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REVIEWS IN BRIEF

Population in Perspective, Gyan Chand, Orient Longman Ltd., New Delhi, 1972. Pp. xi + 380. Rs. 30.00.

This book is a sequel to an earlier work of the author on "India's Teeming Millions" published in 1939. It attempts to study the population crisis in India in the context of new social horizons, examines the revolutionary implications of the tremendous rate at which population is increasing in India and the world and indicates the inevitability of social revolution as a result of population explosion. During the last three decades, India's population has increased by 228.4 million from 318.5 million in 1941 to 546.9 million in 1971 and the decennial rate of growth was 14.23 per cent in 1941, 21.64 per cent in 1961 and 24.57 per cent in 1971. Though there was a steep decline in the death rate from 36.3 per thousand in 1941 to 22.8 per thousand in 1961 and further to 16 per thousand in 1971, the birth rate marginally declined from 40 per thousand in 1961 to 39 per thousand in 1971. Assuming that the population would grow at the rate of 2 per cent per year, it is estimated that India's population will increase to about one billion at the end of this century. One of the basic assumptions of this book is that deliberate, rationally planned and socially oriented policy of family limitation through the world-wide use of contraceptives is an imperative necessity and should be provided for in every possible way. A critical analysis of the problem of population in India and the world and of the theory of population as expounded by Malthus and Marx leads to the conclusion that "a new theory of population transcending the limitation not only of Malthus but also of Marx has to be formulated, and this new theory has to become an integral part of new all-inclusive social theory." It puts forward the thesis that "the population crisis in India is part of the social crisis and the former cannot be resolved without first resolving the latter." The basic premises of this book is that the magnitude, the gravity and the acuteness of this crisis are entirely due to our whole economy being extremely unjust, repressive and in a state of grave imbalance. The ultimate theme of the book is its appeal for a scientifically conducted socialist revolution. In explaining the far-reaching implications of population planning, particularly for India, the book gives valuable insights into the enormity of the issues involved. The issues discussed in this book include growth of population, distribution of age structure, relation of population to the family as an institution, to economic structure and development and to the network of social relations and to operative social forces, eugenics, fertility, mortality, family limitations, manpower planning, strategy of rural and industrial development and change, urbanization and migration. It underscores the fact that the unplanned and accelerated growth of population can be tackled only by widening the bases of planning to include all significant aspects of living in the modern world. Fundamental social changes in the economy as a whole and in its

constituent parts are the essential conditions of achieving a break-through in its stagnation. It is pointed out that the introduction and realization of these changes are of paramount importance for making real headway against the odds created by the poverty of the people being made more dismal by the enormous acceleration of the growth of population. The book advocates a 'socialist population policy' which has to be significantly different from the population policy of a non-socialist country. The biological aspects of this policy would be the same for a socialist as for a non-socialist country, but its social, political and even psychological aspects would be different under socialism or a socialist economy in the making. The more salient points of this policy are that it should be integrated with the general economic policy of the country. It should be framed in concrete terms and with due regard for the specific conditions and problems of each major constituent unit of the country. Another feature of this policy is the progressive limitation of the size of the family through contraception. The qualitative aspects of population policy include health services, nutrition, crop planning, education, and social security.

The book contains an addendum on the Census of 1971.

Agribusiness Management and Resource Materials (Vol. II), Agribusiness (Asian Case Studies) Part I and Part II, Edited by J. D. Drilon, Jr., Industrial Organization and Management, Asian Productivity Organization, Tokyo, Japan, 1971. Pp. xiv + 304 and pp. 444.

A unique perspective of a variety of commodity industries in the agribusiness sector of the Philippine economy is presented in this volume issued in two parts. Both these parts contain a number of case studies and notes brought out by the Inter-University Steering Committee for Agribusiness Programs, the Philippine Case Clearing House and the Asian Productivity Organization for use in advanced courses in agribusiness management as well as in other fields of management. Part I of this volume deals with three agribusiness industries relating to livestock and poultry containing seven case studies, corn with six case studies and miscellaneous industries with two case studies. Part II contains five case studies relating to the rice industry, three case studies each on the sugar industry, vegetable industry and the coconut industry and one case study on the coir fibre industry. Each commodity study begins with an exhaustive and informative note on the agribusiness industry concerned, based on macro-data and the case facts for projecting the salient features of each industry. It presents the significant aspects of the selected industry, identifies its problems and potential, and appraises its growth behaviour and its responses to innovative or technological forces. It also describes the extent of participation of both public and private firms in the entire commodity systems of the industry and discusses the four major

aspects of each industry, *viz.*, production, financing, storage and processing, and marketing. Among the case studies on the livestock and poultry industry included in Part I, three are concerned with the strategy to be followed in future with respect to the marketing of beef, the problems faced in augmenting the supply and canning and processing of beef, and with the production of quality feed for poultry and livestock. Another case study deals with the various activities undertaken by the Agricultural Co-operative and Marketing Association, Inc., at Janopol which is a co-operative body of small farmers engaged in the production of farm crops and livestock. The case studies on rice industry in Part II are concerned with the problems faced in the marketing of packaged rice, profitability of rice farm business, the business activities of a farmer co-operative marketing association in Cabanatuan city, sales performance of the Seed Corporation of the Philippines, product diversification in farm machinery. The effect of the increase in sugar mill capacity on the net income of a sugar mill and problems of uncertainty in export prospects of sugar are discussed in the case studies on the sugar industry. The facts presented in the cases offer opportunities for analytical exercises designed to improve the decision-making skills of students of farm management as well as the professional managers.

Functioning of Village Panchayats, N. R. Inamdar, University of Poona, Poona-7, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1970. Pp. x + 368. Rs. 32.00.

The object of the four case studies of village panchayats selected from Poona district in Maharashtra—two working satisfactorily and two not up to the mark—presented in this volume was to examine how far the provisions of the Village Panchayat Act of 1958 in the State were realised in practice. The case studies are intended to spot out the gap between 'the ideal' and 'the real' and to contribute to a deeper understanding of the basic local government institution in rural India. The two village panchayats which had fared well are Dehu in Haveli taluka and Dhamni in Ambegaon taluka and the two whose performance was not up to the mark are Rahatwade and Khadakwasala in Haveli taluka. The intensive study of the democratic and functional aspects of the selected village panchayats covered both the subjective and objective factors such as ecological background, panchayat's evolution, membership, meetings, *gram sabha*, finances, function, relations among panchayat leadership, staff and the people, village leadership, panchayat election, and impact of the extra-village environment on the panchayat. The case studies of the two successful village panchayats revealed that Dehu had inherited a humanitarian religious tradition, had imbibed the urban influences and its panchayat was financially sound, besides having a career of four decades from which it could learn something. On the other hand, Dhamni village panchayat which was twenty years old, was located in the interior of the countryside, cut off from urban centres, and with a poor

economy. But it had overcome these natural difficulties by dint of its leadership talents which were equal in worth to those in Dehu. Both these panchayats acted as popular institutions with a good deal of success. It is noteworthy that the rich land holders did not dominate the affairs of these panchayats. The knowledge content of the leaders of both these panchayats was high, their style of leadership was predominantly democratic, and their social attitude was liberal and catholic. Both of them got popular support and co-operation in their developmental activities.

The two unsuccessful panchayats which were established in 1958, had failed to discharge even the elementary functions of the panchayat, mainly because the people and the village leaders did not take the idea of statutory village panchayat seriously. While Rahatwade was economically poor and culturally backward, Khadakwasala was economically better off and culturally right in the centre of change, being situated quite close to Poona. An apathetic mass of villagers, factious kin-groups, inactive and unsympathetic village level workers and other extension staff were some of the adverse factors observed in the functioning of these unsuccessful panchayats. The two case studies of unsuccessful village panchayat highlights the important educational role the block development officials have to play in activating the defunct village panchayats.

The case studies have brought to light two kinds of gaps between the legal provisions of the Panchayat Act which formed the basis of the working of the village panchayats in the State and their actual working. One kind of gap related to the informal human relationships or informal ways of behaviour observed in the working of the village panchayats. The second kind of gap related to the deficiencies on the part of the administrative personnel in charge of the village panchayats in implementing their statutory responsibilities. Both these kinds of gaps can be bridged by a deeper perception of the spirit behind the provisions of the Act by the *panchas* and the people and by activizing the administrative machinery. This publication provides a valuable insight into the working of the village panchayats in Maharashtra.

Problems of Marginal Farmers and Landless Agricultural Labourers (A Study of Hissar District in Haryana State) (1970-71), P. V. G. K. Rao and R. K. Sharma, Agricultural Economics Research Center, University of Delhi, Delhi-7, 1971. Pp. 70 + 21.

This report presents the results of a study on the problems of marginal farmers and landless agricultural labourers in Hissar district of Haryana. This study was undertaken by the Agricultural Economics Research Centre, Delhi at the request of the Planning Commission in May, 1971 with a view to helping the Planning Commission in the formulation and implementation of the Marginal Farmers and Landless Agricultural Labourers Development

Agency Programme which was initiated in April, 1971. The main objectives of this study were (1) to identify the marginal farmers and landless agricultural labourers and to work out the subsistence farm size which could provide a certain minimum income from agriculture for a family of average size, (2) to assess the magnitude of problems faced by this category of population and the obstacles faced by them in increasing their income from agriculture and ancillary occupations, and (3) to examine the potentialities of the development strategy worked out by the State Government for this group. The study was confined to seven blocks located in Hissar, Bhiwani and Loharu tehsils of the district and covered 79 households belonging to the category of marginal farmers cultivating holdings less than five acres (39) and landless labourers (40), selected on multistage stratified random sampling basis with probability proportional to size. The reference period of the survey was agricultural year 1970-71. The analysis of data revealed that all the selected households fell below the subsistence farm size, and the existing holding size of the marginal farmers was insufficient to provide a level of income for meeting their minimum requirements. This fact has highlighted the importance of supplementing the agricultural income of the farmers with subsidiary occupations allied to agriculture. By applying the analysis of variance tests to the data for determining the subsistence farm size, and relating size of holding to per acre net income by means of a semi-log function, it is estimated that a holding size of 5 acres and 8 acres in Hissar and Bhiwani-Loharu tehsils respectively will provide an annual income of Rs. 2,400 for meeting the minimum requirements of an average family.

The peculiarities of marginal farmers as observed in the dry regions of Haryana are as follows : (1) Purchased seeds and irrigation charges accounted for more than half of the total expenses. (2) The expenditure on fertilizers and purchased manures is very low. (3) Hired labour is not usually employed for farm operations even during peak seasons. The gross value of output per acre on the average varied from Rs. 330 to Rs. 730. The net income per acre varied from Rs. 240 to Rs. 580. About one-third of the sample households obtained an income ranging between Rs. 100 and Rs. 200 and only one-fourth had a net income over Rs. 500 per acre of cultivated holding. Dairying and labour constituted the major source of livelihood for farmers cultivating holdings upto five acres in the district. Under the Marginal Farmers and Landless Agricultural Labourers Development Agency programme, it was proposed to cover 17,000 marginal farmers and 4,000 labour households in the district of Hissar. Extension of irrigation facilities, provision of crop loan and subsidy on the purchase of current farm inputs and encouragement of animal husbandry enterprises like dairy, sheep and poultry farming are the schemes proposed to be implemented for marginal farmers and landless labourers. A review of the progress of the programme in September, 1971 has revealed the nature of organizational difficulties faced in initiating the programme, particularly in regard to staffing pattern, office accommodation, etc.

Problems and Prospects of Small Farmers in Two Regions of Uttar Pradesh in 1969-70, Agro-Economic Regional Survey No. 2, U.P. Agricultural University, Pantnagar, U.P., December, 1971. Pp. 184 + 53.

This report presents empirical data on current basic conditions of small farmers, and examines their main problems and prospects of improvement in Budaun district and in the Tarai region of Nainital district in Uttar Pradesh. The research centred on selected problems of changing agriculture in the two regions, such as tenurial conditions, cost of cultivation and productivity in high-yielding varieties and other crops, credit and marketing, capital formation on the farm and consumption problems. A sample of 82 small farmers—42 in Budaun and 40 in Nainital—was randomly selected for the purpose of the study and the data related to the agricultural year 1969-70. A framework of levels of viability is developed for differentiating the main features of the small farmers who are *viable* from those who are *potentially viable* and *low viable* (*non-viable*) small farmers. By definition, a viable farmer is one who has farm production and resultant net agricultural income sufficient to maintain his family at the standard or customary cost of living which is estimated at Rs. 1,100 per annum in the Budaun and Rs. 1,700 per annum in the Tarai region. The hypothesis tested in this study is that the level of viability is closely associated with the levels of new farming technology, productivity and sale of produce.

The results of the study showed considerable difference in the small farmer situation in the two regions. In Budaun only 17 per cent of the small farmers are estimated to be viable and about 20 per cent of those not viable at present are estimated to be potentially viable. In contrast, the percentage of small farmers in Tarai who are now viable is 52, and one in four of the others is potentially viable. Low viability is associated with one or more of the following conditions : (1) too little land for family size, (2) out of line input costs, (3) low productivity, (4) little marketable surplus, (5) insufficient net agricultural income, (6) large cash expenditure and expenditure on food, (7) need for off-farm employment and income. Conditions indicating highly viable small farmers relate to sound selection of crop enterprises, larger sown area, a good blend and use of inputs, high productivity and a larger proportion of output sold at high market rates. Two major inter-related problems of small farmers, particularly relating to the category of potentially viable are highlighted in this study. One is the need for much better and practical guidance on the selection of crop combinations and enterprises for optimum yields and cash returns within the actual prevailing conditions of small farms. The second problem is the need for better supply and application of technical knowledge about input use and cultivation procedures.

Several broad directions of change in small farm agriculture are pointed out in the study. These are (1) increasing sources and supply of water

through minor irrigation; (2) wider use of high-yielding food crops, chemical fertilizer, hired machinery and other elements of the new technology; (3) uneven advance in cultivation intensity, productivity and resource utilization; (4) rising agricultural income for viable small farmers; (5) increasing cost of cultivation; (6) higher levels of medium and long-term farm investment; (7) larger availability of credit from institutional and non-institutional sources and the disappearance of the professional moneylender; (8) higher farm family consumption expenditure and better living conditions on farms and in the rural areas; (9) increased employment opportunities for agricultural labourers and small farm family members as cultivation is intensified and the new technology spreads. It is observed that the continued rise in overall agricultural production, especially on the larger farms is likely to worsen the competitive advantage of the small farmers in the sale of their farm produce. General guidelines for improvement of the prospects of small farmers are formulated in this study followed by specific measures which would help them to achieve viability through better farm production.