

civil society activists, officials, academics and NAC members. Ch. 4 deals with the Forest Rights Act, 2006. The book sees several failures in its implementation. It says, "Many eligible claimants were denied rights set down in the Act, and claims to rights by non-tribal forest dwellers were overwhelmingly rejected in all states. In several states, rejections occurred even when claimants submitted full supporting evidence" (p. 79). All the same, the Act has provided a safety net to sections of forest dwellers.

Ch. 5 covers integrated child development services. India's performance at ensuring child welfare has been woeful. Almost 40 per cent of the children under five are stunted, over a third are underweight and over a fifth are wasted. There is a shortage of the staff, on the one hand, and over-centralization of the programme on the other. Failure of inter-ministerial coordination has further aggravated the problems. Even when food is available, the diet is not balanced. The UPA I and II restructured the programme with much success. The last chapter is on Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission in relation to urban poverty. There were serious drawbacks in its design which hampered its implementation. The book concludes, "Perhaps the most important impact that JNNURM has had is to make urban issues, and thus also urban poverty, part of the national policy agenda. Although this has not yet translated into the national political agenda, there is now a greater likelihood that it may and that a national urban programme is here to stay" (p. 147).

These are the contents of the book. Since it has covered a recent period, much of what it says is already known. It makes not many observations on them. It has also some editorial flaws. For example, on p. 44, it says, "... the NFSA (National Food Security Act) was eventually passed by the Parliament in late 2013...."

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Santosh Mehrotra (Ed.), *Reviving Jobs - An Agenda for Growth*, Penguin Random House India, pp. 295, ₹ 599/-

During high growth years, 2004-2012 India achieved an average of Eight per cent growth rate. But on the job front, it didn't see much growth and real wages were almost stagnant. We have now the world third largest economy based on real GDP. But based on per capita income we are at 138th position as we have failed to create enough jobs for our labour force. This book addresses both the problem as well as its solutions. It explains India's growth story since independence and some lapses in policy such as regulatory barriers, inspector Raj, closed economy, low productivity in agriculture, low skill levels, etc. This book compiles article by various authors who have long experience in the field of economic policy formulation, industry, international organisations, civil society, etc. Mehrotra

explains demographic aspects, reasons for high unemployment rate and policy suggestions to revive job creation.

The book is divided into three parts. In Part I the authors focus on macro-level strategy for job creation. Mehrotra explains reasons for fall in labour force participation rate. In 2004-2005, 12 million people joined the labour force which fell to two million in 2012. He estimates that it will increase to five million, but our growth of job creation is not in pace with the growth of the labour force. Thus, people who wish to exit agriculture will be unabsorbed with the present job creation growth rate. PFLS data show that open unemployment rate rose from 2.2 per cent to 6.1 per cent between 2012 and 2018. Besides, the unemployment rate is higher among highly educated youth which means more probability of unemployment for them.

The author underlines various reasons for the rise in unemployment rate such as falling growth of non-farm sector jobs, absolute fall in manufacturing sector employment and slowdown in construction sector. He believes that the current economic slowdown is structural in nature and that “slowdown in growth is a crisis of income, driving by non-agriculture jobs barely growing” (p. 10). Stagnant real wages lead to a fall in saving which hampers investment, leading to low job creation in the infrastructure sector.

The author gave some policy suggestions such as cutting real interest rates, devaluation of the rupee, monetary transmission, monetisation of government assets such as PSU lands, recapitalisation of PSBs, etc. On the job creation side, policies such as well-defined agrarian strategy for farm and non-farm job growth, industrial policy aligned with trade policy, special package for labour-intensive industries, well-defined cluster development policy, alignment of manufacturing cluster with urban development, investment in infrastructure and human development, etc., are needed.

Mahajan, *et. al.* estimated job creation due to investment in various potential sectors such as regeneration of degraded natural resources, construction sector particularly lower-income housing, manufacturing in MSMEs in the cluster and small towns, small labour-intensive sectors, etc.

Ajay Shankar argues that state support is necessary for the success of some industries. The success of the IT industry, pharmaceutical sector and auto industry in early 1980s was the result of the government’s interventions. Thus, we have to give up the fallacy of strong currency, enact proposed code on labour laws and create competitive infrastructure.

The author has failed to address some crucial issues such as higher unemployment among the more educated youth and loopholes in recruitment agencies of government. Higher education plays a signal role in job market, which in theory has a positive correlation with remuneration. Still, the youth failed to get jobs equivalent to their skills, but the author does not offer a solution about it. Another issue is the recruitment process in the public sector. Government sector in India is one of the largest sources of employment, but most of the state institutions and recruitment agencies/boards are in a dismal situation.

Numerous graduates lack vocational skills and depend on government jobs. But due to corruption, inefficient administration and lack of political will vacancies in various departments are vacant. On an average, any vacancy in states takes two or three years to fill which leads to loss of productivity of a large labour force. Vacancies at higher educational level lead to deterioration in education which impacts unemployment. The author has failed to answer these questions.

Part II focuses on Meso-level strategy for the promotion of formal small and medium enterprises with the informal micro-enterprises. The formal sector accounts for 80 per cent of the output with 8-10 per cent of labour force. On the other hand, informal sector accounts for 80 per cent of manufacturing employment and 90 per cent of manufacturing enterprises. Anil Bharadwaj points out some stumbling blocks before informal sector such as zoning policy in urban areas, electricity charges according to the type of use, house tax on commercial enterprises, etc. Domestic reforms lag behind international reforms such as WTO, IPR policies, liberalization, etc. Some other stumbling blocks at policy level are lack of coordination among sectoral ministries such as steel, chemistry, railways, shipping, government interference in public sector banks and judicial process, etc. Thus, we have to revamp district industrial centres based on some successful international examples such as South Korea's small and medium business corporation, develop the land of these centres and insolvency scheme for MSME industries, address their working capital needs, capacity building, facilitate access to markets, etc.

Thukaram, *et. al.* think that mass entrepreneurship is the solution for the present unemployment crisis. Alliance model of mass entrepreneurship in various sectors such as construction, hospitality and food processing is the need of the hour. They have presented it in detail, which enhances mass entrepreneurship.

Sarathi Acharya has discussed rural industrialization which has a potential for job creation. Rural non-farm enterprises have a positive impact such as absorption of excess agricultural burden, additional sources of income, occupational diversity, poverty reduction and increase in female participation in labour force, etc.

On the artisan clusters sector Sarkar, *et. al.* cover policies such as access to quality raw materials, credit and advanced technology. This will lead to the creation of jobs.

This section focuses more on the manufacturing sector and rural industrialisation. The authors ignore important areas such as the tourism sector which is mostly informal in nature. It has a vast potential for job creation as well as commercialisation of rural industries. It has a direct link with rural handicrafts and other artisan industries. Commercialisation of rural industries, enhancement of their value, productivity and supply chain management, etc., will lead to expansion rural industries as well as job creation. The online platform, e.g., Amazon, Myntra, Flipkart, etc., have a well-established infrastructure and reach throughout India. Hence, policies should focus on linkage of rural industries with these platforms.

Part III focuses on vulnerable groups and neglected sectors. Female labour force participation rate is declining due to income effect, tertiary education, etc. Jeemol Unni, *et. al.* give some policy suggestions for boosting employment and productivity of women in self-employment and wage employment categories. For all employment categories which cover home workers, vocational skills in areas where women workers are predominant, implementation of Shramshakti report, amendment of maternity benefits act, setting up of child care centres in organisations and implementation of a national policy on domestic workers are required.

It also explains challenges faced by dalit enterprises. Various data sources show that the dalits have higher shares in poverty and casual labour relative to their share in the population. Arun Khobragade highlights the challenges faced by them on three Cs- commodity, credit and capital. Caste is an important institution for information, credit, capital, customer, etc. A new dalit enterprise faces challenges such as higher fixed cost of the enterprise, risk associated with loss of collateral, lack of seed capital, lack of entrepreneurial culture, inability to deploy managerial talent because of high cost, etc. The government has to address these issues so that a new dalit enterprise can compete with the existing firms. Some overseas examples such as South African Black Economic Enterprises Policy, Malaysia's New Economic Policy, etc., can be helpful.

The authors have failed to address some issues related to disadvantages faced by dalits due to social stigma. Social nature of business can lead to inefficient distribution of resources, making it difficult for newcomers from marginalised groups to enter. Policy interventions that create equal spaces for dalits and women are long term solutions.

Finally, Basole, *et. al.* purposed a NREGA like scheme for urban areas which have less than one million population. These cities are not covered in it and they do not have sufficient infrastructure for industries. We have had various job creation schemes in 1990s and later on such as Swarna Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana, which is converted into National Urban Livelihood Mission. But they focus on self-employment and not demand drivers. The authors give estimates for the structure of the scheme and its fiscal implications. But they ignore that they have a negative impact on wages such as wage spiral effect, distortion in factor markets, bureaucratic hurdles, etc. Basic unemployment allowance or universal basic income can be a better option because this will provide a basic standard of living as well as people have opportunity to enter the labour market for any productive work.

The book is useful for students and analysts of Indian economy.

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