

Aug-Sept 2021

# NCAER NEWS



*To strengthen our bond with our valued friends, patrons, and collaborators, we will be regularly sharing the range of activities being undertaken by our faculty and advisors through this newsletter. In this first edition, we are offering you a peek into all that has been happening at NCAER during the last couple of months.*

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## NCAER Research Outputs

### [Agricultural Growth Diagnostics for Bihar \(India\): Identifying the Binding Constraints and Policy Remedies](#)

This paper by **Elumalai Kannan and Sanjib Pohit**, delineates the growth diagnostics of Bihar's agriculture sector with the objective of identifying the most binding constraints on the factors responsible for accelerating the output growth, and suggesting policy remedies to deal with these constraints. It specifically focuses on the crop sector, which accounts for over two-thirds of the agricultural output, and whose impact on the overall agricultural growth is relatively high as compared to that of the other sub-sectors.

### [Key Drivers of Progress in Digitisation of India's Land Records](#)

This policy brief by **Charu Jain, Deepak Sanan, and Somnath Sen** is based on NCAER's Land Records and Services Index (N-LRSI), which offers a reality check to the public on the ongoing digitisation efforts and highlights issues requiring greater attention by policymakers. The authors of the Brief discuss the key drivers that account for the recent improvement shown by many States and Union Territories with regard to the digitisation of land records and the registration process.

### [Infrastructure in India: Investment Priorities, Opportunities and Key Challenges](#)

This approach paper, written on behalf of the Foreign, Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO), provides a novel methodological framework to evaluate the prioritisation of infrastructure projects. Given the scarce resources available for investments, which infrastructure project should get prioritised first, remains a key question for policymakers. In this report, the authors develop an idea for computing a novel index comprising 70 indicators spread across 9 pillars. This index can provide a score for different infrastructure projects, and thus serve as a tool for policymakers to understand how best to allocate resources for fulfilling multiple needs served by various infrastructure assets. The approach paper also highlights the infrastructure needs of the country and devotes attention to land policies.

### [A Pilot Study of Districts of Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh, for Boosting Economic Growth](#)

This NCAER study started at the request of Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) in 2018 is part of the Working Group initiative in which six pilot districts were selected for preparing District Strategic Plans based on local research and extensive stakeholder consultation. The six districts included Sindhudurg and Ratnagiri in Maharashtra, Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, Muzaffarpur in Bihar, Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, and Solan in Himachal Pradesh. The following NCAER reports cover Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri, and Solan: the other districts are covered by Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow.

- [A Pilot Study of Sindhudurg District of Maharashtra, for Boosting Economic Growth](#)
- [A Pilot Study of Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra, for Boosting Economic Growth](#)
- [A Pilot Study of Solan district of Himachal Pradesh, for Boosting Economic Growth](#)

### [Assessment of Alcohol Taxation, Affordability and Price Elasticity Patterns in India](#)

This study is being carried out with the broad objective of estimating the overall tax burden and elasticity of alcohol products for the last 10 years in 7 selected States of India, including Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim, Maharashtra, Bihar, Karnataka, and Himachal Pradesh. The study has recently produced State factsheets for Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh.

### [MARGIN: The Journal of Applied Economic Research](#)

The latest issue of *Margin*, NCAER's journal on economic research, (Volume 15, Issue 3) was published in August 2021. Edited by **Sanjib Pohit and Anuradha Bhasin**, this quarterly, peer-reviewed, international journal, publishes papers with a special focus on the economics of emerging economies, but is open to high-quality papers from all fields of applied economics.

The NCAER researchers published the following opinion and journal articles during the months of July, August and September 2021:

[Why despite being impacted by tapering, India doesn't need to overly worry about the Fed decision](#)

Poonam Gupta

*The Economic Times*, September 24, 2021

[North-East can be a window for service exports](#)

Bornali Bhandari

*The Hindu Business Line*, September 24, 2021

[Human resources & regulatory autonomy](#)

K.P. Krishnan

*Business Standard*, September 24, 2021

[Role of cooperatives in Indian economy](#)

Saurabh Bandyopadhyay and Anupma Mehta

*The Pioneer*, September 24, 2021

[What recent data says about how our economy is doing](#)

Sudipto Mundle

*Livemint*, September 17, 2021

[The US–China trade war: Impact on India and other Asian regions](#)

Rajesh Chadha, Sanjib Pohit & Devender Pratap

*Journal of Asian Economic Integration*, August 30, 2021.

[Protecting consumers, the heart of finance](#)

K.P. Krishnan

*Business Standard*, August 26, 2021

[How to ease cross-border cargo movement](#)

Sanjib Pohit

*The Hindu Business Line*, August 26, 2021

[India's looming water crisis and urgent measures to address It](#)

Sudipto Mundle

*Livemint*, August 20, 2021

[Workplace as a community: Businesses' response to the market and government failures during COVID-19](#)

Bornali Bhandari, Samarth Gupta, Ajaya K Sahu, and K.S. Urs

*QRIUS*, August 12, 2021

[EU's vaccine travel pass is highly discriminatory towards low-income countries](#)

Perna Prabhakar

*The Indian Express*, July 31, 2021

[Bringing skills and education closer](#)

K P Krishnan

*Business Standard*, July 22, 2021

[Covid's aftershocks: Why we need wide-ranging reforms now](#)

Sudipto Mundle

*Livemint*, July 16, 2021

[Gender parity is a mirage as challenges still remain](#)

Anupma Mehta

*The Pioneer*, July 07, 2021

[Can ownership rights create a better Life for residents of unauthorized colonies in Delhi?](#)

Perna Prabhakar

*Socio-Legal Review-Journal*, July 3, 2021

[Understanding school attendance: The missing link in “Schooling for All”](#)

Manjistha Banerji & Kopal Mathur

*International Journal of Educational Development*, Volume 8.

## Activity Update

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The **DVARA Research Team** presented a webinar on their paper titled “[Regulatory and Supervisory Approaches for NBFCs](#)”, on September 14, 2021. The authors identify the gaps witnessed in the regulatory framework by highlighting their holistic vision for the role of Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs) in the credit ecosystem and the corresponding regulatory, supervisory, and resolution frameworks that should apply to them.

NCAER held a discussion on a paper titled, “Export Performance and India’s Tryst with Self-reliance in the Globalised World” by **Dr Aradhna Aggarwal, Professor at Copenhagen Business School**, on September 3, 2021. This paper highlights the need to demystify the concept of self-reliance and argues that treading down any path to achieve it would necessitate creation of new productive capabilities that would be determined by not what the country can produce but what it can export. The authors of the paper assess India’s export performance since 1988 along the following three dimensions: growth, diversification, and upgrading, with the objective of understanding how well India is prepared to achieve the goal of creating new productive capabilities in this globalised world.

NCAER's National Data Innovation Centre organised its [third Data Talk](#) on *Using Life History Calendars to Improve Measurement of Lifetime Experience with Trauma and Psychiatric Disorders* in the NCAER Seminar series on Data Collection Methodology, on August 25, 2021. The Data Talk was part of a series of thought-provoking discussions on research methodologies in which distinguished speakers in the field share their views and one or more discussants reflect on them from an Indian perspective.



**Dr Poonam Munjal**, Fellow at NCAER, presented a research talk on “**Preparing an Education Satellite Account at the Sub-national**” on August 13, 2021. The presentation was based on NCAER's recently concluded study for the Directorate of Economics and Statistics for Uttarakhand on “Preparation of an ESA for Uttarakhand”, which is based on the framework set by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for an Education Satellite Account (ESA).

The video recordings of NCAER's flagship event, the [India Policy Forum 2021](#), held during July 12-15, 2021, are available on NCAER's [YouTube Channel](#).



## Voices of our Researchers

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### [Dr Poonam Gupta, New Director General of NCAER speaks to PTI](#)

*“My vision for the organisation is to make NCAER a leading think tank in the world where eminent researchers, policymakers, and entrepreneurs can gather to shape India's development journey.”*

### [Dr Poonam Gupta in Conversation with the IHDS Forum](#)

Dr Poonam Gupta opines about the significance and future of NCAER's flagship project, the India Human Development Survey, on the eve of implementation of the third phase of the project.

### [Ups and Lows of India's Economic Recovery Curve](#)

Dr Shashanka Bhide, Senior Advisor and Research Director at NCAER, speaks to *Outlook*

### [e-Shram Generates Hope for Unorganised Sector Workers, but Hardships Won't Disappear Overnight](#)

Senior Fellow Dr Bornali Bhandari speaks to *FirstPost*

### [State of the Economy: CNBC TV-18](#)

Distinguished Fellow Dr Sudipto Mundle discusses the economy in a Television news programme

### [Entrepreneurship-In-Government](#)

Watch Professor K.P. Krishnan's dialogue in ONward Talks, a programme organised by Omidyar Network India

Following are some of the other important research engagements:

**Dr Saurabh Bandyopadhyay** and **Dr Laxmi Joshi** presented the evaluation study of the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan scheme to the Secretary and other senior officials of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj on September 6 and 30, 2021, at Krishi Bhawan.

**Dr Santanu Pramanik** and **Dr Soumi Roy Chowdhury** gave a talk on “Spatio-temporal trends in COVID-19 protective behaviours and vaccine hesitancy in India: Findings from a nation-wide web survey of Facebook users” at a webinar organised by **IIT Gandhinagar** on September 29, 2021.

**Dr Poonam Munjal** spoke on “Impacts of Covid-19 Pandemic on Tourism Industry in India”, at a webinar on Resilient Tourism for Inclusive Growth: Strategizes to Revive Domestic Tourism, organised by National Institute of WaterSports, Ministry of Tourism on September 25, 2021.

**Dr Bornali Bhandari** spoke at a panel discussion on, “RBI’s Proposed Central Bank Digital Currency Economic Implications”, organised by State Bank Institute of Consumer Banking, Hyderabad on September 16, 2021

**Dr Poonam Gupta** presented at a closed virtual panel discussion on India’s economic recovery at the **Hoover Institution at Stanford University** on September 13, 2021. This discussion was part of a regular series of off the-record roundtable sessions meant to bring scholars and experts together to examine recent policy developments involving India.

**Dr K.P. Krishnan** spoke at the inaugural event of the **Know Your Regulator Series** on September 15, 2021. This series is joint collaboration of The IEPF Unit, NCAER, The State Capacity Initiative at the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), the Forum of Indian Regulators (FOIR), and the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA)

**Dr K.P. Krishnan** chaired a technical session titled, "Road Map for Investor Awareness and Protection till 2047" at the national webinar of **IEPFA** titled Empowering Investors: IEPFA, Journey of 5 years and Way Forward, held on September 7, 2021.

**Dr Sanjib Pohit** presented a paper titled, “Role of Policy Interventions in Limiting Emissions from Vehicles in Delhi, 2020-30”, at a virtual workshop organised by **ADBInstitute** on August 26, 2021.

**Dr Pallavi Choudhuri** and **Dr Sonalde Desai** presented a paper titled “Lack of access to clean fuel and piped water and children’s educational outcomes in rural India”, at a seminar jointly organised by the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG) and the Centre for Development Economics, Delhi School of Economics (CDE-DSE), on August 19 2021.

**Dr Charu Jain** presented **NCAER’s Land Record Services Index (N-LRSI) 2021** at a webinar titled ‘The Digitisation of Land Records: A Panacea for Land Conflicts?’ on July 8, 2021, organised by land Portal Foundation in collaboration with NCAER, NRMCC, Cadasta Foundation, and Land Conflict Watch.



The **Development Monitoring & Evaluation Office (DMEO)**, **NITI Aayog** and **NCAER** have signed an MoU on September 10, 2021 for strategic and technical collaboration. The objective of the MoU is to establish a framework for cooperative institutional relations, and to encourage and promote cooperation in the field of monitoring and evaluation of government policies and programmes through rigorous economic analysis, evaluation design, survey design, and data analysis.

**Dr Sonalde Desai**, Professor at NCAER, who holds a joint appointment at University of Maryland, USA, has recently been appointed as **Distinguished University Professor (DUP)** at the University. DUP status is a permanent honorific title that recognises exceptional records in research, teaching, and service.

**Dr Anushree Sinha**, Advisor at NCAER, was recently nominated as a member of an expert group constituted by The Union Labour and Employment Ministry for fixing minimum wages and national floor minimum wages.

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