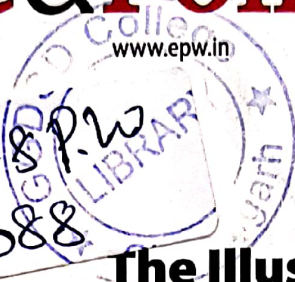


# Economic & Political WEEKLY

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- New GDP Series.

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- The Illusion of Inclusion: Employment-linked Incentive and the Politics of Job Creation
- Smog and Silence: Blurred Corporate Climate Accountability in Delhi's 'Air Apocalypse'
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- Unveiling the Dynamics of India's Unorganised Sector: Insights from ASUSE
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## The Illusion of Employment

The employment-linked incentive scheme, projected as pro-worker, reproduces structural labour market asymmetries by prioritising subsidies to firms over investment in workers and risks institutionalising underemployment. page 19

## Corporate Climate Accountability

Given the structural role of corporate actors in shaping Delhi's toxic airdscape, meaningful air-quality reform requires shifting from performative crisis management towards binding corporate obligations. page 23

## Heat Stress on Rural Workers

Extreme heat intersects with structural marginalisation, causing severe psychosocial distress to rural workers, who are often overlooked in India's urban-centric policy responses to heat. page 14

## Urdu's Liberal Ethos

As Urdu literature increasingly becomes a mode of religious instruction, dogma and orthodoxy are fuelling the language's departure from its historical engagement with scepticism, ethical inquiry, and critique of authority. page 10

## André Bêteille (1934–2026)

Bêteille's concern and interventions for policies of social justice and institutional well-being established him as a staunch progressive liberal who shunned the traps of utopianism. page 31

**The Institutional Unravelling of Urdu's Liberal Ethos**

- 10 Urdu literature is increasingly becoming a mode of religious instruction. This shift departs from Urdu's historical engagement with scepticism, ethical inquiry, and critique of authority. — *Sadaf Fatima*

**Heat Stress and Mental Health of Rural Workers**

- 14 The intersection of climate-induced heat stress and mental health among rural workers in Rajasthan is examined through a lens of structural marginalisation. — *Raj Mariwala, Ishwar Singh & Saba Kohli Dave*

**The Illusion of Inclusion**

- 19 By rewarding headcounts without ensuring job quality, the employment-linked incentive scheme reproduces labour market asymmetries and risks producing statistical illusions of employment. — *Ubaid Mushtaq, Aurolipa Das*

**Smog and Silence**

- 23 Delhi's recurrent winter smog is widely portrayed as a meteorological inevitability, obscuring the structural role of corporate actors in shaping the city's toxic airscape. — *Rafique Khan, Nosheen Khan*

**Disguised Unemployment**

- 27 The dynamics of the increase in labour force participation rates and its implications for workforce structure, composition, and labour productivity are examined using the Periodic Labour Force Survey. — *Venkatarayana Motkuri*

**André Bêteille (1934–2026)**

- 31 André Bêteille's concern and interventions for policies of social justice and institutional well-being established him as a staunch progressive liberal who shunned the traps of utopianism. — *Dipankar Gupta*

**Decoding the Surge in Rural Employment**

- 39 The increase in the rural workforce during and after the pandemic lockdown was primarily driven by women entering self-employment in agriculture, where earnings remain significantly low. — *Basit Abdullah, Satyaki Dasgupta & Kashif Mansoor*

**Poverty and Inequality in India, 2011–12 to 2023–24**

- 45 Using unit-level Household Consumption Expenditure Survey data for 2011–12, 2022–23, and 2023–24, this paper reassesses poverty and inequality in India at the Tendulkar poverty line and at higher expenditure thresholds. Extreme poverty declined sharply from 21.9% to 2.3%. Between 234 million and 421 million people are estimated to have exited poverty, depending on thresholds and methods. — *Arvind Panagariya, Vishal More*

**The Dynamics of India's Unorganised Sector**

- 51 The performance of India's unorganised sector shows a delayed recovery in 2023–24 after a decline in employment and labour productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic. The unorganised sector remains largely composed of microenterprises, with over 90% not reaching one-fourth of the turnover limit of the micro category, reflecting missed growth opportunities. — *Gautam, V Dhanya*

**Leveraging FPOs for Women's Livelihoods**

- 59 Women play a crucial role in agricultural value chains but often have limited access to markets, services, and decision-making within farmer producer organisations. The paper examines whether women-centric FPOs deliver better outcomes for women members compared to mixed-gender FPOs, drawing on primary data from across four FPOs in Uttar Pradesh. — *Shubhangani Chaudhary, Nirupam Mehrotra*

**Aspirational Districts Programme and Interdistrict Disparities**

- 67 Convergence approaches are used to investigate the Aspirational Districts Programme's effectiveness in reducing interdistrict income disparities across all 24 districts in Jharkhand using real income data from 2011 to 2022. — *Muzffar Hussain Dar, Md Zulquar Nain & Aamir Ahmad Teeli*

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