

NATIONAL SEMINAR ON RESURGENT RURAL INDIA: THE PARADIGM SHIFT



P. G. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (DRS-III)
UTKAL UNIVERSITY, BHUBANESWAR, ODISHA

India lives in its villages and rural areas. Ever since the emergence of civilizations, rural areas have been the centre of cataclysmic changes, reservoirs of knowledge, culture, traditions and the technology. But, the emergence of towns and cities, in 21st century, equipped with all the modern basic as well as advanced facilities has led to the movement of people towards cities, neglecting the base i.e., rural areas. It is seen that, ever since its independence, maximum development of India has taken place in the urban areas as compared to the rural areas.

Rural Economy in India

The Rural Economy in India is of tremendous importance as it is completely agriculture based and has vital supply and demand links with the other Indian industries. Rural economy has been playing an important role towards the overall economic growth and social growth of India. Besides, it continues to provide the major source of livelihood to the majority in the form of agriculture, since ancient time. During prehistoric time, when there was no currency system, economy in the rural areas was propelled by the agriculture produce based barter system for trading i.e., the excess of agricultural produce were exchanged against other items. Varied agriculture produce and system in rural India offered a wide agricultural product portfolio. Rural economic growth continues to dominate even the national stock exchanges in the same way as the large scale industries do.

Today, the rural economy in India and its subsequent productivity growth is predicated to a large extent upon the development of its 700-million strong rural population. The agricultural economy of India is drafted according to the needs of rural India since majority of the population lives in about 600,000 small villages. The rural section of Indian population is primarily engaged with agriculture, directly or indirectly, that accounts for almost 19% of Indian Gross Domestic Products (GDP). Considering its multiplier effect, central Government has set up many ministries such as The Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Rural Infrastructure, and the Planning Commission of India as the main governing bodies to formulate and implement the policies relating to the rural economy in India and its subsequent development for the overall growth of the Indian economy. These ministries deal with mainly agricultural products that controls the fate of the Rural Economy in India which are: Food grains, Fruits and Nuts, Fruits, Vegetables, Seeds, Buds, Plantation and Related Products, Spices, Tea and Coffee, Tobacco and Tobacco Products, Cotton, Rubber, Jute, handicrafts, fisheries, poultry, diary, etc.

Paradigm Shift in Strategy for Rural Development

There have been many strategic decisions taken to reinvigorate the rural areas. Some of the notable strategies are pro poor policies adopted for treating rural poor as resource with immense potential; emphasis on participation of people through Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Self Help Groups (SHGs) in planning, formulation and execution of rural development programmes; enhanced allocation of funds; strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions through devolution of adequate administrative and financial powers and responsibilities including key role in implementing rural development programmes; promoting Food Security, Gainful Employment & Infrastructure; strengthening rural infrastructure, shelter for all, potable drinking water for all and rejuvenating wastelands/ degraded lands, promoting cleanliness and hygiene in rural areas.

With two-thirds of India's labour employed in agriculture, successive Economic Surveys have emphasized the crucial importance of broad-based agricultural growth in raising rural living standards, ensuring basic food security for the nation and strengthening the domestic market for industrial and service sectors. Above all, broad-based agricultural growth offers enormous opportunities for alleviating rural poverty through expansion of on-farm and off-farm employment

Since Agriculture is the cornerstone of the rural economy, Government has initiated many Rural Development programs in India. The introduction of Bharat Nirman, a project set about by the Government of India in collaboration with the State Governments and the Panchayat Raj Institutions is a major step towards the improvement of the rural sector. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 which was introduced by the Ministry of Rural Development, for improving the living conditions and its sustenance in the rural sector of India, is another step in strengthening the rural India. Realizing the role of vital links required to develop rural areas, many Rural Development Schemes, such as Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) for all weather connectivity, Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) for self employment, Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) for increasing the food protection by the means of wage employment in the calamities affected areas, Indira Awaas Yojana (Rural Housing), etc. have been initiated. Along with the plethora of schemes, there are also many Rural Development Organizations such as Department of Rural Development in India to provide services such as training and research facilities, human resource development, functional assistance to the DRDA, oversees the execution of projects and schemes; State Cooperative Banks to financially assist the artisans in the rural areas, farmers and agrarian unskilled labor, small and big rural entrepreneurs; National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) to provide credit for the development of handicrafts, agriculture, small scaled industries, village industries, rural crafts, cottage industries, and other related economic operations in the rural sector; Rural Business Hubs (RBH) for developing agriculture; Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) to promote and organize the joint venture, which is emerging between the Government of India and the voluntary organizations pertaining to the development of the rural sector, etc.

Despite so many initiatives, schemes and organizations, rural India continues languish under poverty and devoid of real development. Rural areas are given lot of power through Panchayat Raj Institutions ,but unemployment rate is still very high.. Realizing this, the Government has initiated many changes in terms of strategic policies; treating rural areas as knowledge and employment hubs, etc. Efforts are also on to increase rural participation through Panchayat Raj Institutions and Self Help Groups and huge allocation of funds and power to Panchayat Raj Institutions.

Amidst this backdrop, the Post Graduate Department of Commerce(DRS-III), Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha is organizing a National Seminar on the topic *Resurgent Rural India: The Paradigm Shift* to deliberate on the potentials, issues and challenges of rural India. The Seminar will provide platform to the academicians, practitioners, researchers, industry bodies, non-profit organizations, etc. to understand each other's view points and arrive at an acceptable solution to develop rural India encompassing its various sectors. Further, the seminar is also expected to help all the stakeholders to find a mechanism for collaborative effort and initiatives.

Sub Themes of the Seminar:

The seminar will discuss and deliberate on the following indicative sub-themes.

- Rural economy and its transformation
- Challenges of rural economy
- Rural business and Economy
- Impact of rural development initiatives and schemes
- Bharat Nirman and rural infrastructure development
- Empowering rural India
- Role of Panchayati Raj institutions in the rural development
- Role of Self Help Groups in the rural development
- Rural Entrepreneurship for economic development
- Rural economy in Indian budget

Call for Papers:

The Seminar invites papers on the topic but not restricted to the above sub themes. The interested paper contributors are requested to adhere to the following dates and guidelines:

Registration Fee Rs. 300/-

Important Dates:

Date of Seminar:	18-19 March, 2017
Submission of the Abstract:	05 March, 2017
Submission of the Full Paper:	10 March, 2017
Intimation of the Acceptance of the Paper:	10 March, 2017

Submission Guidelines:

Font Style: Times New Roman / Arial

Font Size: 12

One hard copy and a soft copy may be sent to the undersigned.

email-id to send the articles

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