were determined by their respective longitudes. This arrangement resulted in three distinct time zones that were adopted by neighbouring states and cities. The Assamese tea gardens have long set their clocks one hour ahead of the IST, creating their own informal time zone, 'The Chaibagaan Time', which is one hour ahead of the IST; hence proving that adopting two time zones for India is something the government should think about seriously.

Two Time Zones

In 2006, the erstwhile Planning Commission recommended the division of the country into two time zones. CSIR- NPL (the official timekeeper of our nation) has supported the long-standing demand and has suggested two ISTs separated by difference of one hour, which will help in:

1. Greater Efficiency Of The Workforce
2. Environmental Benefits: According to CSIR-NPL, India might save ₹1,000 crore per year if it can conserve electricity by implementing two time zones, and significantly cut down India's carbon footprint.
3. Societal benefits: Having two time zones can reduce road accidents, and may allow employees to develop healthier eating, sleeping, and working habits.

Disadvantages of Two time zones:

• Increased rail accidents near the time zone border, due to less automation and dependence on manual signals. A Proposed solution by CSIR-NPL director, D.K. Aswal, is to have a timezone on the border of West Bengal and Assam, which would mean only one railway station on either side of the demarcation line (New Cooch Behar, and Alipurduar Railway stations), making it easier to manage the time difference.

• Can create confusion amongst the masses with regards to changing time when entering a new timezone.

• Two time zones can have adverse political consequences as India, apart from getting divided on the lines of religion,caste, race, language, etc., now will get divided on the lines of Time. Zones.Bringing in two time zones will create a divide between the NER and the rest of the country.Alternatives to two time zoning:

Shifting the IST:

The National Institute for Advanced Science (NIAS) cited that Permanent shift of IST to 30 minutes will be better than two time zones i.e., 6:00+ UTC to 90°East. In a four decade-old study concluded by NIAS, it suggested that advancing the IST by 30 minutes would help India boost productivity, save energy and bring the North East into the mainstream fold.

Doing so would translate into a heft saving of energy of 2.7 billion units (as of 2009 estimates, which works out to nearly 3.5 billion units as of today). There are also other Asian countries who have implemented a one-time advancement in their clocks China, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea. Daylight Saving Time: Daylight Saving is a procedure in which the time in the clock is adjusted forward in spring & is readjusted backward in autumn. It can be used from April to September. Daylight Saving would:

• Help save energy

• Provide additional daylight hours in the evening

• Increase productivity

Moving forward, the implementation of the above mentioned recommendations should be accompanied by the government's capacity to collect data and monitor shifts in the nation's economic activity patterns. Factors such as the influence of sunrise and sunset times on human biological rhythms, as well as aligning these timings with office hours, require thorough examination. Efforts should also be made to reduce the area affected by the proposed time zone border. Consulting all relevant stakeholders is crucial to reaching an optimal solution that effectively utilises the daylight hours currently underutilised due to the uniform Indian Standard Time (IST).

~Krrissh Singh

From Shadows to Strength: India's Journey Through the 2008 Recession

Economic Recession is an event that leads to a sharp decline in all economic activities. Numerous economic recessions have occurred globally in the past. Some of the most devastating crises in history include The Credit Crisis of 1772, the WestGreat Depression of 1929-39, and The OPEC Oil Price Shock of 1973. The outbreak of COVID-19 also constituted an economic recession. The economic recession of 2008 is distinct from others as it originated in the US, which is the largest and most developed economy in the world. This recession had a contagious effect, spreading across the globe. However, India was among the few countries that were minimally impacted by it because of its strategic vision and resilient policymaking.

The Root Cause

The primary reason for the economic recession was the surge in subprime mortgages. Housing prices soared while loans were given recklessly without assessing the associated risks. Even the triple-A credit ratings given by agencies like Moody's and Standard & Poor's were questionable. A housing bubble emerged in the market, which then abruptly burst, resulting in a downward trend. Assets became toxic as it became challenging to sell them at any price due to the collapse in demand. Later, the collapse of Lehman Brothers on September 23, 2008, transformed the US financial crisis into a worldwide economic downturn. The Shadow banking system also encouraged people to make risky investments. The bailout of AIG and Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac also contributed to the global financial crisis.

All this led to a ripple effect across various sectors including employment, trade, demand, stock market prices, and banks worldwide. The US government proposed a $700 billion bailout plan to cover the financial system.

Economic Impact on India: A Sectoral Overview

The impact on India can be encapsulated in four sectors: financial markets, trade flows, exchange rates, and consumer confidence.

1) Financial Market

The impact during the first two quarters of FY 2008-2009 was minimal. This was mainly due to robust regulatory policies and proactive monitoring by RBI. ICICI Bank faced some challenges but successfully navigated the crisis due to its strong balance sheet. As the global liquidity crisis emerged, Indian businesses were unable to secure credit from outside and started borrowing in the domestic market to settle their debts in foreign currencies. Despite this, the banking sector maintained a healthy balance sheet to avoid a crisis. Remittances received from abroad assisted in offsetting the trade deficit; however, they fell by over 29% in FY 2008-2009. This was the first time that the concern about India's BOP turned negative.

2)Trade Flows

There was a significant drop in the demand for India's exports of items like gems, jewellery, textiles, leather, handicrafts, and marine products in the markets. Manufacturing output, which grew by 9.6% in FY 2007-08, declined to -0.16% by Q4 of FY 2008-09. The service sector surfaced as a crucial two-time became a lifeline. Developed countries sourced IT services from India due to our cost-effective solutions. However, the recession hit the IT Sector hard, witnessing a growth rate of 43% four-decade-old among the most adversely affected sectors, leading to substantial job losses.

3)Exchange Rates

The worth of the Indian currency was on the decline. The depreciation of the Indian rupee reached Rs. 52.73 per dollar. Inflation surged from 4.7% in 2007- 08 to 8.3% in 2008-09, and the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) Index, which has been Other Asian countries, has its value.

4)Consumer Confidence

Due to the credit crunch in the economy, consumers, investors, and businesses became increasingly risk-averse. There was a reduction in confidence levels in the financial market as reflected in stock backwards and rising layoffs. This also resulted in a net outflow of FDIs and FIIs. FDI was US $34.3 billion in FY 2007-2008 but we were able to raise only US $18 billion in FY 2008-2009. Portfolio investments experience above-mentioned despite India not being heavily reliant on FIIs, this could be problematic as FII could leave in a 'flight-by-night' manner as witnessed in various South American and South Asian nations.

Indian Policy Stimulus

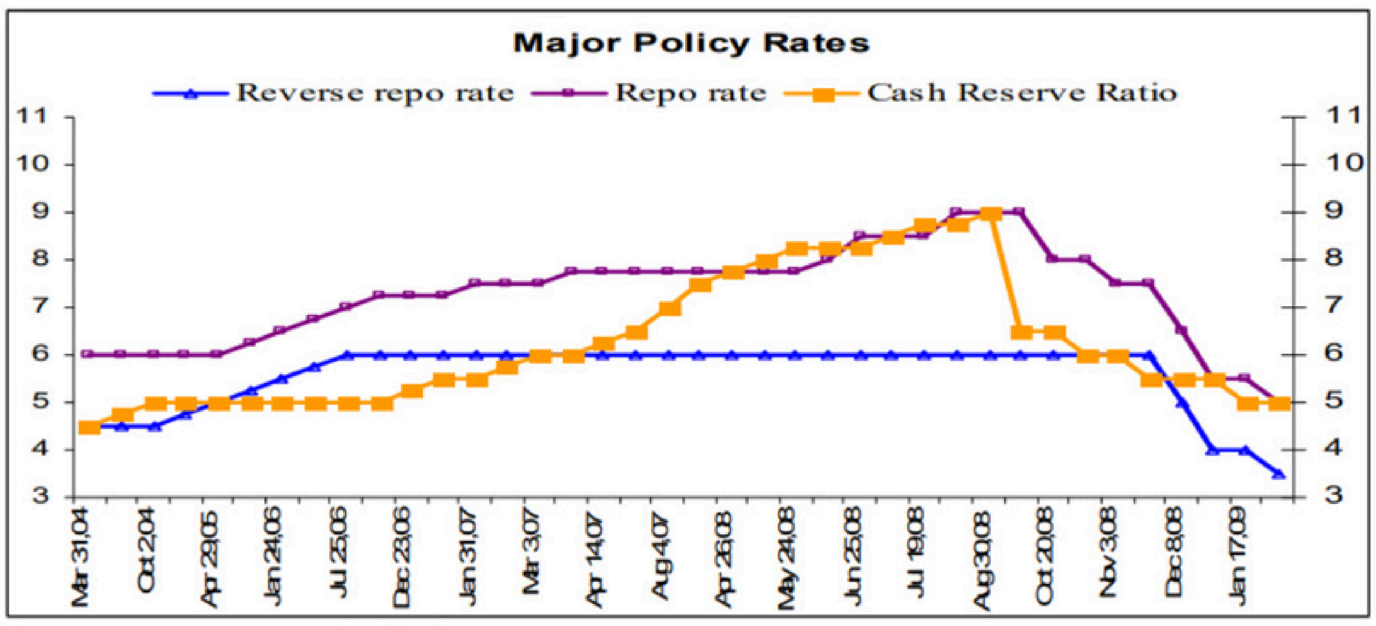
1) Fiscal Policy

The fiscal expansion was represented by the revenue deficit growing from 1.4% of the GDP in FY 2007-2008 to 4.3% in FY 2008-2009. The policies introduced by Manmohan Singh's government which aimed to transfer the purchasing power to farmers included farm loan waivers, funds designated for the National Rural Employment Guarantee Program (NREGP), Bharat Nirman (aimed at enhancing rural infrastructure), Prime Minister's Rural Road Program, and a substantial rise in subsidies for fertilizers and electricity provided to the farmers. Taxes were lowered, subsidies on SMES were increased, and government spending on infrastructure was heightened. They also implemented the Sixth Pay Commission report to boost demand, in the econ-little.

2)Monetary Policy

To ensure liquidity, the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) was cut to 5% in July 2009 from 9% in August 2008. The Repo Rate (the rate at which RBI lends to banks) was reduced from 9% in October 2008 to 4.75% in July 2009, and the Reverse repo rate (RBI's borrowing rate) decreased to 3.25% in July 2009 from 6% in October 2008 to facilitate the flow of credit.

India holds the fourth largest foreign exchange reserves, which helped the nation navigate through the global financial crisis, but it fell from US$ 309. 7 billion in 2007-08 to US$ 252 billion in 2008-09. The limits for FIIs were increased to endure more foreign investments and the minimum support prices for agricultural crops were raised.



Source: Reserve Bank of India.

Conclusion and Lessons

Manmohan Singh, as an economist, managed the challenging economic situation in our country effectively by employing both traditional and innovative measures. Most Indians possess a mindset that discourages loans, leading them to avoid debts unless absolutely necessary. What crops came as a beneficial factor for our country. A silver lining mastering of the recession was a short-term agricultural-dominated environment, as all economic activities were halted. Therefore, the impact on India was varied since it experienced the domino effect of the recession to a lesser extent It will definitely countries.

The lessons we learnt from this recession are t,o safeguard the livelihoods, employment, and income of the poor. Expand self-employment programs,improve access to credit for micro-enterprises, en. Asce skill ,development, promote technological advancement, and ensure sustainable growth. Banks and regulators should adopt counter-cyclical measures and build capital reserves during bull markets to buffer against bear markets. There is a need for Macroprudential Supervision to reduce the vulnerabilities. Also, Central banks act as lenders of last resort to help during liquidity crises. However, insolvency crisis interventions may lead to longarm financial costs for the public sector, so they need careful consideration.

Thus bold and visionary measures must be taken to avoid slipping the economy into anemic growth.

~Neha Gulliya & Shreya Gulliya

Core memories of the tenure 2024-25

TEAM ECOSHASTRA