ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

ECON EXPRESSIONS'22

Economics Association
Sri Venkateswara College

DIGITAL ECONOMICS:
A New Era

Econ-Expressions'22

Annual Newsletter
Economics Department, Sri Venkateswara College

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FROM THE PRINICIPAL'S DESK

The Economics Department of Sri Venkateswara College is one of the most sought-after in the University of Delhi, and Blisspoint, its annual festival, is awaited by students from India. It is heartening to note that the Econ Expressions, the annual Newsletter of the Department, is being brought out yet again, as part of the fest.

The dynamism and vibrancy of the Department is manifested through the students successfully organising such creative events, irrespective of the pandemic. The enthusiasm and collective endeavor of the Student Editorial Team of the Economics Association is commendable. I also see in the pipeline, a number of entrepreneurial and innovative events planned for the 2-day festival, around the theme 'Digital Economics'. The efforts being put in are indeed praiseworthy. I congratulate the team as well as the Teacher-in-Charge Mr. D Brahma Reddy and Faculty Advisor, Mr. Amit Jha for their support in this regard.

Apart from Blisspoint, the Department of Economics has been active throughout the year. With a great set of alumni in the world of academia, civil services, the fourth estate, as well as in the corporates, a number of mentoring sessions were organized featuring them. Skill-based sessions such as MS Excel training were also organised for the benefit of students.

I am of the strong belief that student events and collaborative ventures harness the energy of the youth in a fruitful direction. Such events are also a testament to the healthy and enriching interaction of a plurality of cultures. I am confident that Blisspoint 2022 would be a memorable and rewarding experience for the students of the current batches. My best wishes to all the faculty members and students of the Department of Economics — hope you make the best out of it.

Dr. C Sheela Reddy
Principal
Sri Venkateswara College

FROM THE TEACHER-IN-CHARGE'S DESK

The Department of Economics, Sri Venkateswara College is celebrating the 30th year of its annual festival — Blisspoint. Over three decades it has evolved into an excellent national platform for undergraduate students from across India, for presentingtheir knowledge and skills, and to experiment out-of-the-box ideas. It is my honour to be serving as the Teacher-in-Charge of the Department this very special year.

This year the theme of the festival is "Digital Economics: A New Era", which has been selected keeping in view the digital wave that the world has been experiencing since the onset of the pandemic, and the Indian Government's aim of creating up to $1 trillion of economic value from the digital economy by 2025.

I am happy to share that Dr. K.P. Krishnan, Former Secretary, GoI, and Dr. Seema Gaur, Chief Economic Advisor at the Ministry of Rural Development, have agreed to be the Chief Guest and Guest of Honour, respectively. A special lecture by Dr. Kartik Hegdekatte, IRTS, on "Cryptocurrency and Blockchain Technology" is also planned for the second day.

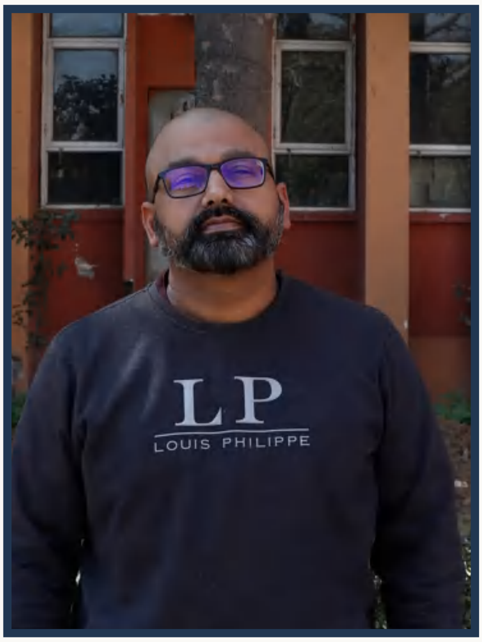
The event would not have been possible without the hard work, dedication and perseverance of the members of Economic Association under the able guidance of Mr. Amit Kumar Jha, Faculty Advisor, and the team leaders — Navya Jindal (President) Ridhima Ahluwalia, Naman Kapoor (Vice Presidents) Araba Kongbam, Suraj Kumar P, Mahesh R (General Secretaries), Yash Khandai, Harry Yadav, Aryaman Bawa (Joint Secretaries), and Khushi (Treasurer). The department members — Rishika Chutani and Megh Utsav (Secretaries of Editorial), Navya Chawla and Vansh Sharma (Secretaries of Sponsorship), Yukti Mahajan and Manya Bassi (Secretaries of Marketing), Ananya Jain and Niranjana P

(Secretaries of Communication), Arjun Pratap Chauhan and Ishita Singh (Secretaries of Outreach) — have put in relentless and commendable efforts this season.

I wish the entire team a great learning experience in the organisation of events and success in all their future endeavours.

D. Brahma Reddy
Teacher In Charge
Economics Department
Sri Venkateswara College

FROM THE FACULTY ADVISOR'S DESK



It gives me immense pleasure to be associated with the annual fest of the Department of Economics, Sri Venkateswara College, in my capacity as the Faculty Advisor of the department. Blisspoint'22 marks the second online edition of the annual fest. It is a reflection of the relentless efforts of teachers as well as students who have evolved their way of teaching and learning .

Owing to the pandemic, we have witnessed a switch to the digital mode, not only in the sphere of education, but also in our lifestyles. We have reduced visiting retail shops for everyday purchases — be it groceries, apparel, furniture or electronics — it is all just a click of the mouse or swipe of a finger away. In this while, the economy has seen a huge spurt of online transactions with focus shifting from e-commerce to m-commerce with the emergence of user-friendly internet based applications. All of this and more led us to base Blisspoint'22 around the theme "Digital Economics: A New Era".

The gala this year is going to be bigger than its previous editions! With the Flagship event Shark Tank and an attractive line-up of a number of other events — Crypto Mock Stock, Treasure Hunt, Case Competition, Economics Quiz, Paper Presentation, and Fantasy Football Auction — it is going to be a ride for the organizers and the participants alike. The annual magazine Econ Expressions has also touched new heights this year by inviting article entries from undergraduate students across India.

Our prestigious college continues to uphold its legacy of engaging its students in a myriad of extra-curricular activities, year after year. The annual Economics fest is one such opportunity for the students to explore themselves beyond their regular academic pursuits. For their encouragement, support and guidance towards the event, I would like to thank Principal Prof. C. Sheela Reddy, Vice Principal Dr S. Venkata Kumar, and Teacher-in-Charge Mr. Brahma Reddy. Lastly, none of this would have been possible if not for the untiring efforts of our association members. My sincere best wishes to them for a triumphant conduct of the event.

Amit Kumar Jha
Faculty Advisor
Economics Department
Sri Venkateswara College

THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS

As I look back at my college life, many things have changed in the three years since I first joined. From being a young woman with many aspirations, to being confined away from college, thanks to the pandemic, and finally getting back to the physical mode of learning, one thing that remained constant throughout my journey was the Economics Association.

I recall my initial days when everything in the University was new for us. Joining this society gave me, back then, a sense of belongingness, and over the years, the opportunity to interact and work with some brilliant minds. I count myself fortunate to have met seniors who supported me at every step of my journey and helped with the smallest of problems. And while I could interact with juniors only online for the most part, meeting them in person when our college reopened was pure joy!

When I was elected to be the President of the Association, I was aware of the responsibilities that came with this position. But with faith in myself and my amazing team by my side, I have been able to maneuver through it quite well. This year, in spite of most of the session being online, we managed to host several webinars with great participation. It also gives me immense pleasure to share that we have been able to achieve almost all of the goals we envisioned for this session, and more, all while going through a period of uncertainty — coordinating and executing the work through online platforms.

We had wanted to take the society to greater heights, and this year we are launching our very own website! For our annual fest Blisspoint'22, we have introduced various new competitions, including the flagship event Shark Tank, and reimagining past events like Mockstock into a MockCrypto event, keeping up with the changing trends.

The Association members are the strongest pillars of support, and it gives me so much joy to be working with such creative and talented people. Furthermore, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to our principal, Dr. C. Sheela Reddy ma'am for her unwavering support throughout the year; our Teacher In-Charge, Dr. Brahma Reddy sir for providing guidance at every turn; and our Faculty Advisor, Mr. Amit Jha sir for his wise counsel. I'd also like to express my gratitude to the team working on this issue of Econ-Expressions, who gave me a chance to share my Ecosoc journey. Last but not least, I'd like to extend my sincere thanks to the entire Association who brought life to our multiple webinars and whose participation throughout various events was vital for the society to have another successful year.

I hope Blisspoint'22 becomes a memorable experience for everyone, bringing with it a great deal of delight whenever it is remembered. As I'll step out of college in a few months, I will forever cherish the learnings and the amazing memories this society has given me. It has been an absolute honour to head such a wonderful team and I'm sure the juniors would carry on the legacy of the Economics Association in the coming years.

- Navya Jindal

VICE PRESIDENT

Being a part of the Economics Association for the past three years has been the experience of a lifetime. I joined as a bright-eyed new recruit, the next year was promoted to head the Marketing department, and am currently serving as the Vice President. My journey has been uniquely blissful and the combined efforts and support of the whole team throughout the three years has made my tenure unforgettable.

My message for juniors would be to savour each moment. Life is unpredictable and you never know what's next, so make the most of the opportunities at hand, and for now, focus all your energies on making Blisspoint'22 a huge success!

- Ridhima Ahluwalia

VICE PRESIDENT

My journey in the Economics Association has been rather like a movie. Starting as an Executive Council Member in the first year, not getting any position in the second year, and cherry-topping it all with ending it with becoming the Vice President, it has been quite the ride!

Going from preparing the magazine in the Editorial Department in the first year to now writing a message for it as a Core member — the feeling is surreal and cannot be explained in words. Between all the symposiums, lecture sessions, and Blisspoints, I wrote, danced, learned, grew and led. I will cherish all the memories I made here. Lastly, my best wishes for the juniors to carry forward this legacy of Ecosoc.

- Naman Kapoor

GENERAL SECRETARY

The Economics Association possesses a uniquely comforting work atmosphere which can only be gained through years of consistent functioning — a testament to the legacy of excellence left behind by those who came before us. As I inch towards the last few months of my tenure, I hope that I have contributed whatever I could to this legacy.

Having been closely involved with the functioning of the Association for the past three years in multiple roles, I am proud of the tremendous progress made by us, and hope to see our future members conquer greater heights. On a lighter note, I am utterly stoked by the fact that my words have featured in three consecutive editions of Econ Expressions, and am slightly devastated by the realization that this streak shall not continue next year

- Araba Kongbam

JOINT SECRETARY

As a member of the Economics Association, it gives me immense pleasure to see the direction our society has taken. One of our most profound achievements has been developing in our members, a deeper understanding towards making the world of economics more inclusive.

There has not been a single time during the year, when the team has not been hosting back-to-back events, to make the society more interactive and full of learnings, and has handled the transition to an online environment almost seamlessly. As the Joint Secretary, my message to all members is to go even further and to transform themselves and grow beyond their comfort zone.

- Yash Khandai

MEET THE TEAM

FACULTY - ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT

OFFICE BEARERS

CORE TEAM

EXTENDED CORE

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

MARKETING DEPARTMENT

SPONSORSHIP DEPARTMENT

OUTREACH DEPARTMENT

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

EVENT SNAPSHOTS

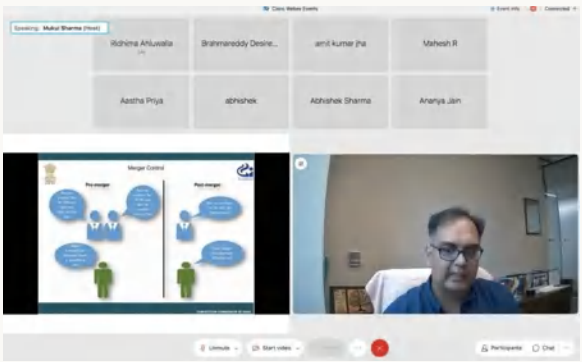
Webinars & Talk Sessions

The academic year 2021-22 has perhaps so far been the most vibrant when it comes to educational webinars conducted by the Economics Department. There has been a back-to-back line up of webinars spanning a wide range of topics as well as speakers. With MS Teams being our most significant friend in the pandemic times, thanks to the online mode, we were able to gather an audience from various colleges across India.

Here is a brief review of the various sessions held so far:

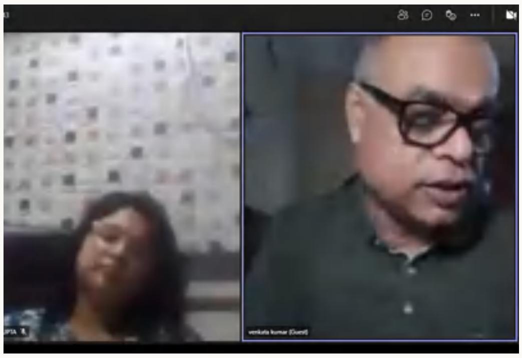
1) Advocacy Programme on the Economics of Competition:

The first seminar of the academic session was held on 23rd August, 2021 on the theme "The Economics of Competition". The lecture was delivered by Shri Mukul Sharma, Joint Director (Economics), Competition Commision of India, GoI. It covered all aspects of the economics of competition, its function, advantages, disadvantages, different types etc. Mr. Sharma made sure to use extensive examples in her delivery. The session concluded with a round of Q&A, where curious students interacted with the speaker.



2) Webinar on Understanding Goods and Services Taxes

On 18th September, 2021 a seminar on the theme "Understanding Goods And Taxes". The lecture was delivered by Shri Sanjay Sharan, Ex. Additional Director General, National Academy of Customs and Indirect Taxes and Narcotics, and Shilpi Gupta, CA, Senior Partner at Chitresh Gupta and Associates and Author of GST-Law, Analysis and Procedures.



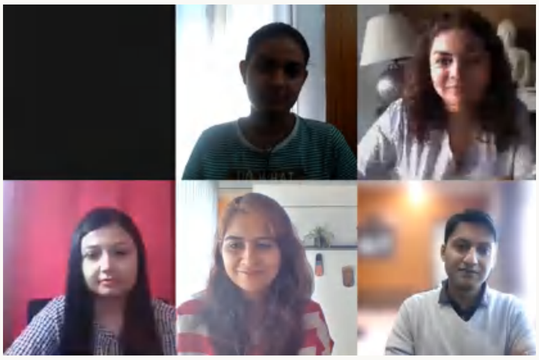
3) Webinar on Usage of Space Technology in Governance and Development

On 30th September, 2021 a session of "Usage of Space Technology in Governance and Development" was conducted in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS). The speaker of the session was the highly regarded Dr. S.K. Srivastava, Dean, Academics, Indian Institute of Remote Sensing, Indian Space Research Organization. The event witnessed much enthusiasm as it covered a relatively unknown yet interesting topic.

4) Alumni Inspire Series

Continuing the tradition of Alumni Inspire Series, introduced in Blisspoint'2021, the Association hosted two alumni-centric sessions in a matter of one month. The first session was held on 25th September, 2021 with the theme of "Public Policy Initiatives". Priyanka Bajaj (Alumnus 2009), Research Officer at RBI talked about "Unconventional Monetary Policy during Covid Times" in this session.

The next session was held on 23rd October, 2021 and was an interactive session with four distinguished alumni of the college from the batch of 2007, namely Surabhi Pant, currently a part of Samsung Electronics, India as a Deputy General Manager; Shreya Soni, Founder and CEO of DSSC Ideas Lab; Tania Jacobs, currently the leader of a team having 35 economists in Shell's Downstream Business and lastly Ravi Saraogi, Founder of Samasthi Advisors. It was an absolute honour to host the dynamic alumni back at their alma mater!



5) Webinar on Union Budget Formulation and Implementation

In collaboration with the B.A. Programme Committee of Sri Venkateswara College, on 11th October, 2021 a webinar on the topic "Union Budget Formulation and Implementation" was organised. Mr. K.S. Samarendra Nath., Director (Rtd.), Ministry of Steel, Govt. of India, was the speaker. It was a rather comprehensive session wherein all students learned from the very basics to the most minute details of what goes into preparing a national budget.

The three funds of Government of India

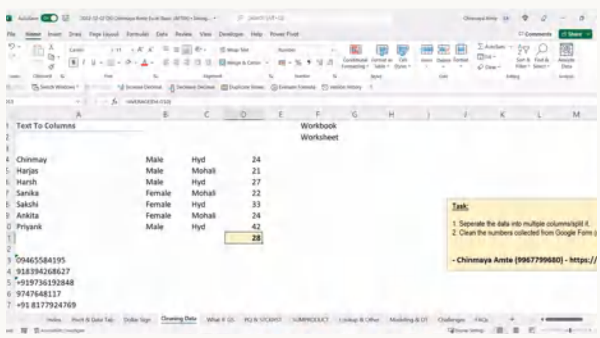
Fund	Consolidated FI	Contingency FI	Public Account (PA)
Income	Taxes & Non-Tax Revenue	Corpus Fund Rs 500 crore	Money other than Consolidated FI
Expenditure	All expenditure other than PA	Unforeseen expenditure	Return to the owners
Parliament authorization	Needed before spending	Needed after spending	Not required
Constitution	Art 266 (1)	Art 267 (1)	266 (2)

6) Webinar on Issues in Indian Agriculture

A webinar portraying the theme of "Issues in Indian Agriculture" was organised by The Economics Association on 15th January, 2022. The speaker for the session was Prof. A Amarender Reddy, Principal Scientist at ICAR-Centre Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture. Sir presented his research and findings on Indian Agriculture and explained each and everything in great detail with interest. It happened to be an insightful session which included an interactive dialogue between the speaker and the audience.

7) Workshop on Basics of Excel

Our latest workshop was held on 12th February, 2022, on the theme Basics of Excel. Our speaker for the day was Mr. Chinmay Amte, employed in a Private Equity Role at M&G, and working on Excel for the past 3 years. Approach-based case studies and insightful discussions on Excel were the focal points of this workshop. Following a structured process of brainstorming and informative exchange, the floor was opened to the students for QnA, where Chinmay sir acknowledged all the doubts posted by the active participants via the chat section, citing tricks and hacks. With the emergence of advanced Excel knowledge, participants were left wanting more such workshops.



8) Sri Vipra Internships - Summer 2021

Upholding the legacy of the annual research internship projects in our esteemed college, in 2021 too, Sri-Vipra — an undergraduate Summer Internship program was organised for the students.

The program was aimed to acquaint the students of the college with the process of academic research within a particular subject of their choice. Professors from across all departments in the college, ranging from Physics to Botany and Statistics and Economics undertook various research projects, and acted as a mentor to a group of 6-8 students, who were selected based on their past academic performance and intent towards research.

Since the internship was open to all departments, the programme saw multiple instances of cross-departmental research. Students from batches of 2022, 2023, 2024 worked together on various projects. Such variations of ages and departments made the entire vibrant and diverse, leading to more than just academic learning.

The various research projects undertaken in the Economics department were as follows:

- **External Balance Sheets Of Developing Economies: Shifts Between 2007 GFC and the 2020 Covid-19 Crisis** by Dr. Krishnakumar S
- **The Effects Of Movie Piracy On Box Office Revenue: An Empirical Analysis** by Prof. Amit Kumar Jha
- **An Analysis of Centrally Sponsored Schemes** by Prof. Meenakshi Sharma

The six weeks of the internship encapsulated an enriching experience for both the mentors as well as the students, and led to many interesting research conclusions!

9) Online Freshers

A day all incoming undergraduates await after writing their board exams is an exhilarating Freshers' Party at college. This past year, the new batch of Economics Honours students didn't get to mingle with their batchmates or seniors in a physical space, but had a gala time with them online. On 29th January 2022, 'Shades of Red' — a virtual Freshers' Party was organised for the Batch of 2024.

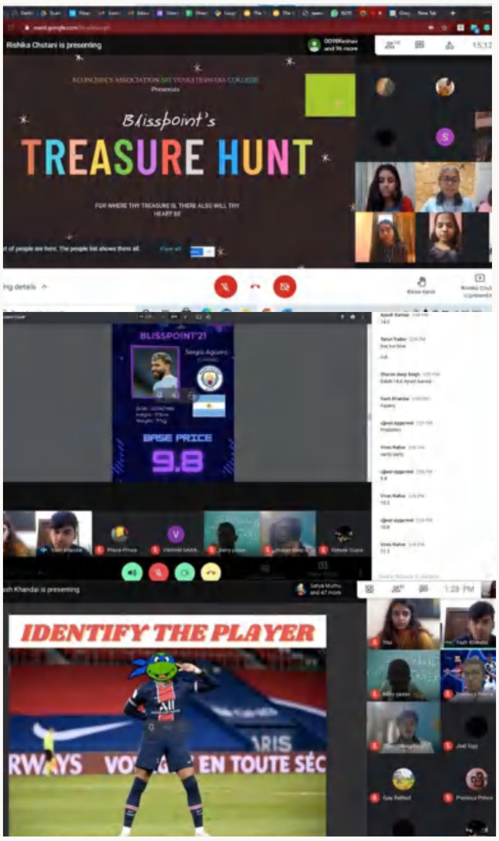
The session kicked off with an online game ‘Sketchful.io’ which was played in groups, and winners from each group were promoted to the next round of Rapid Fire, where Abhinav and Priyanshi took home the titles of Mr. and Ms. Fresher 2022 with their witty and fast answers. After the felicitation, they astounded everyone with their beautiful voices.

As performances by the seniors began, excitement inflated to a new high. The highlights of the evening happened to be Naman, Suraj, Yukti and Navya dancing to Indian beats, Arjun mesmerising the audience with his soulful singing, and Rishika delivering her special message for all juniors as they step into college life, giving everyone joyful shivers!

All-in-all, it was the great convergence of a jovial audience, fulfilling a dire need for fun!

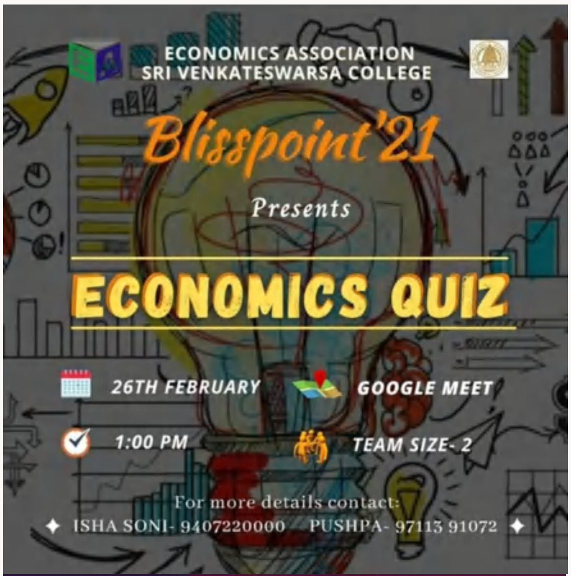
BLISSPOINT'21

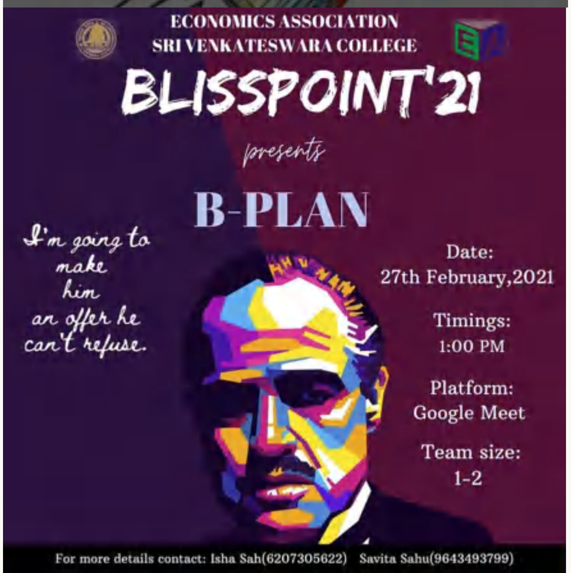
The years 2020 and 2021 were full of unprecedented occurrences that were quite overwhelming for all of us to deal with. But even as everything went online and our very own annual economics festival Blisspoint felt impossible to be conducted, we discovered that nothing could come in the way of ignited spirits when they set their minds to something. And so, on a hopeful note, the Economics Department of Sri Venkateswara College conducted Blisspoint'21 on the 26th and 27th of January 2021, for the first time on a digital platform with the help of applications and websites such as Google Meet, MS Teams and D2C.



The theme for the festival was "Behavioural Economics and Public Policy in India." Students, faculty members as well as all the others who were a part of or who took part in the event experienced absolute 'bliss' organising it as the festival was as wholesome as it could be — full of fun, knowledge, and exposure!

On the inaugural day, we had amongst us, Prof. Sanjay Bakshi, Management Development Institute (MDI), Gurugram and Mr. Parameswaran Iyer, former IAS Officer and Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Govt. of India, who conducted an interactive speaker session, talking about





the new brank of economics that is Behavioural Economics and its relation with formulation public policies in India.

On the second day, an Alumni Inspire Session was held for the students. This comprised an interactive session with three distinguished alumni of the Economics Department of the college, namely, Mr. Kartik Pental, Education Specialist, World Bank; Avantika Kapoor, Merchandising Manager, Google; Shantanu Chakraborty, Director, Amazon. It was indeed an insightful session with students drawing parallels between and learning immensely from three successful but starkly different lives.

Various events such as Economics Quiz, B-Plan, Treasure Hunt, Football Auction, Mock-Stock and Paper Presentation (in the memory of late Prof. Dr. Shailja Thakur) and BlissMUN, the Flagship Event of Blisspoint'21 were organised. Students from all three batches worked together to ensure a smooth run of the events. All the departments too were united during the festival, to ensure a seamless experience for all the participants. All events witnessed robust participation from students from eminent institutions across India!

All in all, Blisspoint'21 was a huge success for the Economics Department, and marked a great start to 2021.

BLISSPOINT'22

Blisspoint'22 — the second online edition of the annual Economics Fest of Sri Venkateswara College is being conducted on 25-26th February 2022.

The theme for this year is "Digital Economics" and the various events being conducted are:

1. Shark Tank: Define Your Legacy (Flagship Event)
2. Case-à-dilla: The Case Competition
3. Footlocker: Fantasy Football Auction
4. Cryptox: Crypto Mockstock
5. Conspectus: The Paper Presentation Competition
6. Quizathon: Economics Quiz
7. Cluedo-Nomics: Treasure Hunt

CHIEF GUESTS FOR BLISSPOINT'22

Dr. K. P. Krishnan

The Chief Guest of Blisspoint'22 is set to be Dr. K. P. Krishnan, a passionate and result-oriented ex-IAS Officer, and a leader par excellence, who has served in various fields and secretariat positions in the GoI, Government of Karnataka, and the World Bank.

Currently, he is working as the IEPF Chair Professor of Economics at the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NAER), New Delhi.

Dr. Seema Gaur

The Guest of Honour for Blisspoint'22 is set to be Dr. Seema Gaur, an ex-IES officer with more than 36 years of diversified experience in key economic ministries and regulatory bodies. She also holds degree in law and diplomas in development economics and public administration.

She was also India's lead negotiator in negotiations for Competition Chapter in trade and investment agreements with RCEP, EU etc. She has given talks as an invited expert in many international conferences and published papers in peer reviewed journals. She has also written on key economic issues including digital economy and competition law in books published by globally reputed publishers.

DIGITAL ECONOMICS: A NEW ERA

The idea of money has taken various turns throughout intelligent human history. Beginning from the barter system to exchanging precious metals for goods and services, and finally going from paper and plastic money to digital currency — we have come a long way. And to think that it is only money that is going the digital way couldn't be further from the truth.

The digital economy refers to a global network of economic activities, commercial transactions, and professional interactions, made possible by information and communication technology. The digital economy grew 2.5 times faster than global GDP over the previous 15 years, almost doubling in size since 2000! Within the fourth quarter of 2021 itself, there were 825 million Indian internet users — a stark rise from the 795.18 million at the start of the year.

The backbone of the digital economy is hyperconnectivity. This is evident through the way businesses now aggressively market over digital platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube, and how e-commerce websites and OTT platforms have become a part of our everyday lives.

But what apart from pandemic makes it all stand out? What has led to the emergence of the new digital era? Why are we attracted towards Bitcoin, NFTs, and other means of digital currency? — The need for a dependable, long-term store of wealth is a popular motive for investing in cryptocurrency.

Unlike traditional money, most cryptocurrencies have a finite supply restricted by mathematical procedures, which prevents any political entity or government agency from diluting the worth through inflation.

However, more is necessary to enable robust digital economic growth. By strengthening its competency, the government must come to terms with the digital future.

A dire strategy is needed in four areas: legislation, market access negotiations, taxes, and safeguarding rights in the digital economy. Such progress is meant to be beneficial in the long run, especially for a developing economy such as India.

On this note, we welcome you to Blisspoint'22 — the annual fest of the Economics Department, this year themed around Digital Economics: A New Era.

NOBEL PRIZE IN ECONOMICS - 2021

Who can understand the pangs of not being able to conduct randomized experiments better than an economist?

This age-old enigma was challenged by presenting the 2021 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences, or the Nobel Prize in Economics to David Card, Joshua D. Angrist and Guido Imbens.

David Card was recognised for his empirical contributions to labour economics. He attempted to present through his research, that there was no particular causation between a raise in minimum wage and increased unemployment which is the traditional economic understanding. Joshua D Angrist and Guido W Imbens won the award for their methodological contributions to the analysis of causal relationships. Their works complemented each other in reducing the margin of error from a pertinent modern economics impediment, i.e. discerning correlation and causality in natural experiments.

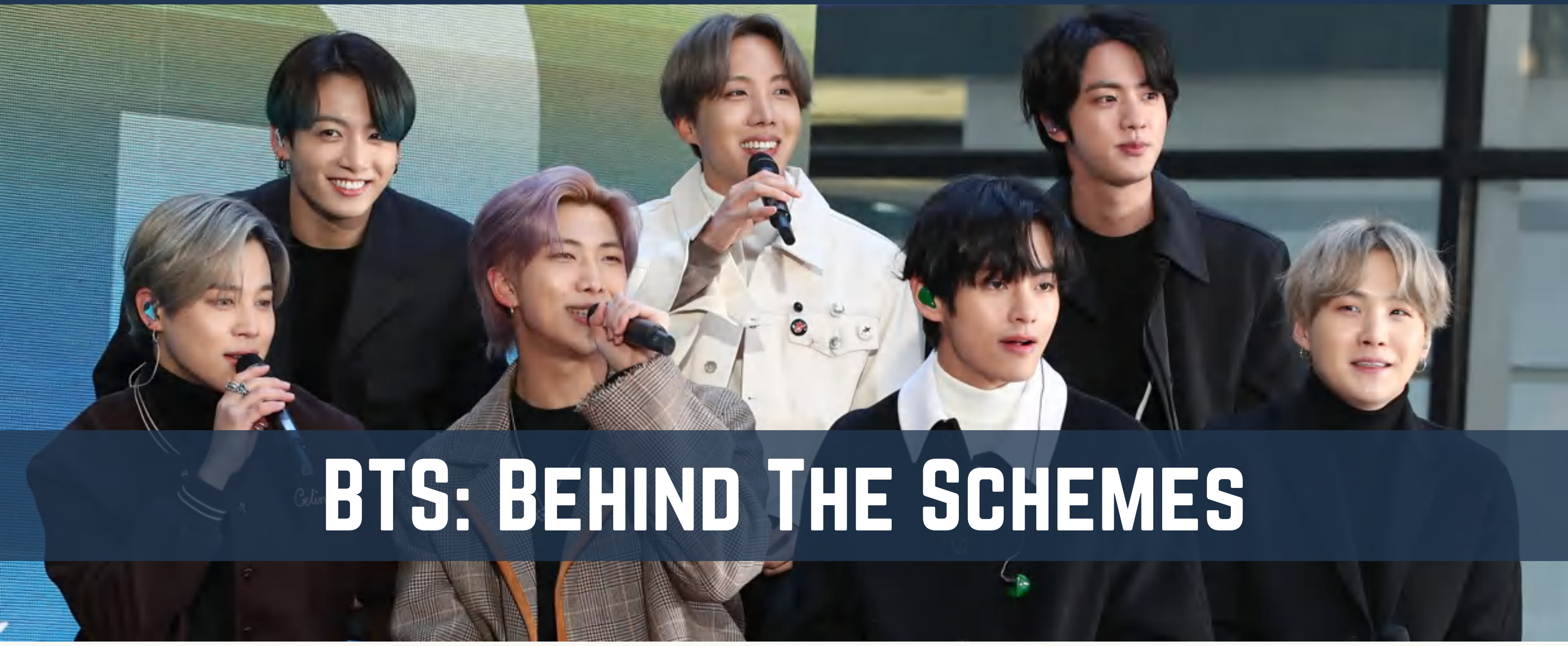
The Nobel Committee remarked that the magnitude of change in modern economics will be astounding and highly beneficial as their works will heavily influence policy decisions pertaining to minimum wage, immigration, education etc.

David Card, born 1956 in Guelph, Canada. Ph.D. 1983 from Princeton
University, USA. Class of 1950 Professor of Economics, University of California, Berkeley, USA.

Joshua D. Angrist, born 1960 in Columbus, Ohio, USA. Ph.D. 1989 from Princeton University, USA. Ford Professor of Economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, USA.

Guido W. Imbens, born 1963 in Netherlands. Ph.D. 1991 from Brown University, Providence, USA. The Applied Econometrics Professor and Professor of Economics, Stanford University, USA.

ARTICLES BY ASSOCIATION MEMBERS AND FACULTY



BTS: Behind The Schemes

Rishika Chutani
BA (Hons.) Economics

BTS, Gangnam Style, Squid Game, Baby Shark, Parasite — if you live on planet Earth, then you must have heard of, if not fallen for, at least one of these cultural breakthroughs from the Asian land of South Korea.

Korean entertainment media is winning hearts around the world, and its global quantum leap is attributed majorly to BTS — a seven-member South Korean boy band based out of the capital city Seoul. But what is the phenomenon that is BTS? Let us find out.

Backdrop

Left devastated to the core in the aftermath of the Korean War in the 1950s, South Korea had to build itself up de novo. The nation was not rich on natural resources, and the only long suit it had was its people. Investment in human resources saw a leap in literacy from 24% to 96% in a matter of a decade.

Focus was next put on increasing exports of goods such as garments, fiber and footwear, and as these picked up, the focal point of attention shifted to the development of industries such as automobiles, steel, and mobiles. It is because of this that we know Hyundai, Kia, Samsung and LG to be the top South Korean conglomerates.

Over the years the nation has developed into one of the top tech-hubs in the world, and owing to this economic progress, in July 2021, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) upgraded Korea's status to that of a developed economy.

Hallyu - the Korean Cultural Wave

It isn't just hardware manufacturing that the nation focused on. The other major area of sale for South Korea became its very own culture. After the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis and subsequent losses in the manufacturing sector, the Government of South Korea diverted its attention towards the entertainment sector. They increased the cultural budgets by nearly 600%, giving artists across the nation a chance to foster and bank on their talents.

The cultural push was also necessary to polish South Korea's global image. The country was perceived to be poor and war-stricken, so, as the influx of Korean movies, shows, music, and art began, diplomatic relations with nations around the world improved. This was South Korea's ultimate soft power strategy.

Come 2012, PSY's Gangnam Style took the world by storm (twice a mention of an addictive song — apologies if it doesn't leave your head soon). Not that music groups from Korea didn't exist on a large scale or weren't popular before, but Gangnam Style put the Korean music industry on the world map.

Talking specifically about Korean-Pop groups, what is strikingly different about them is their performances. Their stunning live vocals and dance steps (no, not easy moves you and I can mimic) make for show-stopping stages.

Hallyu is a term used to describe the spread of Korean culture encompassing music, movies, shows, online games, cuisine, attire, beauty regimes, etc. across the world and BTS — the most popular K-Pop group in the world is known to have revolutionized Hallyu. Here are some numbers to quantify this:

- BTS brings an estimated $5 billion in GDP and more than $1 dollars in consumer exports every year to the economy of South Korea.

- The Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange estimated that 800,000 tourists visit South Korea due to BTS. The Seoul Metropolitan Government attributes the revival of its tourism industry to BTS. Other sectors positively impacted are transportation, hospitality, and beauty.

- BTS's single 'Dynamite', stayed on Billboard Global Charts for 18 straight weeks. It generated $1.43 billion in revenue, and according to a study by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, provided 7,928 jobs during the Covid-19 pandemic, as the economy suffered a major setback from lack of tourism.

- Recently in November 2021, BTS's four 'PTD' On-Stage SoFi LA concerts created history as they grossed an impressive $33.3 million and sold about 214,000 tickets. This accounted for the LA stadium's highest-grossing engagement since its reopening in 2021, and also for the highest-grossing show in nearly a decade. (Source: Billboard)

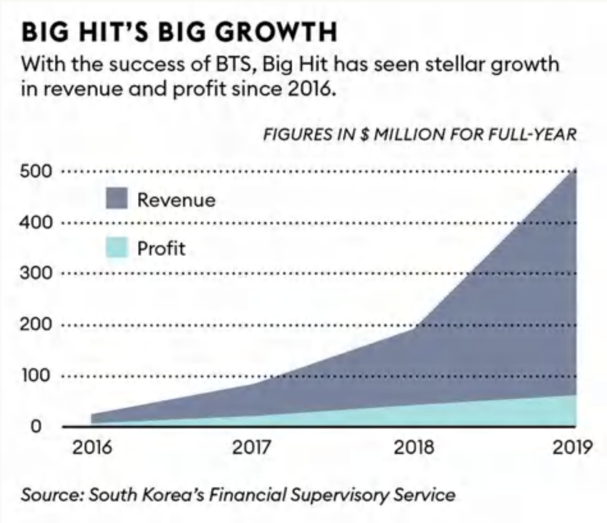
- Back in the day, their Twitter handle had 4 times the engagement of former US President Donald Trump, all thanks to their loyal fan base 'ARMY'.

Sources Of Revenue

Let's take a look at how BTS makes money:

- **Direct Earnings:** Albums, concert tickets, merchandise contribute directly to their earnings. Their April 2019 album, "Map of the Soul: Persona," sold nearly 3.4 million copies within a month and set a record high in South Korea.

- **Equity:** BigHit Music, the label that BTS falls under, went public in October 2020. Each member holds a stake in it. The company is now worth $8.9 billion dollars. It has also entered the American market by acquiring Ithaca Holdings which manages artists such as Ariana Grande and Justin Bieber.



- **Endorsements:** BTS are the brand ambassadors of Samsung, FILA, Hyundai, Louis Vuitton, McDonald's, Puma, Baskin Robins, and many, many more Korean and international brands.

The Age of Social Media

The most significant edge that BTS had over other boy bands that came before it was Social Media, the tool that helped them grow big around the world. It is said that before becoming star boys in their home country, by virtue of being active on various social media platforms, BTS had gained popularity worldwide.

They are active on Vlive, Weverse, Shazam, Webtoon, BTS World, BTS Official Shop, and many more apps besides the usual Twitter and Instagram. They engage with the fans through lives, short films, comics, game shows like the extremely popular Run BTS, and a sale of band-specific merchandise. A closer observation of their revenues tells us that it isn't just their music that is getting them those big bucks. It is worth noting that 23% of BigHit Entertainment's income comes from merchandise revenues, estimated at $114.5 million.

They continue breaking their own records album after album, and currently hold a whopping 25 Guinness World records. Take a look at a few:

- Most-viewed YouTube video within the first 24 hours
- Fastest to reach both 1 and 10 million followers on Instagram (held individually by a member)
- Most weeks at No. 1 for Billboard Social 50 chart
- Most streamed track on Spotify within the first 24 hours

Closing Thoughts

Nation's People Preserving the Korean Language chose BTS as the "Top Promoter of the Korean Language" of 2018 for promoting the Korean language around the world. They also received a letter of appreciation from the government during Hanbok Culture Week 2019 for promoting Korean traditional clothing around the world. They have spoken at the UN and have fanbases in all continents around the world. Clearly, their contribution to their country has been far beyond revenue generation.

Today, K-pop is bigger than ever. There are over 400 different K-pop groups and solo artists and more are debuting every year. BTS has taken the legacy of those who came before them to a whole next level, and has paved the way not only for other Korean-pop groups but for all non-white and non-English speaking people around the world.

If teens in your locality couldn't get you hitched to BTS, perhaps the economics behind their operating model explained in this article does. And who knows — you might just find yourself jamming to foreign-language pop beats very soon!

References:

1)https://www.asiascot.com/news/2021/01/22/the-korean-wave-from-psy-to-bts-the-impact-of-k-pop-on-the-south-korean-economy/

2)https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/01/startups-in-south-korea-are-thriving-this-is-why/

3)The Economics of K-Pop - YouTube

The Great Resignation - Time To Quit Your Job?

Megh Utsav
BA (Hons.) Economics

Do you like your job? Does going to work make you happy or would you rather be at home with your family? Did you know that people around the world are quitting their jobs? It is astonishing to note that 41% of the world's working population is planning to switch their jobs this year — 95% of Americans are thinking of quitting their current jobs this year. So many already have. We are in the middle of what experts are calling the 'Great Resignation'. The term was coined by Anthony Klotz, Professor of Business Administration at Texas A&M University. He calls the trend a pandemic epiphany and we'll try to understand why today.

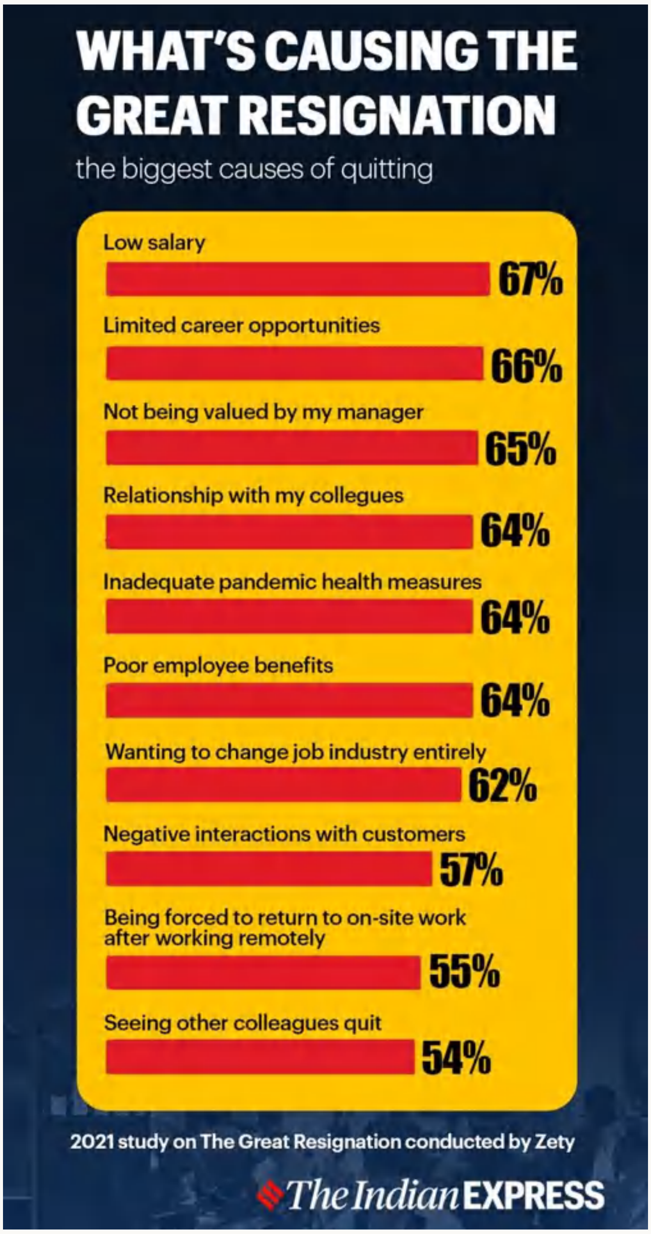
Why are people leaving their jobs? Where are they going? Let's start with some numbers.

Microsoft recently conducted a survey and found that 41% of employees worldwide are looking to quit their jobs this year.
In the United States, 4.3 million people quit their jobs in August in 2021, i.e 2.9% of America's working population, 20 million Americans have left their jobs since April. In Germany, ⅓ of the companies are short of skilled workers. Currently, there are at least 4000 skilled job vacancies.

Data collected from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development shows that in 38 member countries, at least 20 million workers have not returned to work since the Coronavirus struck. In India, the attrition rate in the tech sector is up 23%. In Vietnam, many low-paid government workers have not returned to factories. In the Caribbean, one in six workers aged 18 to 29 has left the workforce. In China, there's a shortage of workers in the tech sector.

Welcome to the Great Resignation. Experts say that some key driving forces behind this could be unemployment benefits, inadequate pay, absence of caregiving, relocation, fear of in-person interaction, etc., but all of this is just half the story whereas something bigger and deeper lies within.

Not everyone is leaving because of unemployment benefits from their government, because they have to care for a child or an elderly at home, or because their family has relocated during the pandemic. The elephant in the room is work-life balance. You see, for years, our lives have revolved around our work. We planned our week based on our work calendar. We met people only on weekends. We socialized only on off-days. We skipped celebrations for work. We prioritized work meetings over meetings with friends. We compromised on vacations to save on paid leaves.



The pandemic changed all of this. It held up the mirror. It forced people to see the unpredictability of life, to reflect on what really matters to them. Many realized it does not work, or at least not their present work.

So millions began reimagining their lives. Many locked up their city homes and moved to the suburbs. They realized they don't want to wait until retirement for greener pastures. Many quit full-time jobs and began freelancing they realize they want to spend more time at home or with family. Many decided to quit and go back to school. They realized life is too short to stick it out in the wrong career. Many turned their hobbies into full-time jobs. Many began trading full-time. At least 16 million people around the world today are trading in cryptocurrency, as of February 2021.

Then there are people who decided to start up their own firms. The Great Resignation has been accompanied by a startup boom. Since the pandemic, a whopping 1.4 million startups were registered in the US. India added 1600 startups in the tech sector alone. Those who did not have the capital for a startup or the skill set to look for new jobs decided to stay back in their villages. Vietnam's garment factory workers, for example, traded poor living conditions and human rights abuses in the factories for a life of struggle at home. At least there they have a family. No wonder the Great Resignation is also being called a worker's revolution. It gave people newfound respect for themselves and their life.

A survey asked people why they quit their jobs: 40% cited burnout, 20% spoke about the lack of flexibility, 16% said the previous employer was not supporting their well-being. So what were they looking for in their new job? 40% said the ability to work remotely according to personal preference. People don't want their life to revolve around their jobs anymore; they want their jobs to fit into the kind of life they want to live.

A parent who is raising a child wants a job where he or she can take time off every day to drop their little one to school. A 25-year old may not want to slog it out 10 hours a day anymore. Some just want to work from home. Today, people are looking for jobs that are flexible, remote, that have shorter workdays and hours.

Every big event in history has affected our economic decisions. During World War I, when men went to the battlefield, women, for the first time, entered factories to keep them running. After the Great Depression, people clung to their jobs. In the mid-90s, they were switching jobs again. After the Great Recession, the trend of sticking to jobs was back. People wanted a safety net. Then came the pandemic which gave people another reality check on life.

Those who survived the virus value their lives way too much to compromise. Linkedin studied the trend and found that the percentage of LinkedIn members who updated their profiles and found a job has increased 54% year on year. Gen Z switched the most; their job transition increased 80%. Millennials were next, and finally the boomers. Sectors suffering the most because of the Great Resignation include hospitality and healthcare.

This was the employee's side of the story. Let's now look at the employer's side.

The first year of the pandemic was hard enough. With workplaces shut, supply bottlenecks strangled operations, and now workers were quitting. It was like being out of the frying pan into the fire. There are currently 10 million job openings in the United States. Germany needs at least 4000 workers. What are companies doing to retain their talent? Well, some companies are offering higher increments and bonuses. Reports say wages for low-paid workers are rising at the fastest rate since the Great Recession. Some employers are even giving collective holidays. German e-commerce company Zolando, for example, offered the staff a collective vacation; the company shut down its offices in the first week of August so that all employees could take a break. Some companies are giving coupons for food delivery.

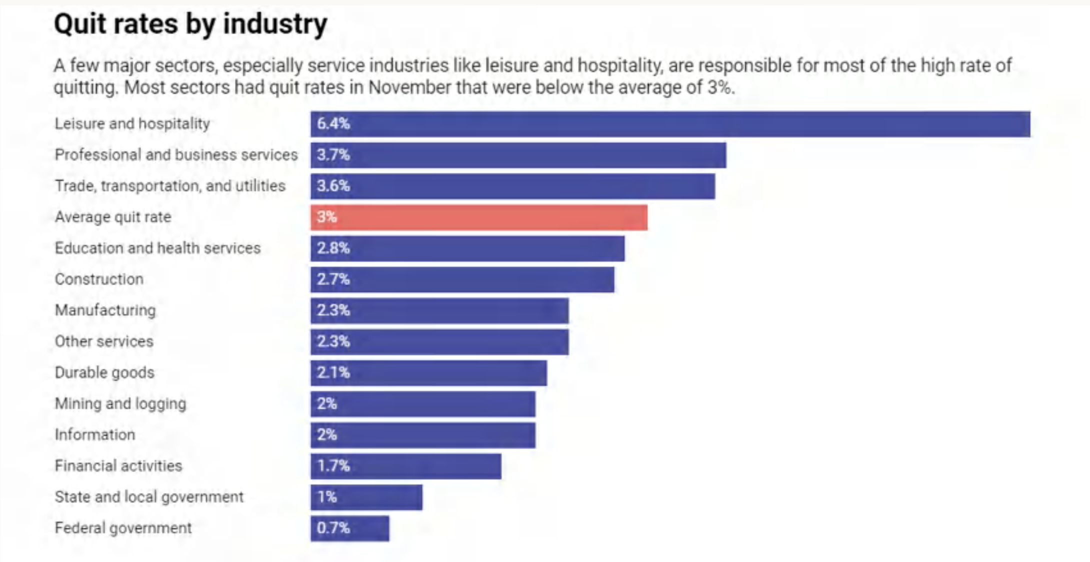
These benefits are exciting. But if a company is to survive The Great Resignation, it must dive deep into an employee's mind and see what they really want, flexibility. Companies must allow people to continue working from home if they want to and not penalize their career growth for it. They must change the hybrid model for good. They must become diverse. By that, we mean not just hiring people from different social backgrounds or people who look different than diversity is needed but they should also look for employees with different needs. If a parent wants to take an hour out every day for his or her child, let them. If someone wants to work from home, let them, that is a rearrangement of your human resources in a way that enables flexibility.

Today, a paycheck is no longer enough and companies must realize this. They must also realize that employees are tired. Many are grieving. They need to be given a reason to return to work every Monday — better health policies, family engagement policies, rewarding employees, and making them feel valued. It is time to reimagine work, reimagine office culture, and reimagine leadership. Because if one company doesn't, another will and they are the ones that will win the race for talent.

References:

1.https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20210629-the-great-resignation-how-employers-drove-workers-to-quit.

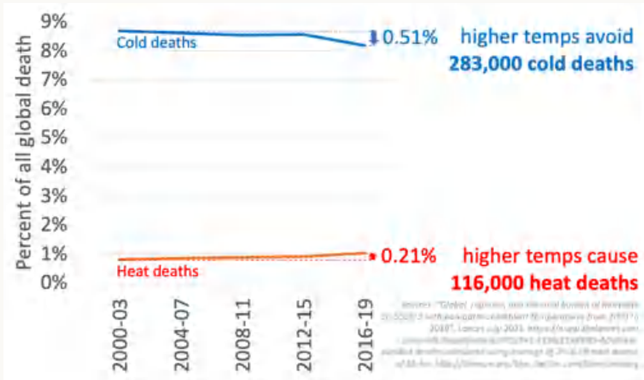
2.https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.businessinsider.in/careers/news/heres-everything-we-know-about-the-great-resignation-whos-quitting-and-why/amp_articleshow/86429516.cms.



THE CLIMATE DYSTOPIA

Vishavjeet Singh
BA (Hons.) Economics

Climate change saves more lives than you'd think. Yes, you read it right! But it is not something that we are used to while reading newspapers, scrolling on social media, or watching national news channels. According to a report by 'The Lancet', since 2000, there has been a 0.21% increase in heat deaths due to climate change, but at the same time, there has been a 0.51% reduction in cold deaths because of higher temperatures as a percentage of all global deaths.



If this data comes as a surprise to you, then imagine the extent to which you have been manipulated by the mainstream media predicting the end of the world and the politicians promising to spend billions from your pockets to save mankind from the so-called existential crisis.

Let's try to look at the more practical side of the story and understand if the situation is exactly how it appears to be on paper. Let's dig slightly deeper into the illusion of so-called climate revolutions.

End of the world?

"It is not like a huge asteroid hurtling towards Earth. It is instead a long-term chronic condition that needs attention and focus, but one that we can live with", says Bjorn Lomborg. This describes how climate change is often regarded as a reason for human extinction. If we talk about the economic impacts, the UN climate panel itself states that due to climate change, instead of a 450% rise in the average income of people around the globe by 2100, it would be 434% only. This is not a catastrophe.

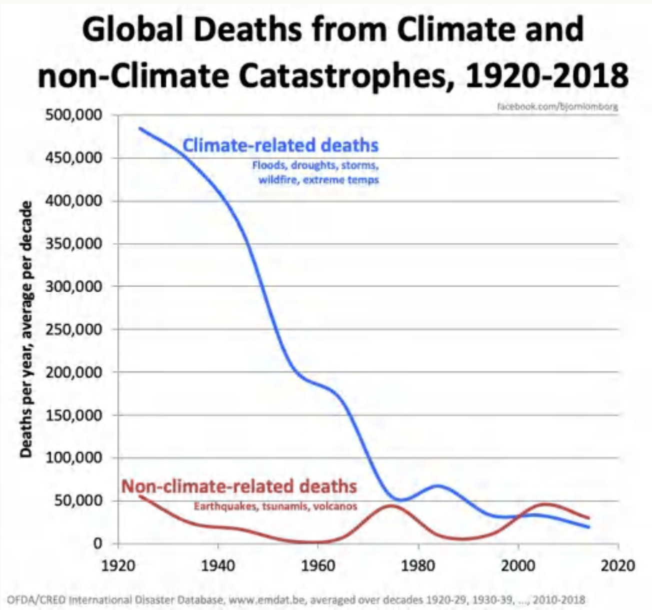
The emotions of people and their fear of human extinction is so well used, that now the debate over climate change has stifled rational dialogue and has killed meaningful dissent. It is so well played that according to a survey of 28 countries, almost half of the adults believe that climate change would lead to the extinction of the human race. But there are wrong assumptions that fuel this irrationality.

For instance, a study shows that due to the rise in sea levels with the effect of global warming, 187 million people will have to move over the next 80 years. But it would happen only assuming that humankind would do nothing to prepare for it. Surprisingly a simple solution like constructing Dykes can reduce the number to only 305,000 and it would cost only 0.1% of global GDP to fix it, so the point to consider is that we'll adapt to most of the changes and at a very minimal cost as compared to what we're promising for other impractical solutions.

The Illusion of Climate Policies and Targets

The media loves terrible stories and politicians always promise to come to rescue you from those hypothetical predictions. Recently, COP-2 concluded in Glasgow, and in line with several countries, India pledged to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2070. If we talk about these targets, it is vague as no one knows how to achieve them. New Zealand, which promised to reach the net-zero target by 2050 got into some math and estimated that it would cost them between 16%-32% of their annual GDP, and for a country like India which is in crucial years of its development, this can be proved disastrous. Also, according to an estimate, Paris commitments would reduce the rise in temperature by 0.05% only till 2100. The International Energy Agency estimates that if every country meets its targets (that is even unlikely itself), then the fossil fuels percentage in the global energy supply would reduce from 81% to 73% only by 2040.

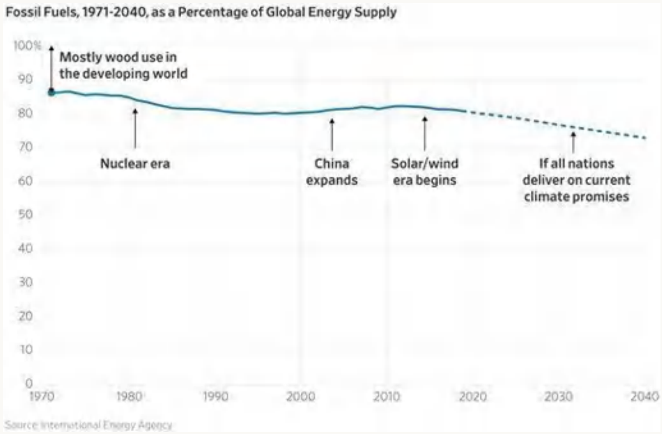
If we talk about the lockdowns in 2020, which was a real-time economic catastrophe, it can be observed that an 11 times drop of what happened in 2020 is required by the end of 2030 to meet the promised targets. So it can be clearly stated that Climate policies are not about effectively meeting lower carbon emission targets - they are but about how they can make us feel good. With all of this comes huge benefits for the green-tech unicorns who champion these policies more than anyone.



Future of Solar & Wind Energy

You must have encountered some solar and wind energy companies promising humankind to save their future, especially around the climate summits. But what is the practicality of these claims? Let's have a look at the numbers for subtle evidence. Firstly let's assume that it is the best way of producing electricity and we would be producing 100% of electricity from it, but production of electricity consumes only 19% of global energy supply and for the rest of methods like heating, transportation, production of steel and fertilizers, etc. fossil fuels would be the only major option.

Secondly, we need to consider the economic viability of the same. Let's look at some recent evidence. Germany's 47% electricity production comes from renewables but parallelly it has some of the highest consumer electricity costs (almost eight times that of Delhi, India) and it definitely does not promise a bright future for a country like India.



Thirdly, let's judge the importance of the role of fossil fuels in economic prosperity with the example of Africa. Africa accounts for the smallest share of greenhouse gas emissions, at just 3.8% as compared to 23% in China and 19% percent in the U.S., but at the same time, over half a billion people lack access to electricity, thus, resulting in 700,000 deaths annually resulting from the use of wood and dung for burning and heating.

The future of solar and wind can also be questioned based on the heavy cost and energy-intensive production process of the equipment.

Role of R&D and the way forward

It has been almost 30 years, and the climate policies have delivered very high costs with almost no fruits at all. Only the recessions and COVID-19 lockdowns have been able to make some impact and its implications are not hidden. Expecting nations to freeze their economic growth by stopping the use of cheap energy would not go a long way.

Three things that are the need of the hour are Research, Development, and Innovation. Let's take the example of Los Angeles, which was one of the most polluted American cities in the 1960s and when nothing worked, instead of asking people to stop using cars, in 1974, catalytic converters were invented, thus, the pollution levels reduced drastically. This is how a simple technological change leads to a substantial impact on climate with practical applications, unlike those hypothetical policies. according to an estimate.

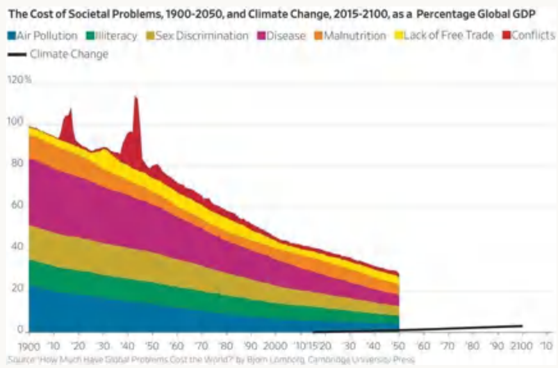
Despite investment in trillions of dollars, the world would get only 5% energy from solar and wind by 2040, but the economic implications of these sudden shifts would generate unpalatable impacts. Let's take another example.

The majority of the income of poor and lower-middle-class families is spent on energy. In the West, people used gas to warm their houses but when it was costly, people warmed their houses less, and thus, died more of cold, but with the invention of Fracking, the price of gas decreased in 2010 and since then it has saved 11000 lives from cold every year.

In conclusion, the key to reducing the effects of climate change is an investment in R&D to develop a cheap, safe, and reliable source of energy and not bashing the use of fossil fuels in the meanwhile or creating a climate dystopia. A breakthrough can come from anywhere, at any time, but what should be done on an urgent basis is that governments need to invest in the development of affordable green technology. The need is to provide funds to individual researchers and when there would be an innovation, the venture capital would automatically come into action.

Undoubtedly, R&D comes with an economic cost, but it would cost almost 1/10th of what we are investing in other climate policies. There is a need to spend less but spend smarter, and we need to subsidize innovative ideas. No matter how good a rebellious plan of action makes you feel, innovation is the final resort.

Climate change is real but we need to understand that its impact would be very small relative to the impact of other driving forces such as changes in population, age, income, technology, lifestyle, governance and many other aspects of socio economic development. The solution is not to go back in time, rather look forward. Only technological development can help humanity become carbon neutral and prevent economic catastrophe arising out of the urgency we are faced with.



References:

1.https://www.lomborg.com/
2.https://www.linkedin.com/in/bjornlomborg

Autocracy VS Democracy: An Economic Analysis

Kashaa Swami
BA (Hons.) Economics

In an autocracy, one person has his way; in an aristocracy, a few people have their way; in a democracy, no one has his way.
- Celia Green

Does a system of government affect the economic growth and stability of a nation? Can democracy and rapid economic growth coexist, or do autocracies have distinct benefits in lifting countries out of poverty? Does a system of government have an advantage when it comes to handling economic crises? Let’s find out.

An autocracy is a system of government by one person with absolute power, while a democracy is a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives.

To put forward a comparative analysis, in this article, I take up the examples of India and China as a democracy and autocracy, respectively.

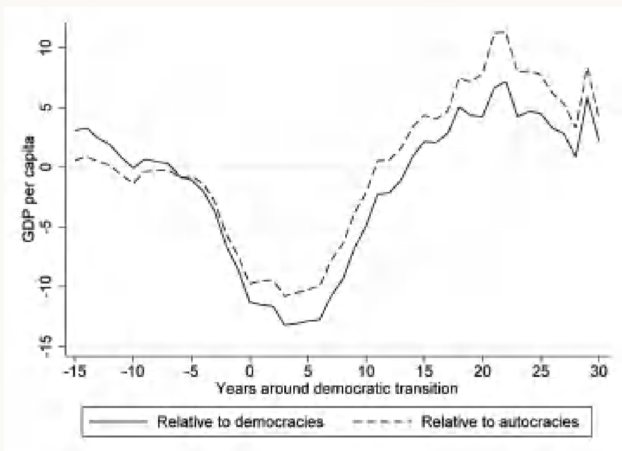
It is argued that autocracies can bring about economic upliftment and prosperity much more efficiently than democracies, mainly due to the concentration of power in singular hands. Without the shackles of legislative, judiciary, and media, the advancement of policies and economic laws is smooth. Several autocracies have achieved comparable rapid economic turnarounds by inculcating dramatic changes in the public and private industries. Examples include Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, Chile, and, of course, China.

However, a significant downfall in autocracies is observed when a government lies in the hands of a misinformed leader. Such economic disasters are Mao's Great Leap Forward, Castro’s centrally planned inefficient economy of Cuba, and Iran's Mullah-led government established monopolies bound by religious shackles.

Hence, it is only wise to say that the overall effect of autocratic administrations is an average of both the good as well as bad outcomes achieved by visionaries as well as misguided leaders.

Autocracies can provide a degree of stability that is institutional for short-term economic growth, but it creates an unsustainable economy in the long run. Democracies on the other hand create fewer erratic outcomes — fewer big achievements, but also fewer long-term tragedies.

Democracies pride themselves on their bipartisanship and political freedom. A tyrannical economic decision is almost unlikely to invade the transparent mechanism that defines a democracy.



A higher level of Human Capital Formation in a democracy ensures higher productivity in terms of education and health. This in turn can translate into economic growth and better living standards. Also, in a democracy, the public chooses its leaders after careful evaluation and it puts in charge people who can be good policymakers and help in economic development, albeit quite often, democratic nations lead to greater clientelism, corruption, red-tapism, and similar factors that impede economic progress. Simply put, many argue that a democracy precedes state construction and results in lower economic development than creating state capacity as under an autocracy.

Let's now draw from empirical evidence, a comparison between the world's leading growing economies — China and India.

- On a nominal basis, China and India are the world's 2nd and 5th largest economies in 2021, respectively.
- China ranks 1st in terms of PPP (Purchasing Power Parity), while India ranks 3rd.
- In nominal and PPP terms, both nations account for 21% and 26% of total world wealth, respectively.

Together they account for more than half of Asia's GDP.

In 1987, the nominal GDP of both nations was about identical, in 1990 China was marginally ahead of India in PPP terms, and as of 2021, China's GDP is 5.46 times that of India's. On an exchange rate basis, China passed the $1 trillion thresholds in 1998, while India did it 9 years later in 2007.

In my opinion, when it comes to handling an economic crisis, democracies outperform autocracies. In an autocracy, a crisis is a threat to the legitimacy of the current regime which leads to denial and dispersal of the issue, despite how it affects the economy, but due to the system of checks and balances, a democracy works hard and is answerable to its people.

It might be of interest to you how China has handled COVID-19 as well as it did, but substantiating my point with concrete proof, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea have been as effective as China in handling the crisis if not more. But what's overwhelming is that democratic countries like Australia, Austria, Greece, Portugal, and New Zealand have been rated the highest performers during the pandemic. Moreover, China's pandemic response measures came at a severely serious cost — its people's freedoms.

The question of whether democracies are more favorable to economic growth than autocracies is far from settled when people are increasingly wondering, especially in light of China's recent progress, if it is better to value freedom or national safety.

I believe that necessary for economic progress is economic freedom, and democracy is just as likely as any autocracy to restrict economic, entrepreneurial, and consumer freedom, but what stands as a definitive discriminating factor is the degree of freedom and the system of checks and balances allowing questioning policymakers. The non-intrusive role of a government keeping in mind the opinions of its people, and most importantly a visionary approach is what affects economic growth, irrespective of a Democracy or Autocracy.

To return to the China VS India contrast, it is evident that India has an advantage over dictatorial China for a democratic tread towards economic growth. In comparison to autocracies, democracies give greater stability and predictability in growth and other development results. Autocracies experience a wide range of economic growth, from brilliant to precipitous. The latter is something that very seldom occurs in democracies. From a development standpoint, each has its own set of advantages and disadvantages, with India obviously dominating in terms of political and social liberties.

More importantly, even from an economic development and sustainability point of view are core human values like freedom of thought, expression, faith, and livelihood where there is a fair system of arbitration, simply because that creates a cohesive nation able to settle internal differences — a prerequisite for growth. The future depends on which of the two is better to do, and in this arena, India has a huge advantage. However, if China has visionary leaders, and this is huge, I would give China the edge in terms of future economic development. This advantage is due in part to the immense desire by all strata of China's people to reclaim its former great country position: entrepreneurs, professionals, and laborers. On the other hand, a bad leader may come to power in China and wreak significant economic damage. Overall, I predict India's growth rate to be lower but more constant, which might be quite valuable.

References:

https://statisticstimes.com/economy/china-vs-india-economy.php#:~:text=But%20in%202019%2C%20China's%20gdp,is%202.38x%20of%20India.&text=Now%20in%202019%2C%20China%20is,145th%2C%20resp%2C%20in%20nominal

Cryptocurrency And The Future

Aditya Anand Jha
BA (Hons.) Economics

Cryptocurrency is a decentralized digital medium of exchange which uses the principles of cryptography to verify and record transactions. It is decentralized because it doesn't have the backing nor control of a central authority. So, unlike fiat currencies like the Dollar or Rupee, cryptocurrencies are immune to government manipulation, and respond only to supply and demand in the free market. What makes this decentralisation possible is the elephant in the room - the blockchain technology.

A blockchain is a digitally distributed immutable ledger or database that is shared among various computers or nodes in a network. The difference between a ockchain and a database here is that the data here is stored in interlinked transparent blocks forming a chain. But the thing to note here is that the data recorded cannot be altered. In a crude way, it is much like sharing a Google document which cannot be further edited.
The history of blockchain technology dates back to the 1990s when Stuart Haber and W. Scott Stornetta created a cryptographically secure chain of blocks where no one could tamper with the data. However, it was rudimentary in application. It was only in 2009 when a group of people under the pseudonym 'Satoshi Nakamoto' presented a white paper detailing the electronic peer-to-peer system as a substitute for the present financial system.

The timing could not have been more apt as it happened against the backdrop of the 2008 financial crisis. For the first time blockchain powered cryptocurrencies were introduced in the picture which could do away with all the inefficiencies and information withholding nature of the financial world.

To illustrate this, let us take an example. Imagine a bank vault containing a number of safe deposit boxes stacked together whose content is accessible only through a key to the owner and invisible to all others. What blockchain-powered cryptocurrencies do is take the same arrangement and emulate it in the digital space. But the ingenuity over here is that all the deposit blocks are completely transparent and their contents are visible to everyone in the chain network but accessible only to the one with the cryptographic security key. Moreover, the anonymity of the user is maintained as the wallet address is not linked to the user's identity. Numerous such arrangements come together to form our distributed ledger network.

Though cryptocurrencies were popular among geeks and tech enthusiasts, their popularity broke all thresholds only during the lockdown period. It's now being viewed as a very profitable investment and has eventually garnered the attention of business magnates and lawmakers as well. But what makes cryptocurrencies valuable is its scarcity and basic demand and supply. The supply of cryptocurrencies is capped and cannot exceed the limit.

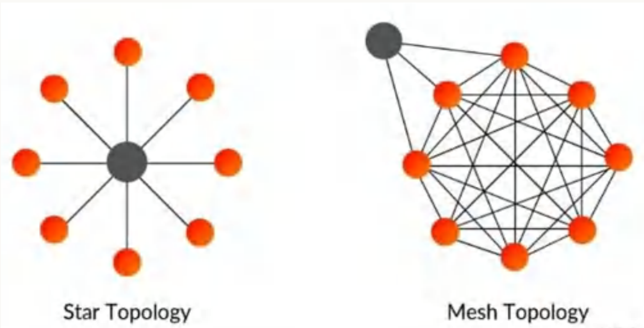
One can simply argue that several people became interested in buying cryptocurrencies as traditional assets started losing value due to the pandemic-induced Global Economic Crisis. But looking at the big picture, the rise of cryptocurrencies indicates a paradigm shift in the way transactions will take place in the future. We first started using materials with intrinsic value as a medium of exchange and then moved on to paper currency whose value would be backed by the government.

Now we use a centralized digital payments platform that allows us to transfer cash into digital wallets using online banking, debit cards and credit cards. The thing to note through this evolution is that the portability and recognizability of money have increased at an astounding rate. Cryptocurrencies are just the next step. The present digital payment system is clogged by regulations that decrease the speed of transactions as they are required to go through a number of middlemen for verification.

Even though the investments are coming in, people are still averse to the idea of cryptocurrencies. Much of it can be attributed to its newness. The situation was very amusingly described by talk-show host John Oliver when he said, "Cryptocurrency is everything you don't understand about money combined with everything you don't understand about computers". But certainly, the volatility of it cannot be ignored, which is influenced by supply and demand, investor and user sentiments, government intervention and hype. But just like all new concepts, it will take time to settle down.

The response of governments around the world has been wary. Some, like El Salvador, have granted it legal tender while most like the US, China and India are testing the waters. The main concern of the worried countries is that the decentralization of currency will curb the government's power over it and make accountability a norm. Others fear that an unregulated economy will facilitate nefarious activities without detection. Case in point, the detection of the Dark Net website Silk Road which sold illegal drugs to over a million customers using cryptocurrencies as payments. In order to avoid the above circumstances, Central Bank Digital Currency or CBDC has entered the scene.

It is the same as a fiat currency but in digital form backed by a central authority with distributed ledger technology. As there is a central authority, users would have to let go of some privacy. But it will help eliminate third party intrusion and prevent illicit activities since the ledger system will help the central authority in tracking the transaction. Also CBDC (Central Bank Digital Currency) will help integrate people with the financial system, as doing that will only require a digital wallet and an internet connection, all of which is manifested in mobile phones.



A good way to differentiate cryptocurrencies from CBDC is through their network topology. Topology is the way in which nodes or computers are arranged in a network. Cryptocurrencies have a mesh topology in which each node is interlinked, while CBDCs have a star topology in which all peripheral nodes are connected to a central computer. CBDC is being developed by a number of countries. China is testing digital Yuan or digital Renminbi, while Nigeria is coming up with eNaira. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced that RBI will soon roll out it's own CBDC.

As far as the future of cryptocurrency in India is concerned, a parliamentary bill is yet to see the light of day. But in the Union Budget of 2022, the Indian government has announced plans to impose a 30% tax on income gained from digital assets like cryptocurrencies and non-fungible tokens. It doesn't legalise the status but, for now, treats them at par with income generated by speculative investment and gambling.

A truly decentralized currency system may not be possible in the near future but blockchain is the future. It can be applied not only in finance but in healthcare, education and trade. But it will certainly bring with itself an unprecedented level of automation across various fields which will completely transform the landscape. Automation will lead to the redundancy of several jobs and the creation of new ones. Its effects will certainly outperform that of the Industrial Revolution's. But it will also make people in charge of their own money like never before

References:

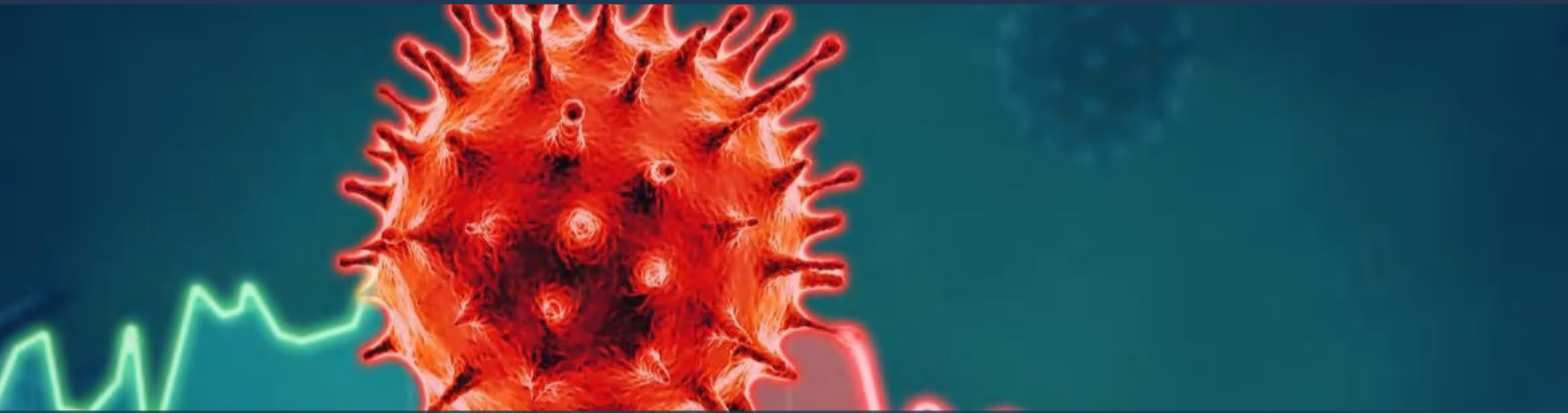
1.https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/

2. https://youtu.be/l5TqlnD1ZSI

3. https://youtu.be/UK6ngtZGftw

4.https://consensys.net/solutions/payments-and-money/cbdc/

5.https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-what-is-the-digital-rupee-announced-by-sitharaman-in-budget-7751109/



Covid Economics - Great Depression 2.0 In Making?

Reva Singh
BA (Hons.) Economics

The world came to a standstill because of an unprecedented crisis in early 2020. The Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on health were dire, but it is also interesting to learn about its connotations on economics too. The stock markets are more erratic than before, small businesses are being shut, the daily wage earners have next to no sources of livelihood left. The virus held the entire world in its death grip.

The three horsemen of this pandemic leading the financial crisis were — inflation, supply chain disruptions, and debt (both private and public). Let us examine them further.

I] Inflation

Inflation is an increase in the general price level of the economy, and as a result, a reduction in purchasing power. A direct consequence of inflation is a price hike. The main cause of inflation seen during this period is the reduction in spending. With nationwide lockdowns, the economy came to a halt. Services were shut and the only businesses that saw profit were those which had online setups, such as Amazon and Netflix.

The effects of inflation have not been uniform. The three major components of inflation were food, fuel, and core inflation (all prices except food and fuel).

- Food inflation fell significantly from above 5% at the start of the current financial year to 0.7% in September.
- During the same period, fuel inflation rose from 8% to 13.6%.
- Core inflation, which leaves out volatile items such as food and fuel, remained sticky near 6%.

Dharmakirti Joshi, Chief Economist at Crisil was quoted saying, "Not only did inflation in various components diverge, but its burden also varied by income group, primarily because the share of spending on each of these commodity groups differs across income classes." This means that even though prices inflated for everyone, the urban poor bore the maximum damage. This is because they spend more on items that got costlier, such as fuel, as compared to rural-dwellers, who spend more on necessities such as food.

Inflation remains an issue within the economy even now as we are way ahead on the path of recovery. With the coming of the Omicron variant of the virus, there are significant supply chain disruptions and bottlenecks.

II] Supply Chain Disruptions

Supply chain refers to the activities required by an organization to deliver goods or services to the consumer. With Covid restrictions, supply chains across the world took a huge blow. While this was the case with the agriculture and tertiary sector, the manufacturing sector was trying to stay afloat, combatting the lack of availability of raw materials.

The operational and financial consequences include:

- Demand drops and surges by segment
- Supply shortages
- Inventory placement challenges
- Reduced productivity

There is also a lack of information regarding what to base the business models on since the crisis is of a very volatile nature. The only choice left with the planners are to base the activities on speculation, which is not a very reliable source. Hence, the credibility of multinational companies comes into question because of their failures to meet contractual obligations, due to idle/depleting stocks. Most of the hard-hit areas are global supply chain leaders. For example, China controls 1/3rd of the supply of both finished and unfinished commodities. As lockdowns forced production to stop, there was a sharp decline in the supply of goods followed by a decline in sales and revenue which ultimately resulted in worldwide lay-offs.

The infamous Suez Canal disruption by the Egyptian 'Evergreen' was a classic example of supply-chain disruption around the world, as netizens dove into meme-making!

III] Debt

The pandemic and its aftermath increased Global Debt to $290.6 trillion in 2020, inclusive of government as well as non-financial corporate debt. This is estimated to rise further in 2021. The persistent decline in productivity poses a challenge to the sustainability of debt, with Africa and the Caribbean being the worst-hit markets. While advanced economies have more fiscal space, they are challenged by demographic disparity. As far as recovery is concerned, it is estimated that it will be led by the USA. Meanwhile, the service-oriented economies of Europe will lag behind. This is because the American banks, despite a rise in non-performing loans, entered the pandemic with a higher capitalization ratio.

The debt can be divided into two classes — government debt and private, or household debt.

- Even though government debt was already not in a good situation, the pandemic has set back progress on social goals such as low growth rates, low rates of investments, etc. Government debt surged to 105% of the GDP in the fourth quarter of 2020 (Q4-2020) from 88% before the pandemic: its highest level since the aftermath of World War II! Household debt, on the other hand, rose to 66% of GDP from 61% at the end of 2019, partly reflecting loan moratoriums and the resilience of residential real estate markets through the pandemic.

To improve the conditions, governments have adopted monetary policies that have reduced the cost of borrowing to sustain debt. However, there remains a high degree of risk due to debt accumulation. Global leaders and policymakers need to act with urgency to curb this record-high debt. There is a need for policies that sustain debt coupled with policies that aim to resolve it in case it becomes unsustainable.

Course of Action

According to the top economists, the global economy has entered into a recession worse than that at the time of World War II. Consumer spending has reached an all-time low. While the poor have been hit the hardest, the rich have found a way to make profits. There is utter chaos in the stock markets.

While the road to recovery has begun in some countries with restrictions being taken off, the path for recourse is still unclear. The U.S. administration and a few bullish financial forecasters can be found arguing that we will end up with a strong, V-shaped rebound, with economic activity surging right back to where it was in no time. Others are betting on a longer, slower, U-shaped turnaround, with the pain extending for a year or three. Still, others are sketching out a kind of flaccid checkmark, its long tail sagging torpidly into the future.

One thing is certain though — reopening the economy is the only way to provide relief to all!

References:

1. https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20210629-the-great-resignation-how-employers-drove-workers-to-quit.
2. https://hbr.org/2021/09/who-is-driving-the-great-resignation.
3. https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.businessinsider.in/careers/news/heres-everything-we-know-about-the-great-resignation-whos-quitting-and-why/amp_articleshow/86429516.cms.

In Defence of Capitalism

Arsha T.S.
BA (Hons.) Economics

It's easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism.

The origins of Capitalism have been debated, with the traditional account stating capitalism originated in trade. This account tends to view capitalism as a continuation of trade after people were freed from the constraints of feudalism. Modern capitalism fully emerged between the 16th and 18th centuries, with the establishment of mercantilism.

When a new group of economic theorists, led by Adam Smith questioned the fundamental mercantilist doctrines, the system declined and eventually gave rise to industrial capitalism. This finally marked global domination of the capitalist mode of production resulting from the Industrial Revolution. The world since has been a spectator of the spontaneous evolution of a deeply rooted system of capitalism, which has been widely denounced from time and time again. Despite the culture, how former chief economic advisor Arvind Subramanian terms it as "stigmatized capitalism", there are reasons why the world's advanced economies are capitalistic at their core.

The experimental nature of capitalism is precisely why it works.

Critics of capitalism may point out that it creates an uncertain future. However, nobody knows where market dynamics will lead us. If the economy grows, we can predict with confidence that the future will be better than the present. Capitalism has kept this promise quite well over the broad span of history.

Since the Industrial Revolution, capitalism has fueled many more revolutions in various sectors. Over the last two centuries, it has lifted many out of poverty, significantly raised the standards of living, and resulted in innovations that have reshaped lives.

In the field of medical science, capitalism has enabled the generation of funds and fostered scrutiny of medical ideas which has led to successful research. The innovative nature of capitalism and the wealth it generated has been able to contribute to implementing these researches to reduce child mortality rates and increase the average life expectancy.

Other areas of living standards have improved immensely such as education, skills, information, and social mobility. The most significant contribution of capitalism, however, as a form of trade has been the immense reduction in absolute poverty.

In recent decades, workers in advanced economies are many multiples wealthier. There has been an exponential rise in GDP per head as countries industrialized and traded. With rises in global wealth, the world witnessed a dramatic reduction of absolute poverty. According to research, since 1800 the average world citizen today is 120 times better off than their 1800 counterpart. This has only been possible due to the technology-driven innovation of entrepreneurial capitalism.

With the rise of capitalism, there has also been a massive expansion of the financial sector. The economic freedom it brought about created incentives for entrepreneurs to reallocate resources from unprofitable channels into areas of higher demand, becoming a tool for economic growth. The ideals of free market and globalization, central to capitalism, created opportunities and broke down barriers. This has led to encouraging efficient ways of production and forming an ever-growing network of exchange and collaboration. Even countries under democracy have grown economically with the help of corporate capitalism. It has helped in modernizing economies and enabling essential transitions which are inevitable with growth.

Capitalism, as it turns out, is just like any idea: it's as uplifting as it is corruptible.

Just like any idea or system, capitalism has its flaws. Capitalism can be considered intrinsically futuristic- to new inventions, broader horizons, and greater abundance. The challenge to the system would be when these promises are questioned.

The three challenges to the capitalist promise of better tomorrow are:

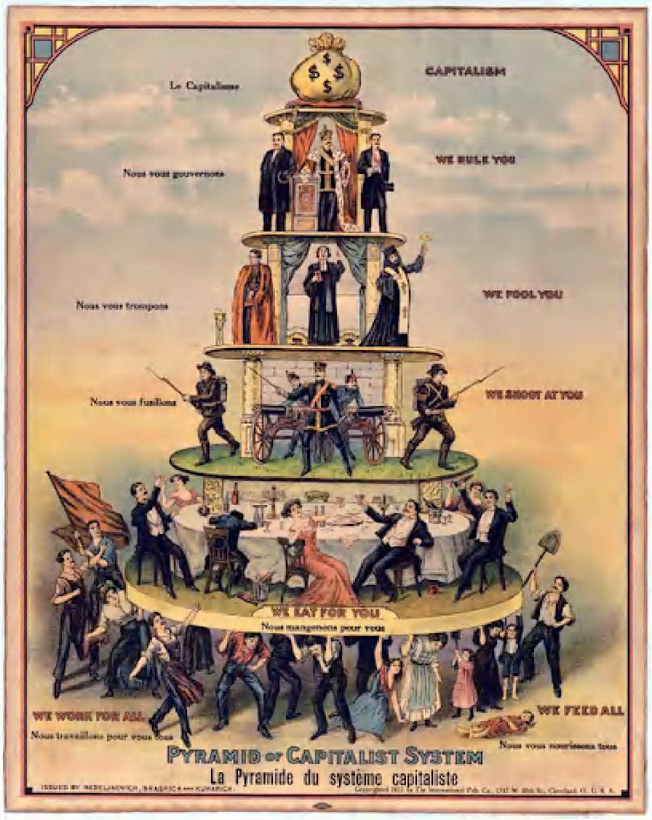
1. The unreliability of growth: Driven by profit expectations, capitalist growth fluctuates with changes in opportunities for capital accumulation. Keynes had pointed out that the basic problem of capitalism is not its vulnerability to periodic saturation of investment but rather its likely failure to recover from them. Therefore, there persists the issue of prolonged periods of mass unemployment and decline in living standards after steep market fluctuations.

2. The quality of growth: Production processes generate externalities that can be either good or bad. With growing concern regarding climate change, the fingers are pointed at capitalism for being blind to the social and ecological harm caused due to overriding obedience to profit.

3. Equity: Another concern regarding capitalist growth is the fairness with which the expanding wealth is distributed and recurrent hardships are shared. The criticism focuses on disparities in income among layers of the population. A well-known and widely reproduced illustration, Pyramid of Capitalist System, depicts the same.

Failure to overcome these challenges had led to rethinking the future of capitalism. Critics argue that capitalism needs to be reformed as the system has turned rigged. The American economist, Joseph Stiglitz in an interview expressed his thoughts on what he called 'progressive capitalism', a new balance between the market, the state, and civil society.

In the new system, creative entrepreneurship would



improve the market, while capital itself would be accountable and follow the law in both letter and spirit. This would ensure that globalization works for ordinary citizens and not just corporations.

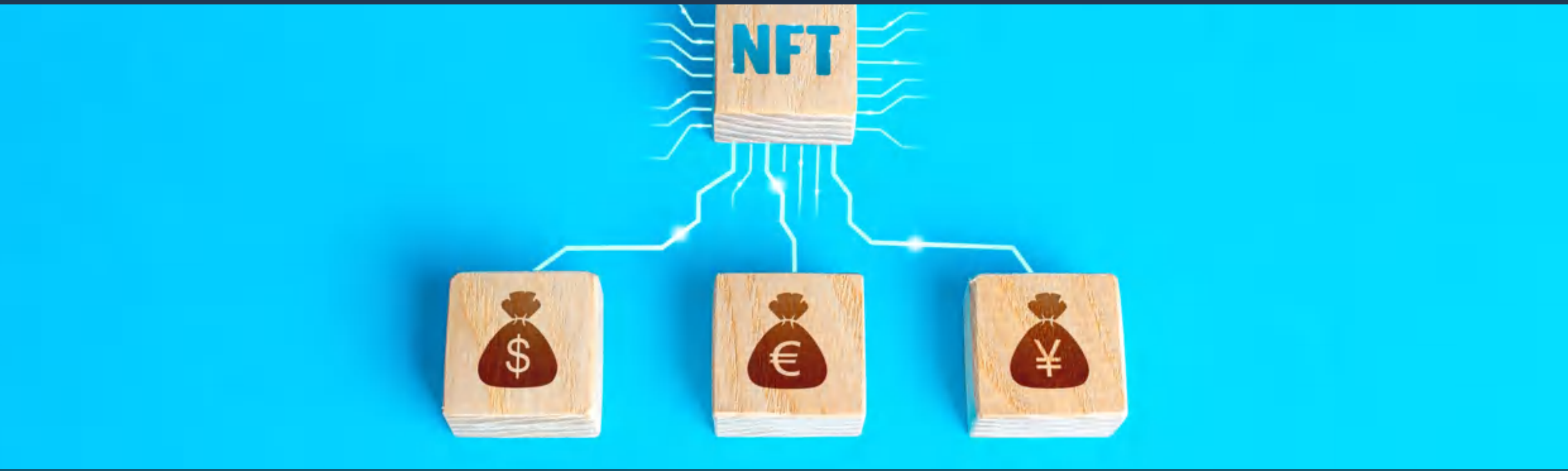
Some reforms are already in place. As the world becomes more sensitive to climate change there are many businesses embracing sustainability. With shifting demands to more sustainable products and concerns of the new generation of workforce, the businesses are investing in tackling the crisis.

"The past is another country" is the opening of LP Hartley's 1953 novel The Go-Between. Hartley's opinion is deeply modern and many would now agree as uncontroversial. Once the capitalist engine had revved up, the world has never looked back. A vibrant corporate capitalist base has led to numerous opportunities for the world economy. Even though capitalism may not seem like a perfect system, it has played an essential role in facilitating transitions.

References:

1. https://www.economist.com/open-future/2019/07/08/if-capitalism-is-broken-maybe-its-fixable

2.https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_capitalism



Owning A Piece of History In The Digital World

Anjali Rao
BA (Hons.) Economics

What is the hype about people buying and selling digital art in billions? Let's find out.

NFT stands for Non-Fungible Token. They were introduced in 2014, but it wasn't until 2021 that they became wildly popular. Seattle entrepreneurs Jennifer Wong and Peter Hamilton were the first ones to get inspired and create a digital community like this.

On December 4, 2012, a paper was delivered by Meni Rosenfeld that presented the idea of Colored Coins. Colored Coins depict a class of techniques for addressing and overseeing genuine resources on top of the Bitcoin blockchain and can be utilized to demonstrate responsibility for resources. They are fundamentally Bitcoins, but with an imprint on them, that decides their utilization.

Between 2014-2016 there was a significant development and platforms were built for Bitcoin. Then Ethereum's reign started and took over NFTs but most of the people didn't like the idea of filling precious block space with tokens that presented the ownership of images. The blockchain that supports the smart contracts, the token standard is often included to tell people how to issue and deploy tokens.

NFTs give ownership rights, earlier there was no way to distinguish between owners of any digital artwork. But NFTs have been given that opportunity to represent ownership rights and this helps markets in transactions. This is a new type of transaction. Each NFT is unique and it's easy to trace who owns what NFT. They're easy to transfer from one person to another, just like a bank transferring money.

Putting artworks on a blockchain is listing them in an auction catalog. However, replicas could be made and it was difficult to distinguish between them.

They couldn't be stored as actual artwork in a blockchain because it was too small to hold it. People mention the links or web addresses. It means when a person buys an NFT, they're not buying the artwork but the link to it. It's hard to figure out if this will work or fail. NFTs still face some problems. For instance, they depend on companies for their businesses to verify their artworks. The artworks can vanish if their domains are not renewed. Platforms nowadays aren't innovative and they are just posting pictures created by the media. They're similar to any other website selling posters.

In recent times the blockchains are deteriorating and people need some place else to store their assets. Global tycoons are getting profited by this as they're storing their money in places they will not see. When the price will rise, people will buy and the value will appreciate like bitcoin, dogecoin and ethereum. Commoners are not relying on this and they're not choosing a blockchain based technology. People who invest in cryptocurrencies and have made bets can't cash in their chips.

They can't buy real estate with it. So only the rich seem to be buying artwork with it. NFTs are environmentally irresponsible and each transaction needs more and more computing. More resources get consumed, though many people are coming up with 'Green NFTs'. NFTs are somewhat responsible for millions of tons of carbon dioxide emissions generated by cryptocurrencies used to buy and sell them.

NFTs are a major economic innovation as they allow people to show their creative sides and earn money. Sales are increasing, $13.7 million in the first half of 2020 and $2.5 billion in the second half. Some people believe if the profits keep increasing the real estate might get turned into NFTs in future. Over the last year, items that turned into nfts have increased and that might have given this a possibility.

Crypto is moving into the mainstream and digital currencies have the potential for world changing technology, and help create more economies. Big companies are trying to figure out the role of crypto currency in their business.

Mostly, we hear big brands like Tesla, Starbucks talking about it and getting benefited. The potential of NFTs keep increasing and people are buying lands virtually benefiting the future generation. NFTs do sell limited edition products too, for example, Nike.

It's already expanding their business and trying to figure out ways for consumers. The $85 billion video game industry too is experimenting with it and gamers are already accustomed to caring about digital goods.

Critics have pointed out that this is increasing online crime. Cryptocurrencies had been used in 2021 for ransom payments. Digital currencies have features which attract criminals.

Once the payment is made, it is difficult to track and unwind them. Spotify and Netflix provide unlimited digital content for a subscription fee, NFTs are built that can provide physical content too.

These platforms have to verify their sources and then behave like an auction. Markets available for NFTs are streamlined and augmented. Streamlined marketplaces provide more limited services, whereas augmented gives a full-time service experience. Companies with intellectual property and target audiences may go with augmented markets. NFTs have given scope for jobs and beginners are finding it.

Some others are of the opinion that NFTs could be something more to help us reflect our identity and how we portray it. This can give us security, power, and privacy if we allow it

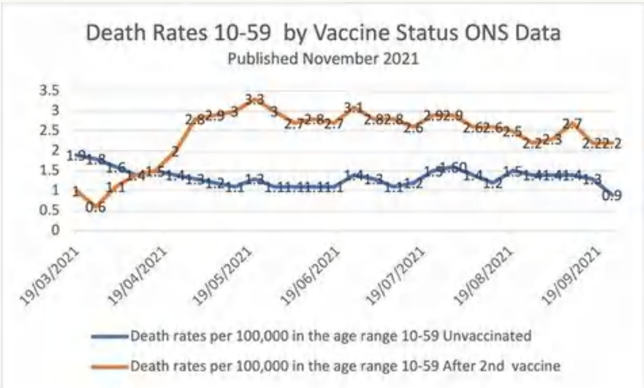
India is being left out of this opportunity as people are having a hard time accepting NFTs and cryptocurrencies. It depends on us if we want to seize this and make something out of it. If India makes appropriate changes, NFT could take hold in India. It would be in accordance with the worldwide local area in interfacing and creating guidelines around this innovation. If not, it would simply be an entryway banged even with potential.

References:

1. https://www.investopedia.com/non-fungible-tokens-nft-5115211
2. https://www.theverge.com/22310188/nft-explainer-what-is-blockchain-crypto-art-faq
3. https://hbr.org/2021/11/how-nfts-create-value
4. https://www.androidauthority.com/non-fungible-tokens-nft-3061350/

Lies, Damned Lies, And Statistics

Harshita Rao
BA (Hons.) Economics



If we take a look at the recent data of ONS (Office For National Statistics) in England, it shows that between the ages of 10-59, more vaccinated people died than the unvaccinated ones. These observations are kind of counter-intuitive, since multiple studies have shown that taking vaccines reduces death risks up to 90%. Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been shown to be highly effective against Covid, including the delta variant. So what are the odds of the studies being wrongly presented or the data being tampered with?

What is happening is a fascinating but rather misleading phenomena. It is explained in statistics, as the 'Simpson's Paradox'. This paradox occurs when a trend appears in separate groups but then disappears or reverses when you combine the groups. In our case, the confounding factors of age and vaccine uptake makes the above chart useless. But before explaining that, let's take an easy example to understand this paradox better.

In figure 1, the data shows the calculated mean of two different groups — A and B. Initially, Mean A > Mean B. When we take smaller sub-groups from the same data, both show Mean A < Mean B. This is Simpson's Paradox. Same data, but different results.

Group B: 1 2 2 3 5 $\bar{x}_B = 2.6$

Aggregated data: $\bar{x}_A > \bar{x}_B$

	Subgroup 1	Subgroup 2
Group A:	1 2	3 4 4
Group B:	1 2 2	3 5

Subgroup 1: $\bar{x}_A = (1+2)/2 = 1.5$

$\bar{x}_B = (1+2+2)/3 = 1.67$

Subgroup 2: $\bar{x}_A = (3+4+4)/3 = 3.67$

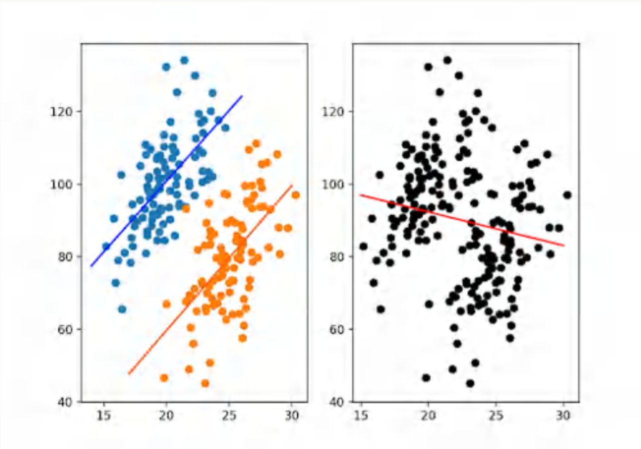
$\bar{x}_B = (3+5)/2 = 4.0$

Subgroup 1 data: $\bar{x}_A < \bar{x}_B$

Let's take one graphical example. In the previous plot, we observe a positive correlation on the left-hand side in both the groups but in the graph on the right-hand side, all of the data is grouped together and we observe the opposite, a negative correlation.

Now, back to our initial problem. The issue lies with the size of the age band, 10-59 years is an exceptionally wide scope of ages. We all know that age is the greatest factor of death for many reasons. A 59 year-old is undeniably bound to kick the bucket in a given timeframe than a 10 year-old. At the time this information was being circulated, a large portion of all unvaccinated people were younger than 25, while that of the vaccinated ones were beyond 40. It's hence, not surprising that the vaccinated individuals were more likely to die — not on the grounds that vaccines are unsafe, but since these people are much older, which was shown when the other age groups, introduced in the ONS information (60-69, 70-79 and 80+) were all much smaller, and all showed a huge decrease in mortality for the vaccinated.

This is just an example of how data can play tricks on us. A reminder that you should not just believe raw numbers you read online and take them at face value with zero context.
Since, this phenomenon is not widely understood, in many cases such data is being used to mislead people and spread agendas, which are delusional. Unverified studies, unproven claims and out-of-context data are regularly shared on websites and social media across the globe — fuelling dangerous myths about the virus and the vaccines. A common concern about the Covid vaccines is that they can cause harm, or even death, to those who get them.



The initial graph was widely circulated by the Anti-Vaxx groups on social media, mentioning that vaccines don't work without realizing what was actually happening with that data. In the wrong hands, Simpson's paradox can be used to manipulate and misinterpret data in favor of the objectives of the particular group. The opposition could very well show such graphs against the policies of the government and turn the citizens in their favor.

In France, for example, some people point to official figures that say there are more Covid cases in vaccinated people than in unvaccinated people. But since such a large portion of France's population is vaccinated — more than 75 percent — it is not surprising that Covid cases are occurring among the vaccinated. Covid vaccines are known to help prevent severe illness and death — but they do not necessarily prevent the virus from spreading.

This means that cases still occur among the vaccinated, and there will be more cases among the vaccinated if a greater number of people are vaccinated.

Even the VAERS data was being used by French politician Martine Wonner to claim 54 American children had died as a result of Covid vaccine. Wonner used the data to argue that French children should not be vaccinated. But Medical bodies across the world have argued that rare side effects can occur as a result of some of the vaccines — blood clots or myocarditis- but the benefits of the vaccine outweighs these.

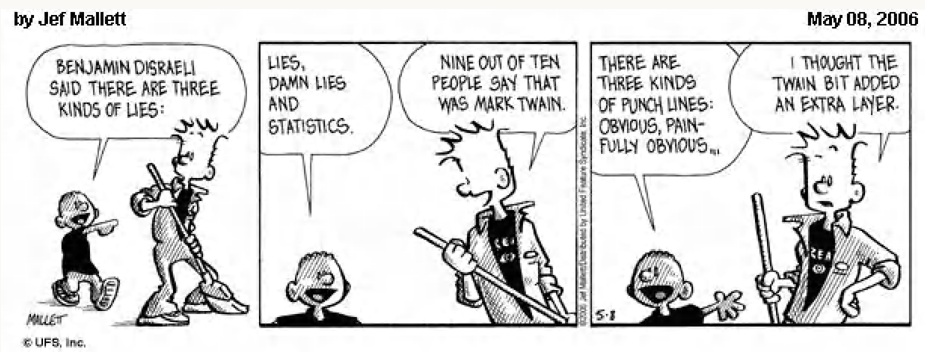
Issues such as Simpson's paradox appear with certain frequency in real-life problems and highlight the dangers of working with proportions, in particular among groups of very different sizes, or with sub-groups that contain different properties. This paradox illustrates the pitfalls of thinking about things along too few dimensions, which usually happens when we are seeing simple data on charts. The data could be very well revelatory but interpreting and understanding it is a bit difficult if you don't know the whole context.

The moral of this story is that it's very easy to misrepresent perfectly legitimate data in order to argue the opposite of what the data is actually telling us. Because Statistics informs so many big decisions, when it comes to analysis, we need to tread carefully. After all, things might not always be what they seem at first glance!

As Mark Twain said, 'There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics.'
Or did he?

References:

1. https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3ct2dkz
2. https://flowingdata.com/2021/11/30/simpsons-paradox-in-vaccination-data/
3. https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/stor-i-student-sites/robyn-goldsmith/2021/04/02/being-careful-with-covid-19-statistics-simpsons-paradox/



Population Control Policies: A Need To Rethink Our Concerns

Abhinav Mankotia
BA (Hons.) Economics

With over 1.4 billion eggs in the metaphorical basket, India will soon surpass China to become the most populous country on Earth. But when a country is adding an Australia worth of people every year, questions often arise regarding the sustainability of this growth. Enter the concept of Population Control Laws. The idea of population control has risen in the media eye from time to time, as it has recently with Assam imposing a population regulation bill and UP too flirting with the idea. But where does the concept of Population Control stem from, is it effective, and do we even need it? Let's dive deep.

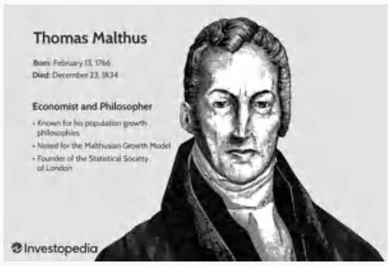
ORIGINS

To begin with our journey, we travel all the way back to 18th century Victorian Britain. Britain was undergoing the very first Industrial Revolution. The population more than doubled during the period due to increased food production, advances in medicine, better sanitation, and an increased birth rate. During this time of unprecedented growth of population, in 1798, an English economist Thomas Robert Malthus published a book called "An Essay on the Principle of Population." In it, Malthus famously theorized that populations would continue ever-expanding beyond subsistence until growth is stopped or reversed by disease, famine, war, or abstinence.

Malthus examined the relationship between population growth and resources. He then proposed the Malthusian theory of population where he said that the population grows exponentially and the food supply grows arithmetically and that a balance between the two can be established through positive and preventive checks. The theory laid out by him was essentially where the idea of controlling a population to manage limited resources was born, and still shapes discussions regarding population control to this day.

FIRST ATTEMPT AT POPULATION CONTROL POLICY

The very first attempt to influence social policy to reflect this theory of overpopulation was made by Malthus himself in his criticism of the "Poor Laws". He discovered through his studies that poorer families tended to have more children. This was due to an improvement in their economic condition, as after the Industrial Revolution. This, in essence, birthed a cycle of poverty where every marginal success in improving living conditions was mitigated by the increase in offspring. The solution, Malthus stated, was to encourage the poor to marry later and have fewer children, if any at all, as they would be sentencing more people to live in poverty and starvation.



The way to encourage the poor to adopt this solution would be to eliminate all types of aid. Welfare, according to Malthus, encouraged the poor to marry earlier even when they could not support a family. England's Poor Laws, which propped up people who suffered from bad harvests, was creating the very poverty it hoped to eliminate.

However, the fundamental criticism of Malthus was his failure to appreciate the ongoing British agricultural revolution, which eventually caused food production to meet or exceed population growth and made prosperity possible for a larger number of people. Malthus also failed to anticipate the widespread use of contraceptives, which brought about a decline in the fertility rate.

THE CHINESE CONNECTION

A century later and halfway across the world, history was repeating itself in China. Up and coming Rocket theorist Song Jian had just stumbled upon the works of researchers associated with the Circle of Rome in a 1978 congress in Helsinki, who were themselves influenced by the work of Malthus. He deduced that his discipline, optimal control theory, could be applied in an innovative way to predicting and subsequently controlling population growth. This inspired Song to create a model that would forever change the demographics of the world's most populous country. He asserted that the optimal population of China would be around 600-700 Million. Given a population of almost a billion in 1979, Chinese women needed not to have more than one child throughout their lives to come back by 2080 to a population figure that was deemed reasonable.

Then, Song managed to use his eloquence, his connections, and his power of persuasion to bring the results of his works to the centers of power. Song succeeded in securing acceptance of the idea that the **One-Child Policy** was not the best, but the only solution for China.

ONE-CHILD POLICY

On September 25, 1980, a public letter published by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party to the party membership called upon all to adhere to the One-Child Policy, and that date has often been cited as the policy's "official" start date.

On September 25, 1980, a public letter published by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party to the party membership called upon all to adhere to the One-Child Policy, and that date has often been cited as the policy's "official" start date.

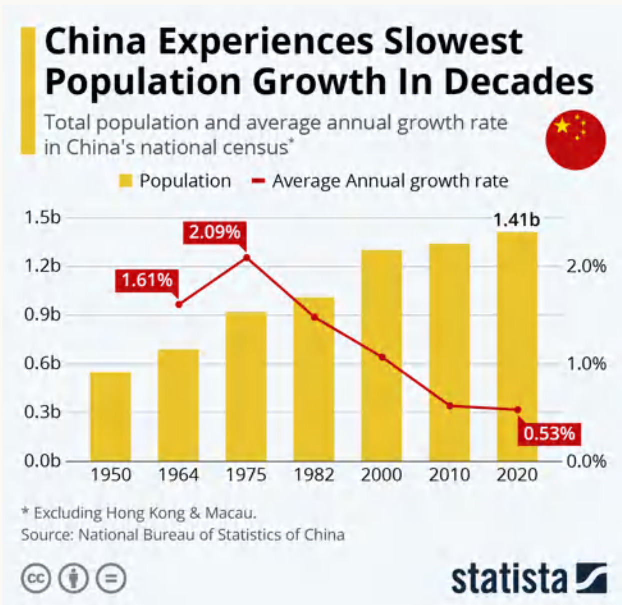
The program was intended to be applied nationally, although exceptions were made. Rural families were already allowed two children if the first was a girl, while ethnic minorities were allowed an extra offspring.

Urban couples were also allowed to have a second child if the parents were both single children and as were those whose firstborn was handicapped. The implementation bore greater fruits in the cities where families were already nuclear in size and were willing to comply with the party's initiative. On the other hand, there was a less effective implementation in the rural countryside where it was the norm to have big agrarian families.

Methods of enforcement were multifold. This included improving the accessibility of various contraceptive methods to make them widely available. Financial incentives were offered and preferential employment opportunities were given to those who complied, whereas sanctions (economic or otherwise) were imposed against those who violated the policy, and, at times (notably the early 1980s), invoking invasive measures such as forced abortions and sterilizations (the latter primarily of women).

UNFORESEEN CONSEQUENCES

The consequences of the One-Child Policy were more far-reaching than Song's equation could've ever predicted. Yes, it did succeed in achieving its main



the goal of reducing the population by preventing an estimated 400 Million births, but the demographic changes its implementation brought forth created new challenges in its stead.

Most notably, the country's overall sex ratio became skewed toward males—roughly between 3 and 4 percent more males than females. Traditionally, male children (especially firstborn) have been preferred—particularly in rural areas—as sons inherit the family name and property and are responsible for the care of elderly parents.

Hence, having a girl became highly undesirable, resulting in a rise in abortions of female fetuses, abandonment, and even infanticide of baby girls. Over time, the gap widened between the number of males and females and, as those children came of age, it has created a situation in which there are more than 35 million men with no women to marry. This leads to a loss of productivity in women-centric industries as women are expected to be willing to marry.

Another consequence was instances of families having more than one child and hiding the subsequent children from authorities. Those children, most of whom were undocumented, faced hardships availing of social services such as education and employment schemes.

This led to the deadweight loss of human capital as these people were essentially barred from contributing to the economy. Although the number of such children is not known, estimates have ranged from the hundreds of thousands to several million.

Thirdly, and perhaps the longest-lasting consequence of the policy was a growing proportion of elderly people, the result of the concurrent drop in children born and rise in longevity since 1980. This became a concern, as the great majority of growing senior citizens in China had relied on their children for support after they retired, and there were fewer and fewer children to support them. A growing dependent class and a shrinking youth workforce are projected to put a strain on the Chinese Economy.

UNTURNING A LOOSE TAP

In late 2015 Chinese officials announced that the program was ending. Beginning in early 2016, all families would be allowed to have two children, but that change did not lead to a sustained increase in birth rates. Couples hesitated to have a second child for reasons such as financial feasibility, the lack of available childcare for working mothers, and worries about how having another child would affect their careers. Decades of messaging and policies devoted to limiting family size to just one child had succeeded in reinforcing in the public eye how having one child is the ideal. With data from the 2020 census highlighting the looming demographic and economic crisis fueled by low birth rates, an aging population, and a shrinking workforce, in May 2021 the Chinese government announced that all married couples would be allowed to have as many as three children; this was formally passed into law in August 2021.

RUNNING OUT OF PEOPLE

At last, we arrive in the present, to a country not very far, Japan. Japan, unlike India, continues the trend previously established by China—Japan's population is aging and shrinking.

The population of Japan peaked in 2008 at 128 million. With the fertility rate falling below 1.5 at the beginning of the 1990s and falling as low as 1.29 in 2004, the population is shrinking rapidly. Japan already has a million fewer people than in 2008. Perhaps an even bigger problem is that the proportion of elderly Japanese is increasing rapidly. One-third of the population is above 60 years old and 12.5 percent are above 75.

The working-age population peaked in 1997 and by one measure is already 9.7 million people fewer than it was then. These facts are well established but the consequences are yet to be fully digested.

With its population shrinking and aging, Japan will need productivity growth to maintain living standards. Each worker has to become more productive as the shrinking labor force has to support a larger proportion of the population. For every 5 workers in Japan, there are 2 elderly people beyond retirement age. Japan is expected to spend 28% of its National Income on sustaining them through Healthcare and Welfare. By 2060, there will be 4 elderly people for every 5 workers.

As Japan's elderly population increases, more resources are required to support them, but since the working population is decreasing the base for tax revenue and income generation will keep on reducing as costs rise. This trend can already be observed in Japan borrowing debt to fuel its increasing gap in its public expenditure and income. With a foreign debt of 13 Trillion USD, which is essentially 266% of its GDP, Japan is by far the most indebted developed country in the world. The best short-term solution to this problem is if Japan opens up further to foreign capital, technology from Western countries, and workers from countries like India. But the essential problem will remain till the people of Japan increase their FTRs.

INDIA AND THE FUTURE

We have learned from the example of Victorian Britain that population growth can be sustainable with development in technologies. We have learned from Communist China, how messing with the natural course of maturing in a country's demographic can lead to unforeseen consequences. Lastly, we have learned from Japan what letting a population shrink can do by increasing the load on the workforce and creating a debt-dependent economy.

Looking at the population pyramid for India we can understand how the population growth is natural for India. The reason India possesses such a vastly greater number of people in the historic and geographic contexts. India has historically, along with China, be the global population center as it lies upon one of the most fertile lands in the world, having a cultivable area at 52% of the total landmass, the highest in the world. India hence in the future must adopt a pragmatic approach to its growing population. We must be patient enough to let the population grow and shrink naturally, yet we must also ensure a stable population but not allow it to shrink too much and stabilize it at the Replacement Rate of 2.1 Births per Woman.

INDIA AND THE FUTURE

There are signs that India is certainly on the right path with Total Fertility Rates dropping to 2.0 in the latest National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21) and projections showing population peaking in 2050 India certainly has a long and cautious road ahead.

References:

1. https://www.scmp.com/economy/china-economy/article/3135510/chinas-one-child-policy-what-was-it-and-what-impact-did-it

2. https://www.investopedia.com/terms/o/one-child-policy.asp

3. https://borgenproject.org/malthusianism-theories-poverty-aid/#:~:text=However%2C%20his%20work%20shaped%20England's,suffer%20from%20starvation%20and%20pover

4.https://www.britannica.com/biography/Thomas-Malthus

CASINO ECONOMICS

Ishita Garg
BA (Hons.) Economics

Consider — according to conventional economic theory, casinos shouldn't be able to exist. Then, which economics applies to these casinos? Let's find out!
Casino Economics is the study of casinos and gaming in which players or gamblers place huge bets on games of chance taking a big risk in expectation of high returns. Casinos are determined to make profits like any other business.

Let's take an example of a roulette game played in casinos to prove the widespread recognition that "the house always wins". An American Roulette Table displays 38 numbers (0, 00, 1 to 36). 5.26% is the house edge, or the average gross profit that the casino expects to make from each game for such a roulette wheel. House edge is calculated in this way:

HOUSE EDGE = (Odds against Success – House Odds) x Probability of Success

Odds against Success = Ways to Lose / Ways to Win = 37/1

Probability of Success = Ways to Win / Ways to Win + Ways to Lose = 1/(1+37) = 1/38

House odds = Payout for a bet on single no. = 35/1
House Percentage = House Edge x 100 = (37/1-35/1) x 1/38 x 100 = 5.26%

This means for every $1 million that is wagered, the house manages to earn a profit of 50,000 and only 950,000 is returned to the bettors. This shows how all casino games are designed to provide the house with a built-in edge.

A consumer who is considered to be rational in conventional economics would never take that deal where he pays more and gets back less. Still, many intelligent people head to casinos everyday. Why?

The Economics Behind Casinos

For this, consider the following survey undertaken by the Wendover Production, where people were given two options to choose from.

(Table on next page)

In the first case, the two options when evaluated are of the same worth. On taking 80% gamble infinite times, an average of $5 is received each time. There should be no preference here, but people still preferred having a certain $5 over the 80% chance of winning $6.25. This shows that the negative effect of losing $5 is more powerful than the positive effect of winning the same amount. For the same reason people shouldn't be gambling.

Notice that there is a change in people's preferences in the third case where the odds are manipulated, however, the second option is worth the same as the first one i.e. $5. People here preferred gambling (2nd option) over receiving a certain gain.

This is exactly how casino economics works. People like to take low probability risks for colossal gains against a sure gain. Therefore, the negative effect of losing a certain amount is less than the positive effect of winning a large amount at high risk. They would accept risk over sure money even when the odds are not in their favour. They get lured into the opportunity to get their income multiplied by a factor of thousands.

CASES	1st option	2nd option	% of people going with 2nd option or choosing gambling
Case 1	100% chance of receiving $5	80% chance of receiving $6.25	23.20%
Case 2	100% chance of receiving $5	25% chance of receiving $20.	50.30%
Case 3	100% chance of receiving $5	0.5% chance of receiving $1,000	64%

Why do people get addicted to gambling and can't stop the gambling expenditure even after incessant occurrences of losses?

One of the significant explanations given by behavioral economics is through 'heuristics' and 'biases'. Heuristics are the mental shortcuts that people take to solve problems quickly and efficiently ignoring the cost-benefit analysis.

Heuristics can ease the process but can also lead to errors that are called biases. These biases stemming from heuristics overpowers the gamblers which are exploited by the casinos. Some evident heuristics are as follows:

1. Gambler's fallacy -

After getting the same outcome in sequence, the gambler automatically predicts a negative correlation. For instance, after getting heads in a sequence for four to five times when a coin is flipped, he will believe that the coin will land on the tail side next time.

2. Hot hand fallacy -

Assuming a positive autocorrelation as a result of wins or losses in sequence. For example- after getting 3 heads continuously, assuming the next toss will also result in heads.

In both the heuristics, there is a flawed correlation set between the independent outcomes. Loss chasing is one of the outcomes of these biased assumptions wherein people believe that after losing the game for a long time, a win is due.

3. Illusion of control -

Due to overconfidence and optimism, the gambler feels that he has complete control on the outcome as he has gained the skills for the game.
These are just a few of them. These biases get a strong hold over gamblers' brains, giving them a false winning sensation which leads to long losing streaks.

Conclusion

Casino Economics theory deviates from the traditional economics theory as here people instead of making rational decisions based on the complete information available to derive maximum utility, go against their long-term interest to incur losses.

Policymakers must keep in mind this social cost of pathological gambling as the debate on legalizing the casino gambling takes place in the wake of reducing the fiscal pressure through this possible source of additional revenue.

This fascinating economics behind casinos can never be a good deal for bettors in casinos. However, it can definitely prove to be of good use if applied correctly. Prize-linked savings account (PLSA) is one such concept innovated by economists. PLSA is a savings account where interest pay-off on the deposits in banks is determined by lottery.

Rather than allocating a fixed interest to each account holder based on their deposits, banks pool the interests from all accounts and tickets are distributed to the account holders in proportion to their savings. Then the winners of the lottery are awarded with the pooled interests. This is a brilliant way to incentivize personal savings.

The interest offered by the banks is generally low as compared to the inflation rate because of which people aren't attracted towards it. Therefore, this manipulated approach where enormous interests are offered to the public has proved to be successful. Thus, this is a 'no-loss lottery' (as deposits are never lost) for gamblers!

References:

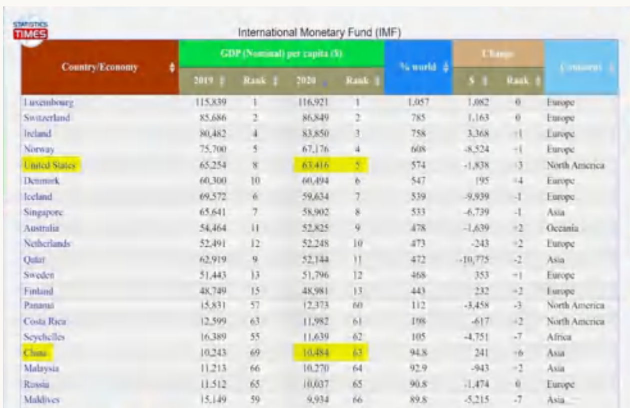
1. https://twitter.com/wendoverpro/status/1054533498722111488
2. https://youtu.be/7cjIWMUgPtY
3. Behavioral Economics And Gambling: A New Paradigm For Approaching Harm-Minimization By Sally M. Gainsbury, Juliette Tobias-Webb And Robert Slonim

The Paradox of choice: chinese Economy

Nupur Mehra
BA (Hons.) Economics

China surpassed America to become the world's richest country, as its global wealth has tripled over the past two decades from $156 trillion to $514 trillion, exhibiting an exponential growth. In 2000, China's wealth was $7 trillion and today it has jumped to $120 trillion (17 times). During the same period, the total wealth of the USA has increased only twice, to $90 trillion.

What do we mean by the richest country? If you add up the wealth of every person in China, then it is the richest country in the world, but that is different from GDP. When we talk about GDP, we need to account for the population of the country. If we talk about GDP per capita, China doesn't stand anywhere near the top. Where it was ranked 64th in this parameter, the USA took 5th position. Even if we talk about the overall GDP, the USA is much ahead in terms of overall GDP at approximately $21 trillion. China comes at second place, at around $15 trillion.



STATISTICS TIMES

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Country/Economy	GDP (Nominal) per capita ($)				% world	Change		Continent
	2019	Rank	2020	Rank		$	Rank	
Luxembourg	115,839	1	116,921	1	1,057	1,082	0	Europe
Switzerland	85,686	2	86,849	2	785	1,163	0	Europe
Ireland	80,482	4	83,850	3	758	3,368	+1	Europe
Norway	75,700	5	67,176	4	608	-8,524	+1	Europe
United States	65,254	8	63,416	5	574	-1,838	+3	North America
Denmark	60,300	10	60,494	6	547	195	+4	Europe
Iceland	69,572	6	59,634	7	539	-9,939	-1	Europe
Singapore	65,641	7	58,902	8	533	-6,739	-1	Asia
Australia	54,464	11	52,825	9	478	-1,639	+2	Oceania
Netherlands	52,491	12	52,248	10	473	-243	+2	Europe
Qatar	62,919	9	52,144	11	472	-10,775	-2	Asia
Sweden	51,443	13	51,796	12	468	353	+1	Europe
Finland	48,749	15	48,981	13	443	232	+2	Europe
Panama	15,831	57	12,373	60	112	-3,458	-3	North America
Costa Rica	12,599	63	11,982	61	108	-617	+2	North America
Seychelles	16,389	55	11,639	62	105	-4,751	-7	Africa
China	10,243	69	10,484	63	94.8	241	+6	Asia
Malaysia	11,213	66	10,270	64	92.9	-943	+2	Asia
Russia	11,512	65	10,037	65	90.8	-1,474	0	Europe
Maldives	15,149	59	9,934	66	89.8	-5,215	-7	Asia

However, despite lagging in both GDP per capita as well as overall GDP, China has overtaken the USA in terms of overall national wealth. Both countries are vying for its attention globally in both Nominal and PPP terms. The US is at the top in nominal, whereas China is at the top in PPP. As of 2021, both countries together share 41.89% and 34.75% of the world's GDP in nominal and PPP terms respectively.

The GDP of both countries is higher than the 3rd ranked country Japan (nominal) and India (PPP) by a huge margin, separating them from the pack. In 2000, the USA was richer than China, and every year, the annual GDP of the USA has been more than that of China's. So, how did China become richer than the US even though the USA's GDP had been higher?

Many economists are indicating that China may soon fall into a major economic crisis. Despite eminent 'development', why is it under so much scrutiny and what is this looming economic crisis? To understand this, let's look at the total wealth of China and see its breakdown.

About 78% of Chinese wealth is in the form of real estate. 60-70% of a country's wealth in the form of real estate is not unusual, this does happen but there is an overestimation here. A real-estate bubble has formed in China which means that the actual price is low but the speculative price is very high. But why did this happen?

The State Capitalism of China's Central Government plays a major role. They've strictly set

Country	Nominal GDP (in trillions)	PPP Adjusted GDP (in trillions)	Annual Growth (%)	GDP Per Capita (In thousands)
United States	$20.89	$20.89	-3.6%	$63,413.5
China	$14.72	$24.27	2.3%	$10,434.8
Japan	$5.06	$5.25	-4.6%	$40,193.3
Germany	$3.85	$4.52	-4.6%	$46,208.4
United Kingdom	$2.76	$3.08	-9.7%	$41,124.5
India	$2.66	$8.97	-7.3%	$1,927.7
France	$2.63	$3.15	-7.9%	$39,030.4
Italy	$1.89	$2.49	-8.9%	$31,714.2
Canada	$1.64	$1.83	-5.3%	$43,258.2
South Korea	$1.64	$2.24	-0.9%	$31,631.5

Top Ten Countries by Nominal GDP in the U.S. Dollar Exchange Rates

the standards of performance for the local governments to bring in a certain GDP growth rate in their region, failing which the officials lose their power. So, they were under a lot of pressure and saw that the easiest way to uplift the level was by more and more construction of buildings and this inflated the real estate prices. Real estate made a 29% contribution to the annual GDP of China. For instance, the rising real estate values are making it impossible for so many people to buy and afford living in these expensive apartments.

The problem is that China overinvested in these random properties and is referred to as "Ghost Towns". At this point you might ask why, if the apartments are so expensive, the real estate companies don't lower the prices of the apartments so as to make it more affordable?

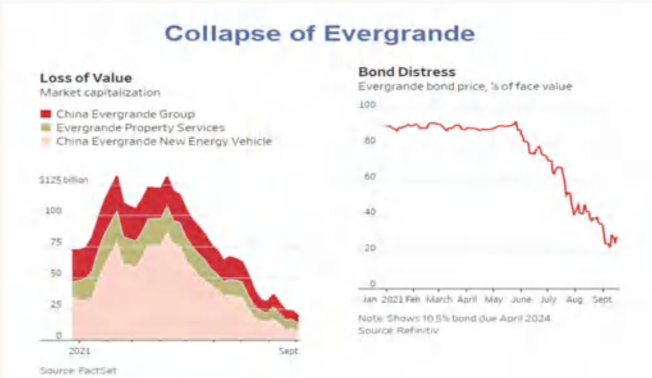
All the real estate companies had taken huge loans from banks so that they could build these apartments. The overall debt of the real estate companies in China has reached $5 trillion.

The recent episode involving China's Evergrande Group is one example of how high property prices could ultimately hurt the country's economy. Of the 60 million empty apartments in China, this company owns 1.6 million of them and now it is facing uncertainties in repaying the loan of $300 billions and if this company becomes bankrupt, the entire market of China can crash. The share price of this company fell 80% and its bonds have been downgraded by the credit rating agencies.

The situation is so dire that companies are asking for loans from their employees! Many experts compare this situation to the 2008 USA Housing Bubble which was the reason for the Global Economic Crisis. Evergrande is being seen as Lehman Brothers that was considered 'too big to fail company' in 2008 but it did fail. When the shares of Evergrande crashed, the same day Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg's wealth fell by $26 billion that day. What are the solutions to this situation?

China's Reactions and Responses:

1. Some people suggest that Evergrande should sell off its assets and ghost apartments at steep discounts so that it earns them at least some money. But the last option for revival of such companies is the "Government". Here, we can see the hypocrisy of these large companies that when they run successfully, they want unregulated capitalism with an absolute free market but when these companies are underwater and they need bailouts, then they humbly submit to the government asking for socialism, to give them the public funds (taxpayer's money) for a bailout to save them. Owners use the logic that since their company is large and if their company goes underwater, the stock market will also crash, so many people will sit unemployed and it would affect the economy of the country. That's why it becomes necessary to save their company and the government should help them.



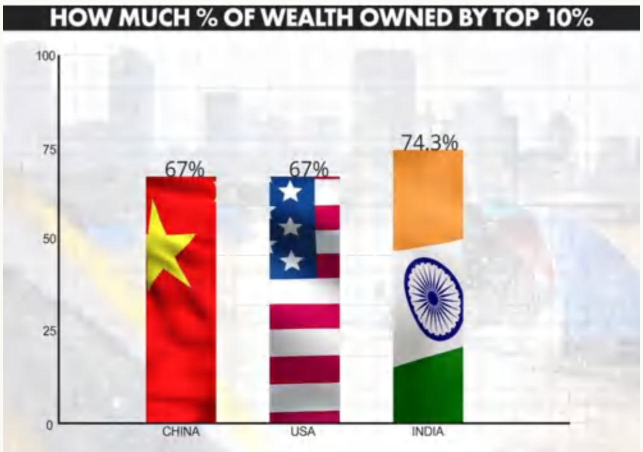
2. The Xi Jinping government carried out major regulatory crackdowns recently. To reduce bad loans, they introduced "Regulation 3 Red Lines". Three new conditions have been put forth based on which the companies can now take loans. It was found that out of the 30 biggest property companies in China, 20 of the companies had crossed the Red Lines. Apart from this, many big estate companies are being forced by the government to repay a portion of their debt instantly.

3) A new team has been formed in China to detect corruption. All the State-run banks, national financial regulators and the companies are being scrutinised to detect the level of corruption in each of them. This is an interesting point. Many people think that there is no corruption in a country with dictatorship because they assume that the dictator would severely punish corruption. But this isn't the case. It is the countries with outstanding democracy, that faces lower levels of corruption than compared to dictatorship because:

- in dictatorship people are hesitant to question anything,
- there are no independent agencies to check whether there is any corruption or not,
- whistle-blowers are oppressed,
- there are no reliable independent media to scrutinise the corrupt officials.

4) You may think it is possible to buy houses by taking loans, but in China there is a rule that one can get a loan of only 60 % of the total amount. Thus, the down payment will have to be at least 40% of the total amount which wouldn't be possible. The next option is to rent the apartment. Even then, the rent is very high and the consequences of this crisis are that people are avoiding having children. The reason for this is that the houses have become so expensive that people are wondering why they should have children when they can't afford to raise them well.

Rules aren't the only thing holding families back from having more children: there's also the high cost of living. That's why the birth rate of China is falling rapidly. China removed its one-child policy first, introduced the two-child policy, repealed it and a three-child policy has been introduced now. The government wants people to have more children so that the population doesn't dwindle. The maths is straightforward—more workers mean more growth, and fewer workers means less.



5) In most democratic countries, politicians and governments are often accused of being puppets in the hands of big capitalists and billionaires. But in the case of China, big billionaires are puppets in the hands of the government. If they don't listen to the government, then they suddenly vanish.

One of the richest people in China — Jack Ma — the founder of Alibaba, suddenly disappeared. Before his disappearance, he criticised the policies of the Xi Jinping government's financial regulatory system. On 5th November 2020, it was decided that Ant Group, the FinTech company of Jack Ma would roll out its IPO at the Chinese Stock Market with an expected valuation of more than $300 billion. However, on 2nd November 2020, the Chinese government changed its rules, in the process disqualifying Ant Group. Experts believe that the Chinese government was afraid that Alipay was getting so big that money was now moving away from Chinese banks into Alipay and that the control of money was going to private companies.

6) Rich people are buying more and more properties to invest in and that's driving up the prices raising the inequality significantly. For the middle class and poor people, buying homes has become unaffordable. Housing affordability in China at present is among the worst in the whole world. To counter this hitch, the Chinese government has started a 'Common Prosperity Drive' announcing that homes are for people to live in and not for speculation. Under this, if people are buying homes to live in, it wouldn't be taxed but if someone buys subsequent houses as investments then high property taxes would be levied on them so that real estate prices could get down to a moderate level and buying homes could become affordable for people.

According to China's 2008 data, about 70% of people bought homes for the first time, but according to the 2018 data only 11% were first time buyers. Almost 90% of people were buying houses just as an investment. Many experts criticise this strategy because companies would not be able to prosper and the economic growth of the country will slow down. Only time will tell how China deals with this crisis.

References:

1.https://www.imf.org/en/Home
2.https://www.worldbank.org/en/about/leadership?cid=ECR_GA_

Taliban and The New Afghan Economy

Mahek Gupta
BA (Hons.) Economics

In August 2021, Afghanistan succumbed to the Taliban. Be that as it may, the new system was invaded by another adversary: an economic crisis.

The Taliban's takeover was a test that isn't anything in contrast with their next mission: administering during a financial crisis. Already plagued by insecurity, COVID, corruption, government over-centralization and mismanagement, declining revenues and drought, the Afghan economy will now face a host of challenges in the aftermath of the Taliban's takeover. Rapid reduction in international grant support, loss of access to international territorial assets, and disruption to financial linkages are expected to lead to a major contraction of the economy, increasing poverty, and macroeconomic instability.

Before the Taliban takeover, the Afghan economy was surviving and breeding on foreign currency influx into a highly centralized government. These disbursements accounted for 45% of GDP and financed 75% of state expenditures, including public sector salaries.

The international community flooded and overflowed the feeble, degenerate with reserves — both keeping the Afghan government above water and keeping it from being considered responsible to its residents.

The Taliban takeover has cut off the flow of international aid and left the dysfunctional economy exposed.

Already one of the poorest countries in the world, the ability of the regime to survive under heavy sanctions and Western financial freezes is not without precedent — consider Iran, where the current regime has survived crippling sanctions for over four decades. For Afghanistan's situation, there has additionally been a hypothesis about China making up for the shortcoming left by the U.S. withdrawal and putting resources into the locale.

Yet, Chinese ventures are a long way from being ensured. China has been in comparative circumstances previously, and is probably not going to expand its venture until the Taliban substantiates itself stable. Additionally, regardless of whether China, Russia, and Pakistan all contribute huge aggregates, their speculation would not replace the joint monetary capability of the multilateral international actors including the U.S., E.U., and IMF. Accessing these income sources will require a long arrangement process which the Taliban and individuals of Afghanistan can't afford.

The United States froze billions in dollar reserves which the Afghan government was receiving due to constraining the liquidity of both the central bank and commercial banks and their ability to make international transactions.

This has undermined international trade, a main income flow for the Afghan economy. Intermediary banks abroad are not willing to indulge in transactions given the risk involved and uncertainty of returns.

With billions in international funds frozen, the best the Taliban can mobilize in domestic revenues is $500 million to $700 million which however is not enough to pay public salaries or provide basic goods and services. With drought ongoing as well, the United Nations predicts 95% of the population will go hungry and as much as 97% of the country risks sinking below the poverty line.

Still, the predictions and influence exerted by the international organizations may not levy the pressure they intended to. The Taliban have already proved themselves to be expert tax collectors and show their power by raising far more tax than the Afghan government in areas under their control. Their ability to effectively impose rules and have people abide by the regulations in place shows the control they have on the illicit economy. Apart from this, the Taliban funded its insurgency operation from illegal mining and opium production, however, these revenue sources are not enough to operate a fully functional government.

Deriving funding from an informal and unorganized economy cannot be a sustainable government practice. But neither was the previous administration's corruption and reliance on foreign aid. The Taliban may benefit from its less technocratic approach but it will have to be more responsive to individual provinces to avoid a governing collapse. Alienated from the rest of the world, the Taliban is reliant on the local citizens for a smooth functioning economy. If it can strengthen its relationship with individual provinces, it might be able to break the cycle of over-centralization that has been a key feature of Afghan regimes since the 1880s.

Immediate challenges that the Taliban faces:

- Brain Drain — Professionals have been trying to flee the country by whatever means they can. Fear and uncertainty has led to widespread dislocation
- The dissolution of Afghan National Security Forces has left hundreds of armed forces and policemen jobless.
- Basic social services are in danger with girls not even being allowed to attend school beyond 6th grade.
- Further reduction in the already low investment private sector. The private sector needs to be kept afloat as they do not have any major ties with the Taliban.

Financial crisis:

- The US federal reserve has frozen all of Afghanistan's funds amounting up to 7 billion dollars. Although this has been done to avoid misuse of funds it also means that the Central Bank cannot adjust the exchange rate by trading its dollar and other currencies for the Afghani. This could potentially lead to a plunging exchange rate and hyperinflation in the nation.
- The World Bank and IMF have also similarly frozen Afghanistan's financial assets. Afghanistan no longer has access to the special drawing rights fund which it could have used to manage the balance of payments and the Govts expenditure

The light at the end of the tunnel:

- Under a new measure to bypass the Taliban, the U.S. is planning to deliver aid directly to the Afghan people. The Biden administration plans to expand aid groups can help ease a rapidly worsening humanitarian crisis in the country.
- The Taliban also appear to be easing their stance on women's rights, with a promise to end restrictions this year on teenage girls trying to access schools, the move could see more foreign aid pour into the country.
- Negotiation options available with the US and other international partners may not be viable anymore and the military balance and situation have to be readdressed. New ways need to be devised and international organizations need to come up with other ways of transferring money as isolating Afghanistan will lead to the collapse of the nation.
- Some humanitarian aid has continued after the Taliban takeover, as foreign governments attempt to prevent millions of people from starving. The US has been actively transporting food grains procured from India to Afghans.

What the future holds:

Afghanistan's future remains unclear, but one thing is certain: money matters. The Taliban have demonstrated they comprehend this straightforward truth. If their past is any sign of things to come, the Taliban will track down reserves.

However, their capacity to appropriately oversee money related strategy is not yet clear. This is the place where it can channelize the nation's experts and procure their help. In the event that they don't, they will most likely lose the financial conflict, and along with it, the individuals of Afghanistan.

Economic implosion and a humanitarian catastrophe are a clear danger for Afghanistan. While much depends on what the Taliban do next, the United States and other international partners have a responsibility to not make the situation worse through complete economic disengagement and unnecessarily corrective automatic authorizations.

The Taliban's startlingly quick and complete takeover has one silver lining. Military and regular citizen losses, struggle related to the uprooting of individuals and annihilation of urban communities have been far less than would have been the case if there had been a longer period of civil war. Such an extended conflict could have stretched out for months, perhaps even a year or longer, with cycles of escalation and burgeoning bloodshed.

References:

1. https://theprint.in/world/taliban-looks-to-dodge-economic-crisis-by-boosting-afghan-exports-as-foreign-aid-ends/788996/?amp

2.https://www.newindianexpress.com/world/2021/oct/19/afghan-economy-on-the-brink-taliban-rely-on-former-technocrats-2373164.amp

3.https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/afghanistans-economy-under-the-taliban-the-challenges-ahead/

How To Fund Decarbonisation With Modern Monetary Theory

Aryaman Bawa
BA (Hons.) Economics

A Crash Course in Modern Monetary Theory

Ask the leaders of any country as to what is holding back their shift to green energy and the most common answer you will get is that there is a lack of funds available. However, an unconventional economic theory has the potential to change this and enable governments to fund the decarbonisation of economies without any reduction in spending elsewhere. This theory is called the Modern Monetary Theory or MMT for short.

Any mainstream economist will tell you that budget deficits are bad because they push interest rates up.
The government uses revenues generated from taxes to pay for what it can. To fund the remaining expenses, the government has to borrow money by issuing bonds. As the amount of loanable funds is fairly constant, the increased demand pushes up their price, which is the interest rates, making loans more expensive.

This creates an additional expense, not only for the government but also for businesses and individuals. There would be a reduction in the number of loans being taken out in the private sector and hence a reduction in private investment. Now, people will take out fewer mortgages and student loans, fewer factories will be built which would slow down economic growth.

This reduction in private investment due to an increase in government spending is called crowding out. As government expenditure increases, interest costs will increase and the government will have very few choices to repay interest, none of which are economically beneficial. One option, called financial repression, is to push interest rates down through regulation. Another is printing more money and risking hyperinflation or just defaulting on the debt altogether. The latter would make interest rates permanently higher as lenders would require higher compensation for undertaking a greater risk.

However, proponents of MMT feel that crowding out need not necessarily occur. They adopt an older view that bank loans create money equal to the amount demanded. This is known as the endogenous money theory. It rejects the idea of a fixed supply of loanable funds for the government and private institutions. It implies that an increase in borrowing won't increase interest rates since the rise in demand would be met endogenously.

MMT goes beyond this theory to argue that as long as the government controls the supply of money it spends, it cannot run out of money and so should never need to default.

This would mean that the Indian government cannot default on its domestic loans since these loans are to be repaid in Rupees and the Indian government cannot run out of Rupees as it is the only agency that issues them. The government running out of Rupees would be a situation akin to a plant running out of oxygen.

This view implies that the government does not fund its spending with taxes and borrowing but creates money whenever it needs. The need for taxation is for people to use the government-issued currency. Since Indians earn in Rupees, they have a reason to use this currency. This creates a sink for the government created currency, an outlet to prevent its accumulation. Secondly, taxes are used to control inflation. They take money from the economy which prevents prices from skyrocketing by keeping demand in check.

However, in this system, bonds aren't necessarily important as the government can just create money without borrowing. Some argue that in MMT, the purpose of bonds is to prevent interest rates from falling too far. Since government spending will increase the money supply, the amount of reserves in the banking system will rise. Reserves earn a very low-interest rate and so push the economy-wide interest rates down. As bonds earn a higher interest rate, they help keep interest rates up. In the case of MMT, the main constraint on government spending is inflation.

The approach taken by MMT to explain the need for a deficit is the sectoral balances framework. According to this, government deficits are often required to boost private savings. When the government is running debt, another sector must be running a surplus. Either the domestic economy or the external economy. When an economy imports more than it exports and the domestic economy is riddled with debt, the government must run a deficit to help the private sector recover. According to this view, a government deficit isn't crowding out private investment but instead enabling it.

Opponents of MMT believe that printing huge sums of money will cause hyperinflation similar to post-war Germany or early 2000s Zimbabwe. MMT supporters respond that this approach takes inflation very seriously. Taxes are used to reduce inflation and thus, preventing inflation may require higher taxes and as a result a lower deficit.

Inflation results when aggregate demand exceeds the actual supply. If there is a lot of money trying to purchase too little stuff, price increases, which is inflation. Taxes also reduce aggregate demand and hence keep inflation under control.
MMT also aims to achieve full employment through an employment guarantee. Under this, the government would offer a job at minimum wage with benefits either within the government or for a non-profit to any adult who wants one, as a right of citizenship. This is a way to keep wages from rising in an inflationary spiral.

Without a job guarantee, a rise in taxes can cause a slowdown and unemployment. A job guarantee would ensure employment for anyone who is hurt through these measures.

In short, Modern Monetary Theory argues that governments that issue their currency can never run out of money like people or businesses. The key factor is that there should be demand for the currency it issues. This is not possible in countries whose currency has no value but is feasible amongst all the major countries of the world.

How does this help us Go Green?

As we have seen, MMT's main idea is that a government can never run out of money as long as it has control over its currency. Any currency-issuing government can always repay its domestic, and in some cases, international debt as it is the only issuer of the currency.

In the last couple of years, we have seen governments approve trillions of dollars of spending as a response to the coronavirus crisis. The next 2 decades are extremely crucial for the world in the fight against climate change and thus, this recovery money along with additional expenditure could help steer the economy onto a green development path powered by clean energy.

MMT increases accountability of governments as lack of funds to finance decarbonisation can no longer be an excuse to keep choking the atmosphere with greenhouse gases. The longer we keep using fossil fuels, the greater risk there is to our existence.

For countries like the US, UK, Canada, India and China among others, there is a path that can be followed to achieve this decarbonisation as discussed by environmental economist Ray Galvin.

First, the government needs to consult all stakeholders and decide what is required to achieve decarbonisation in such a way that poverty is eliminated and the wellbeing of people is enhanced simultaneously. Social and environmental sustainability needs to be prioritised and the procedure required needs to be secured via legislation.

Next, the government would request the Central Bank to supply the required sum of money in regular installments by modifying the relationship between the government and the central bank if needed. The Central Bank should supply this money and credit it to the Ministry of Finance. In return, the Central Bank must demand government bonds to be held by it in perpetuity as a security for the money to be used for the required program.

Finally, the government spends the money following the plan laid out in the legislation. If it uses the money for other purposes, the Central Bank can cease the funding or start selling the bonds it holds as security, thereby putting the government in debt for the misallocated money.

Once the government starts using this money, it must monitor inflation throughout the program. If it rises above a certain agreed level, the government must withdraw the new money by increasing the top tax rate on the highest owners or increasing the wealth tax and by asking the Central Bank to sell some of the government debt only to private citizens. Incoming money from both sources is dissolved into nothing.

Thus, the function of taxation is to prevent inflation. For this purpose, Carbon Taxes can have a double impact of incentivising sustainable practices along with reduction of inflation. However, they must be used with caution.

Even the European Union countries can follow a similar programme with some modifications where the various members can coordinate their decarbonisation. The European Central Bank can provide the required funds while monitoring the use of this money.

Decarbonisation of economies requires a large number of infrastructural projects in most major sectors. Transitioning to generating electricity sustainably and upgrading the power grid to cope with fluctuating power generation through electricity and wind will be important. In the transport sector, there will be a shift to green fuels and electric vehicles. For this, investment in a large charging network would be required.

There is agreement amongst economists and Central Bank officials around the world that government investments into a green economy would have positive economic effects in the long run as compared to paying airlines and big companies which can destroy the economy.

As we have discussed, there is plenty of money available for decarbonisation. There is no need for the government to borrow and increase debt along with a risk of higher interest rates in the future.

With MMT, Central Banks can make the money needed out of thin air and lend it to the government with strict legislative control to prevent corruption and misuse.

There will most definitely be some resistance to such huge spending especially since most people do not know about MMT. However, financial markets and investment banks have benefited from a huge amount of free money showered onto them by Central Banks especially in the 2008 crisis. Similar funding can be provided to fossil fuel-based industries. These industries need to work with the government to convince people that this is the only way to save the environment.

Thus, lack of finance should no longer be the stated cause for ignoring the threat to our planet. Governments need to face the reality that they need to start working towards adopting greener technology and to achieve their stated promises of decarbonisation. They can continue other expenditures without compromising their efforts towards decarbonisation. The next 10 years are the most important for the fate of human civilization. Until we do not find a way to survive on a different planet, Earth is the best choice for a home for humans and we need to take care of it because without it we cannot exist. We need to remember that there is only one Earth, we have threatened it and now it is our turn to protect it.

References:

1. Modern Monetary Theory, Explained: Dylan Matthews
2. Yes, there is enough money to decarbonize the economies of high-income countries justly and sustainably: Ray Galvin

Indian Tech-Unicorns

S Krishna Kumar
Faculty, Department of Economics

In this article I shall break down the report titled 'The Indian Tech Unicorn Report 2021' by Orios Venture Partners.

Indian startups have raised $42 billion in 2021, up from $11.5 billion in the previous year. India saw 46 unicorns (companies with $1 billion valuations) in 2021 alone, more than doubling the total number of unicorns to 90. These include ShareChat, Cred, Meesho, Nazara, Moglix, MPL, Grofers (now Blinkit), upGrad, Mamaearth, GlobalBees, Acko, Spinny and others.

India — with 90 unicorns — is the third-largest unicorn hub behind the US (487) and China (301), and ahead of the UK (39). It has the third-largest startup ecosystem in the world with about 60,000 startups.

"These startups are not only developing innovative solutions and technologies but are generating large-scale employment. Today, one out of 13 unicorns globally was born in India," the report stated.

Bengaluru was the city with the most unicorns. Fintech, e-commerce and SaaS (software as a service) have seen the maximum number of unicorns, while health-tech, ed-tech, D2C, Gaming and Crypto are also close behind. 2021 was a landmark year for Indian startups going public.

"A total of 11 Indian startups (including 8 unicorns) raised about $7.16 billion through public offerings... One97 Communication (Paytm) raised India's largest-ever IPO with an issue size of Rs 18,300 crore (about $2.46 billion)," it said. Further, Zomato has the highest market capitalisation ($14.8 billion), among the listed Indian startups, followed by Nykaa ($13.5 billion) and Freshworks ($6.9 billion).

The report also noted that 20% of unicorn founders are non-engineers, two-thirds of the Indian unicorns have at least one or more founders from IITs, IIMs or ISB, and highlighted that there are 13 female unicorn founders, 8 out of which have emerged in the year 2021 - Falguni Nayar (Nykaa), Gazal Kalra (Rivigo), Ruchi Kalra (OfBusiness), Divya Gokulnath (Byju's), Ghazal Alagh (MamaEarth) and Saritha Katikaneni (Zenoti), among others.

Source: Statista

Reference:
https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/tech/funding/indian-startups-raised-42-billion-in-2021-report/articleshow/88875670.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

ARTICLES FROM D2C CONTEST

Relation of crude oil prices with Indian Economy

Chhavi, Amity University

For any economy to succeed and develop, the energy area assumes a key part. There are a wide range of wellsprings of energy like rough, flammable gas, hydroelectric, coal, atomic, sun based and wind. Crude is generally utilized as a wellspring of energy. India is probably the biggest merchant of raw petroleum on the planet. Over 80% of India's rough prerequisites are met through imports. Any ascent in worldwide rough costs comes down on our import bill and Indian Rupee. India imports harsh basically from the Middle east. The cost of harsh is picked by a relationship of Middle Eastern countries called the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). This body directs the cost of rough by fluctuating the creation limit. Worldwide interest likewise decides the expense of raw petroleum.

Oil area is among the eight centre businesses in India and assumes a significant part in affecting decision making for the wide range of various significant segments of the economy. India's financial development is firmly connected with its energy interest.

As per IEA (India Energy Outlook 2021), essential energy request is relied upon to almost twofold to 1,123 million tons of oil same, as the nation's (GDP) is relied upon to increment to USD 8.6 trillion by 2040. Unrefined petroleum utilization is relied upon to develop at a CAGR of 3.60% to 500 million tons by 2040 from 221.56 million tons in 2017. India's oil request is projected to ascend at the quickest pace on the planet to arrive at 10 million barrels each day by 2030, from 5.05 million barrel eachday in 2020.

The global market has diminished its fuel creation, and the oil-rich countries are checking out higher benefits. This outcomes in the customer nations experiencing higher fuel costs. India imports almost 80% of its unrefined petroleum necessities.

Consequently, the nation is enduring the worst part of higher fuel costs. Additionally, the fast speed of industrialization across the globe has prompted an expansion sought after and utilization of fuel. Worldwide interest for raw petroleum has been reliably on the potential gain. Utilization of energy has gone up because of progressions in innovation. International pressures add to the spike in worldwide oil costs. A conflict like situation expands the interest for fuel, and henceforth costs could spike. India's utilization of fuel has additionally gone up lately. With an undeniably youthful populace and ascend in per capita pay, Indians are spending more on vehicles. This ought to have given a great deal of alleviation to buyers as India had seen a sharp fall in global rough costs a year ago. In spite of the sharp fall in costs, the selling cost of fuel didn't diminish.

The heft of India's raw petroleum needs is met by imports. Subsequently, any ascent in unrefined petroleum costs will straightforwardly expand India's spending, contrarily affecting the country's financial shortfall. Any ascent in the monetary deficiency could unleash devastation on the economy and monetary business sectors. It additionally influences India's sovereign credit scores. Any ascent in fuel costs straightforwardly affects the Indian Rupee.

Numerous Indian organizations rely upon stable unrefined petroleum costs. Higher creation costs hurt the benefit of these organizations. Until further notice, this may contrarily influence stock expenses. On the other hand, an augmentation in oil expenses could really incline toward the country's oil examination associations.

Unrefined is fundamentally utilized for the age of force and fuel for vehicles. Any expansion sought after would prompt an increment in value, which would apply huge strain on unfamiliar stores and India's CAD.
Moreover, it is a fundamental natural substance utilized in an assortment of businesses. Customers would ultimately endure the worst part of this cost increment, bringing about expansion. Fuel cost is a strategically and socially delicate issue. We have seen state run administrations being excused and expanding closures because of the increment in fuel costs.

At the point when oil fates turned adverse last year at the pinnacle of the pandemic, financial exchanges reached as far down as possible, however from that point forward they have been on a rising binge in accordance with flooding oil costs. Investigators bring up that expanding oil costs reflect developing interest in the economy, and values frequently convey more than the normal expansion that the oil flood might prompt. In accordance with oil, costs of different items including coal has been rising strongly.

All in all, regardless of worldwide fuel costs relaxing for most of 2020-21, the advantage was not given to the Indian shoppers. With the economy expected to ricochet back with a V-formed recuperation, the fuel request is relied upon to rise, driving worldwide rough makers to build creation to fulfils the expanded need. The Indian government would need to lessen the duties to hold the fuel cost within proper limits and thus, diminish the weight on the shoppers.

The Gig Economy: The Impact of the Digital Workforce on the Global Economy

Divija Rustagi
Maitreyi College, University of Delhi

The gig economy, also known as “shared economy” or “crowdsourcing”, is a term that refers to individuals marketing their skill sets online on different platforms or selling their services to companies. Gone are the days of 9-5 jobs with benefits and a pension plan. This trend is reshaping the way we think about work. This change in the workforce has come with many challenges as well as opportunities and a significant impact on our global economy.

With the rise of global outsourcing, freelancing, and the "gig economy", more people are working independently than ever before and on their terms. It also allows people to test-drive something new and dip their toes in the water without losing their primary source of income. In a gig economy, businesses save resources by hiring experts for a shorter period which is a viable solution for filling in temporary vacancies.

They also save in terms of benefits such as provident fund, paid leave, and insurance which are perks enjoyed by permanent employees. The gig economy might seem lucrative, but; it does pose a certain number of threats as well. The world is moving from a manufacturing economy to a knowledge economy.

That means gig workers need to continuously hone their skills and keep up with the industry trends for a competitive edge. Since gig workers are hired for a short contract, there is always a lingering uncertainty about the next gig. Moreover, there needs to be a degree of discipline and resilience to match the degree of freedom that comes with freelancing.

The gig economy has had a profound impact on the global economies of many countries, especially developing nations. Developing nations are seen as attractive destinations for outsourced labor because they have cheap labor markets that are often much less regulated than developed countries. Companies have turned to outsourced labor to cut costs, they have also created new opportunities for workers in developing nations. Today, 40% of the workforce are freelancers (up from 33%) (Kumar, 2021),and this shift in labor is redefining what it means to work in today's digital age.

The gig economy has allowed people who were once unable to find formal employment or work independently to find an income source. According to the McKinsey Global Institute, the gig economy has given millions of people access to economic opportunities who would otherwise be left out of the workforce.

They found that "a third of all workers are freelancers, contractors, temps or self-employed." These people are typically working part-time and/or doing jobs that they enjoy that may not be their main career. Some of these jobs include driving for Uber, doing contracting work on Urban Company, or delivering food for Swiggy. With the advent of technology platforms like
Ola and Dunzo, more people can find work. (Kumar, 2021)

GENDER SENSITIVITY AND ECONOMICS

Kotha Lakshmi Kusuma
ICFAI

With the domestic sphere that men and women generally, face in their households forms the locus point in any economy. Historically, in many societies the works are divided – household works for women and men as the wage earners and this is considered as "rational and traditional family institution". But, the household work that women do is considered as "leisure" as they are not generating any valuable goods or services. Presumably, people feel that women have less experience in the labor market than men as they devote more time to the housework and rearing children.

Consequently, people consider that women have to expend their energies on households so they acquire less human capital compared to men. This is a cycle where the assumption of "to-be future householders" is now decided to have less education and pay so as to handle the family activities.

Social norms often dictate the types of works according to gender, age e.t.c. For instance, women are evaluated as unfit due to marital status or work for late hours. In their maternity period, they face a strong disapproval in employment.

However, with the passage of time, few of the policies have changed. In India, women are not allowed to be fired during the pregnancy period. The household and financial decisions are mostly rested on the hands of men as they are considered to have better experience and knowledge in the labor market. But, that is assumed because women specialize in homemaking, though never universal. In India, though women comprise 40% of agricultural labor, in the share of assets they own only 9% of the land.

India was ranked 140th among 156 countries in Global Gender Gap Report 2021. It highlights political empowerment, education, health and economic participation and opportunity.

The COVID-19 pandemic, nudged most of the sectors to adopt the 'new normal' work from home mode. It further exacerbated the inequalities and created additional challenges to the women. Primarily, focusing on household work and caregiving role to their families affected their incomes, opportunities, survival and growth. Their responsibility for the family increased and they typically earn less, save less and have less secure jobs.

According to reports of UN India, more than half of the work done by women is unnoticed, unpaid and almost all of it is informal. Even if they earn in a formal sector, they spend 90% of their incomes on their families.

Certainly, India is the fastest growing economy and a working-age population is expected to climb to over 800 million people. Despite the developments, women account for only 19.9% of the total labor force in India. Human Development Report 2020 states the Gender Development Index (GDI) value of India is 0.82 with 0.57 for females and 0.69 for males. In addition, the Gender Inequality Index (GII) sheds light on the empowerment, economic activity and reproductive health. India's measure was 0.48 and was at 123th among 166 nations which is quite similar to the other indexes with little improvements. Domestic violence, physical security, mental well-being, standards of living, societal norms, competition and many other factors are still affecting the women and in turn the economy.

The portrayal of women, marriage, childbearing, maternity leaves at workplaces, participation in the household and societal decisions have become more progressive in the last few decades. However, progress has been uneven as women move beyond basic to more enhanced space which includes leadership, governance and beyond.

Nevertheless, the gender sensitization is quintessential to be acknowledged. Elimination of gender based occupational segregation, pay gaps, stereotypical ideas about male oriented leadership is the pressing priority. A shared responsibility to the family as two wheels of a chariot cannot be overlooked. Simply put as economics says, gender-sensitive and inclusive representation in opportunities and labor market leads to rise in income and standards of living resulting in increase in consumption and spending.

IS CRYPTOCURRENCY 'MONEY 2.0'?

Nandini Shankhyan
Sri Venkateswara College, University of Delhi

Conceptualized in 2009 by an anonymous programmer, Satoshi Nakamoto, Bitcoin- world's first cryptocurrency- has come a long way from being a digital novelty to acquiring the status of legal tender in an American country. Today, we have more than 9000 cryptocurrencies in the world! It is no surprise that the number of cryptocurrencies and number of cryptocurrency-wallet users show a positive correlation.

Now since, cryptocurrency has over 80 million users worldwide and has been accepted as legal tender in a country, it is needless to say it is emerging as a new form of money. Right? Not necessarily.

So essentially, the question at hand is- "Is cryptocurrency a new form of 'money'?". As per my observation, any attempt to fit cryptocurrency in either of the two monetary theories- Chartalism or Metallism- fails invariably since cryptocurrency is neither a creation of law nor a commodity with intrinsic value. I posit F. A. Walker's maxim, "Money is that money does" as the basis of my argument. For cryptocurrency to qualify as 'money', it must perform the following four functions:

1. Medium of Exchange
2. Store of Value
3. Measure of Value
4. Standard of Deferred Payment

Failing even one of these functions diminishes the scope of cryptocurrency as 'money' significantly.

Medium of Exchange
Most cryptocurrencies remain inefficient media of exchange because of the staggering levels of energy required for their processing. Furthermore, due to their decentralized nature, a major chunk of 'crypto-transactions' belong to the black markets.

Store of Value
Historical data shows that cryptocurrency is highly volatile. Figure 3 shows, beginning May 2021, Ethereum plummeted more than 50% from $4,179 to $1,786. Later in November, it reached a new all-time high of $4,812. Therefore, in my opinion, such extreme variations deem the cryptocurrency unfit as a store of value.

Measure of Value
I would say, high volatility is the arch-nemesis of cryptocurrency. How can anything that has volatility as high as 80% be a reliable yardstick for valuation? Even if cryptocurrency was to serve as a measure of value, as long as it is crippled by its inability to act as a medium of exchange, it makes no difference to the way transactions are conducted.

Standard of Deferred Payment
Given the high volatility discussed in the preceding points, it is evident that cryptocurrency cannot be used for lending and borrowing. Now that we have established that cryptocurrency barely fulfils the criteria for 'money', where does cryptocurrency stand? I would say, it is best classified as a highly volatile investment instrument.

Moreover, I feel it is a bubble, that has gained popularity as an alternative high yield investment due low interest rates in global economy post the Global Financial Crisis of 2007-08. I fail to understand why an energy intensive instrument whose source of value remains in the dark, is gaining popularity when the world is constantly at a crossroads with energy crisis and bells of sustainable alternatives are sounding in every sector.

Unfortunately, banning cryptocurrency would be futile as they can easily operate from offshore exchanges. As far as regulation is concerned, I believe we require a uniform global policy on cryptocurrency to avoid misuse of technology for evasion of taxes.

Irrespective of the impact of the impending cryptocurrency laws, development of metaverse can potentially change the course cryptocurrency takes in future. Now to tell if it will be for better or worse, is a debate for another day.

DECODING THE PUZZLE BETWEEN HAPPINESS AND INCOME

ANALYZING THE PARADOX OF HAPPINESS & HOW CAN COUNTRIES BECOME HAPPIER?

Neha Gupta
Sri Venkateswara College, University of Delhi

Happiness, one of the very basic aspects of humankind, is also the most valuable 'possession' as the ultimate goal of human life is to be able to live happily and in turn, be able to fulfill all its needs. But do we realize that all the things that we do to satisfy our material needs may not give us true bliss but just create a momentary illusion.

If you ask anyone or even yourself what is your definition of happiness? The answer generally leads to confusion & silence and that is what's going wrong. Now, when the terms 'satisfaction', 'welfare' & 'needs' come into the picture, bringing the branch of economics is integral as it also aims for reaching the maximum level of human satisfaction by using the available scarce resources, which in itself corresponds to some degree of human welfare.

But what needs to be understood is that human welfare is not limited to material well-being and income-related factors only, it also has crucial elements of non-monetary & subjective well-being (SWB) which generally get omitted in the conventional methods of measuring human welfare.

The concept of happiness is not new, originally an area of interest for psychology, it gained momentum in economics in the 1970s through Richard A. Easterlin and his famous Easterlin Paradox.

In an article titled "Does Economic Growth Improve the Human Lot: Some Empirical Evidence" (Easterlin 1974), the Easterlin Paradox stated that at a point in time happiness varies directly with income, both among and within nations, but over time happiness does not trend upward in correspondence with income growth. To simply put this, it claimed that the long-term effect of income on happiness is insignificant, and income can only have a short-term impact on the happiness levels of countries.

After getting a lukewarm response when it was initially introduced, finally in the 1990s, it started gaining attention leading to the establishment of "Happiness economics"— which represents one new direction advocating the notion that relying on income measures of well-being alone can mask a tremendous amount of latent social unrest (Graham 2005).

This apparent puzzle of Easterlin can also be interpreted on basis of relative income effect (this effect was formally introduced by Duesenberry in 1949), which means that a person's SWB mightn't increase with the increase in his/her absolute income, if the relative income of a person is low in comparison with others. This also concludes that if there is a uniform increase or decrease in the income levels in the whole country, the level of happiness doesn't change.

This paradox has its own set of supporters and critics and remains unsolved, but what is noteworthy is both the relativists & the absolutists tend to agree that, for societies in which basic needs are met, further increase in average income will not increase average happiness. Moreover, it is only logical to note that, an increase in absolute income may raise happiness, and beyond a certain threshold level people develop aspirations for status positions, and hence more money may not bring more happiness (Lakshmanasamy 2010).

The frequency of aspirations has seen a tremendous upward trend, especially after the onset of globalization with expanding economic growth and on the other side opening the gates of global consumerism and the perception of materialistic happiness. Consequently, being trapped in the vicious cycle of getting ahead of everyone has blurred the gap between true happiness and just attainment of targets and resources for us.

So, what should be the way forward to tackle this dilemma? Should we stop globalization altogether and start again with closed economies? This is not feasible nor it will be beneficial for the global economy, yet an intermediate path of localizing economies can be considered, which aims of a partial offset of globalization & focuses on embracing the local economy.

The second effort that is needed is to give extra emphasis to non-monetary aspects of social welfare. A shift of planning and goals is required, Happiness economics should be used to supplement the findings on growth and welfare to draw more holistic conclusions and policy prescriptions. One such case is Bhutan, which adopted Gross National Happiness (GNH) instead of Gross National Product (GNP).

After this, another popular instance is of World Happiness Report (WHR) that is developed by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN) with its initial report in 2012, surveying the state of global happiness by ranking 156 countries by their happiness levels using data from Gallup World Poll (Bhattacharyya et al. 2019).

It was observed that Finland was the happiest and India was at 133rd position even far behind some war-torn and conflicted economies like Pakistan which was a major setback for our country.
It’s 2022 for India with a dipping 139th rank in WHR 2021 and thus there is an urgent
need for India to change its outlook of development, growth & social well-being,

India should reconnect with its roots of rich heritage and diversity connect it with social welfare, start localization. We should judge our economy not only in GDP growth rates but adjoining data on life satisfaction should be treated with sincerity too. In conclusion, we should not forget that money should be just a medium to facilitate life, not the ultimate definition of happiness and life satisfaction.

Can Export Promotion work?

Shivansh Raman
Hindu College, University of Delhi

The relationship between a country's exports and the productivity of its firms is one of the most hotly debated issues in economics. From import substitution in the 50s and 60s to the modern consensus on the export-led model of growth, the exact nature of trade's contribution to economic development remains unsettled.

The evidence that we have on whether pushing firms to export bootstraps productivity growth by making them compete and learn in global markets is, at best, inconclusive. For obvious reasons, it is plagued by entanglements in causality: does export improve productivity, or do productive firms export?

We don't really know. As such, the impact of countries' industrial policies on trade and growth is contested as well. Traditional economic dogma says to disregard the role of the state in developing these markets: governments don't exactly have a stellar record when it comes to picking winners and losers in business.

But the heavy involvement of the state-led export promotion in the growth stories of various East Asian and Southeast Asian economies suggests it's not that simple.

Export promotion is a very broad term that's largely used to refer to all the measures and programmes aimed at assisting current and potential exporters: tax credits, direct subsidy, technical support, preferential tax treatment, border tax adjustment, easing of rules of origin, provision of electricity and water at subsidised rates, etc. The goal of these services is to help firms in general, and small and medium-sized firms in particular, to become successful exporters.

However, the incentives should ideally generate enough economic activity and employment that justifies the expenditures and shift in regulation. There may be specific attributes of good industrial policy that countries may want to emulate. Joe Studwell, in his book How Asia Works found that successful industrial policy mainly involves three steps:

1) **Government Support:** Government intervention is needed to steer the economy's resources toward technologically sophisticated industries beyond current capacity

2) **Export Focus:** Exports serve not only as expanded markets for domestic production but importantly as feedback mechanisms through the use of market signals from export markets for accountability as well as to swiftly shift firm and state policy.

3) **Strict Accountability:** Government support shouldn't be unconditional. Financial and regulatory assistance should be provided to targeted industries and not just individual firms so as to promote intense competition amongst local companies. It's not necessary to take away support if some level of short term profits isn't achieved but regular comprehensive assessments of the firms' performance should be carried out.

His book goes further in assigning the blame for the relative early failure of Southeast Asian state interventions (relative. to Easter counterparts) on the lack of export discipline.

Export discipline here refers to a policy of continually testing and benchmarking domestic manufacturers that are given subsidies and market protection by forcing them to export their goods and face global competition. Without concrete and objective standards to prove their ability to penetrate world markets, local firms end up trying to please and fool the relevant politicians and bureaucrats instead of improving efficiency.

This obvious-sounding policy is actually incredibly hard to maintain and is much less common than one would think: politicians involved in framing rules like to maximise their own influence. The influence of any individual politician or ruling party is greater if state support is contingent on personal and subjective metrics rather than just the bottom line.

Even firms prefer this over cut-throat competition since it is easier to convince (see: bribe) bureaucrats than to be successful at business. In fact, the size of the subsidy should depend on export success rather than other metrics. It forces firms to produce products of far higher quality than they could get away with selling domestically.

Foreign consumers aren't going to buy poor-quality products, but domestic consumers might not be able to afford any better and/or might be forced to buy due to a domestic monopoly. The state should actively eliminate underperforming firms since it's acting in lieu of market forces.

The success of export promotion policies has been largely heterogeneous. It's important for developing countries to not repeat the same mistakes that other governments have made and focus on the best practices supported by empirical evidence.

GLOBAL MINIMUM CORPORATE TAX – A BOON OR CURSE

Srishti Agarwal
Kirorimal College, University of Delhi

In October 2021, finance ministers from the group of seven [G7] nations reached a landmark accord setting a Global Minimum Corporate Tax Rate of 15%. Corporate Tax is a direct tax imposed on the net income or profit that enterprises make from their businesses. Flooring the tax rate to 15% was an attempt to disincentivize the undue advantage to smaller countries imposing lower tax rates, as MNCs follow the system of locating headquarters in the "tax haven" countries. A tax haven is a country that offers foreign business and individuals minimal or no tax liability for their bank deposits in a politically and economically stable environment. They have tax advantages for corporations and possess an obvious potential for misuse in illegal tax avoidance schemes.

Shell corporations is the yield of one such manipulation involved. A Shell corporation is a company that exists only on paper and has no office and no employees but many have a hold on passive investments. These are set up with an attempt to evade the tax and are illegal in nature. These Companies are one of the most crucial results of BEPS programme. Since the inception of the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) for programme, the proposal for GMT is another positive step towards global taxation reforms. BEPS refers to tax avoidance strategies that exploit gaps and mismatches in tax rules to artificially shift profits to low or no-tax locations.

These are leaked files from 14 global corporate services firms which set up about 29000 off- the-shelf Companies and private trusts in not just obscure tax jurisdictions but also countries such as Singapore, New Zealand, and the United States, for clients across the world. There are at least 380 persons of Indian nationality in the Pandora Papers. Similar leakages include Panama papers leak in 2016 and Paradise Papers leak in 2017.

Global Minimum corporate tax would apply to companies' overseas profits.G7 would back a minimum global corporation tax rate of at least 15%, and put in place measure to ensure taxes were paid in the countries where businesses operate. If companies pay lower rates in a particular country, their home governments would "top- up" their taxes to the agreed minimum rate, eliminating the advantage of shifting profits to a tax haven.

It could have major repercussions for low tax countries and tax havens. It is definitely a threat to the economic growth of the countries. But, it also has a wider angle to be looked upon. It is a threat to GLOBALISATION. The companies would shift their headquarters from tax haven countries to their parent countries, when they find no major additional tax savings and benefits in these countries, with an incentive of better recognition, lower operational costs and reduced threat to tax evasion punishment laws.

Also the countries like Bangladesh that do not have many incentives to offer except that of Special Economic Zones (SEZs), this decision might not be very conducive as they would still attract lesser investments from round the globe. India has already been proactively engaged with foreign governments in double taxation avoidance agreements and tax information exchange agreements; this proposal adds no further benefits to India. It will further be problematic to enforce such a policy in a federal government structured country like India. It seems right in claiming a win situation for all the nations, however, in the real world, the policy will create unwanted hurdles for many developing countries' growth paths, especially India.

This agreement may create a wider gulf between haves and have-nots across the world. The policy itself puts a question on globalization as it would really be beneficial to all the nations or would provide undue privileges to certain larger economies to become a monopoly. To enhance the system and witness stronger global ties in the time to come, it is imperative for the agreement to be analyzed once again.

India In The Metaverse: The NFT Wave And Its Impact On The Indian And Global Socio-Economic System

Tavishi Sharma
Miranda Hourse, University of Delhi

By allowing basketball fans to own an NBA authorised 10 seconds of a game, NFTs have revolutionised everyday experiences. Whether it be music, art or videos, Non-Fungible Tokens or NFTs make it possible for individuals to trade unique and non-interchangeable tokens of digital experiences on the metaverse, a shared, immersive online state where one can move digital objects between online and offline modes.

Though the global launch of NFTs can be traced back to 2014, they have only recently taken over the world with raging popularity among youth across nations. NFTs are traded using blockchain technology and are the torch bearers of a new phase of the internet, the Web3, characterised by an availability of internet services and apps built on the same decentralised blockchain technology as cryptocurrency.

Interestingly, NFTs do not pose the same threat as cryptocurrency, in that there is no fear of the development of a pseudo currency waiting to flood the market. NFTs are 'non-fungible' i.e. non-interchangeable, thereby eliminating this threat. Moreover, NFTs are changing the landscape of the intellectual property. Wharton Business Schoool, John Fleckenstein (COO for RCA Records) notes that any business reliance on intellectual property rights in the digital space is a 'game changer'.Further, he notes that the industry has gone from buying physical copies of music to now selling the musical experience beyond quintessential audio stimulation.

In an experimental attempt, Gresham et al published their research paper as an NFT after being rejected from several journals. Whether or not this precedes a shift from online journals to NFTs for the publication of academic resources is yet to be seen, however, it does showcase NFTs' innovative reach, nonetheless.

In India, NFTs gained considerable traction in 2021 when prominent social and entertainment personalities began launching their own collections. From Amitabh Bachchan and Salman Khan to Yuvraj Singh and Manish Malhotra, stars are using NFTs as a unique way to reach out to fans and form novelty investments.

On 1st June 2021, India's leading cryptocurrency exchange WazirX launched the country's first NFT marketplace. In a nation with a considerable Gen Z and Millennial population, it is no surprise that our youth are quite fascinated by NFTs, both for status and investment purposes. However, impending Central regulations on cryptocurrency and NFTs may cause the current craze to abate.

Indian youth's financial patterns are also highly unique. Teenagers and young adults do not have much experience with personal finance. Parents are the breadwinners of the family and they manage household finances including money received by children as gifts.

Further, higher socio-economic classes disallow their children from earning in any form as a matter of prestige and status. However, the global rise of NFTs and technological savvy of Indian youth open doors for unconventional means of earning. Thus, with the growth of NFTs, we may expect a change in the Indian youth's preferred source of income.

Adoption of NFTs also has a profound impact on the Indian economy and its future as a digital giant. The Economic Times notes "Web3 is the future of the Internet and its mass adoption has just begun".

The Indian Express reports that Web3 could add $1.1 Trillion to India's economic growth over the next 11 years and induce widespread redistribution of data across networks, as opposed to the current tech-corporation monopoly on data. Further, according to the US India Strategic Partnership Forum and CrossTower report, "the digital asset economy's value to India's GDP will grow at a 43.1% compounded annual growth rate". Moreover, cryptocurrency allows India to harness its resources of a technologically forward and skilled youth to become a global leader in digital assets. Today, NFTs are simply used as art collectibles but they are essential to the growth of the metaverse. The underlying blockchain technology speaks to the future of holding digital assets. Notably, the same blockchain technology works on the ‘Proof of Work’ system, fuelled by complex and power hungry machines, posing concerning ecological challenges.

To keep the transactional records safe, this system uses as much electricity as the country of Libya. Distressingly, most scholars are not optimistic about the use of renewable energy or advanced machinery to tackle this issue as these efforts may be diverted to more pressing issues including the natural fuel crisis.

Alex Tapscott at Fortune projects that we may soon be able to trade and transport across different environments and jurisdictions. NFTs are set to revolutionise our relationship with the internet, with each other and our fundamental understanding of trade and exchange as we know it.

Analysing the Potential Benefits and Shortcomings of the Farm Laws

Yash Singh
St. Xavier's College

In September 2020, the Indian Parliament initiated three agricultural laws that were jointly referred to as the “Farm Bills”. It was being said by the Government that these laws were passed to alleviate the farmers of all the distress they have faced over the years. However, the bill was heavily denounced by the opposition and a large number of farmers also expressed dissent by gathering around the national capital in what was termed as the largest protest in the modern-day world. To understand how beneficial these laws were, one needs to understand the potential impact it was supposed to bring.

The first law in this bill was The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Service. This law can be split into two parts. Price assurance would have helped in protecting the interest of the farmer through a legal agreement that would ensure farmers of a certain price for their crop before they start growing it. It would prevent the buyer to exploit the farmer by providing a dispute settlement mechanism by an established authority. Farm service implies that farmers can get into contract farming with large corporations. This aspect was seen as having the potential to generate large investments from the private sector as corporates support the farmers in growing the required crop as per the contract.

The second law was The Farming Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act 2020. It enabled the farmers to sell their produce outside of the Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) yards. These are controlled by the state governments and contribute to a large source of tax income earned by states like Punjab and Haryana. Although the farmers are permitted to sell in these yards by law, many small farmers can be found selling outside of these as well.

Lastly The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill 2020 was not a new addition but was amended. It prevents hoarding of essential commodities to create artificial demand and goods are added to this list at the government’s discretion. For instance, in March 2020 government added masks and sanitisers to this list to prevent people from amassing these. The amendment made to these is regarding certain goods being taken out from it and the government will be adding these and regulating their supply and price only in cases of war, famine, natural calamities, and high price rise. For perishable goods, the government was to control the pricing after a 50% increase in their retail price, whereas for non-perishable items an increase above 100% in their retail price would have resulted in intervention.

Although the bills were passed for the benefit of the farmers, there are a few downsides to these as well. The farmers were not comfortable with the idea of corporate farming as they believed that the corporations may put some legal clauses to exploit them.

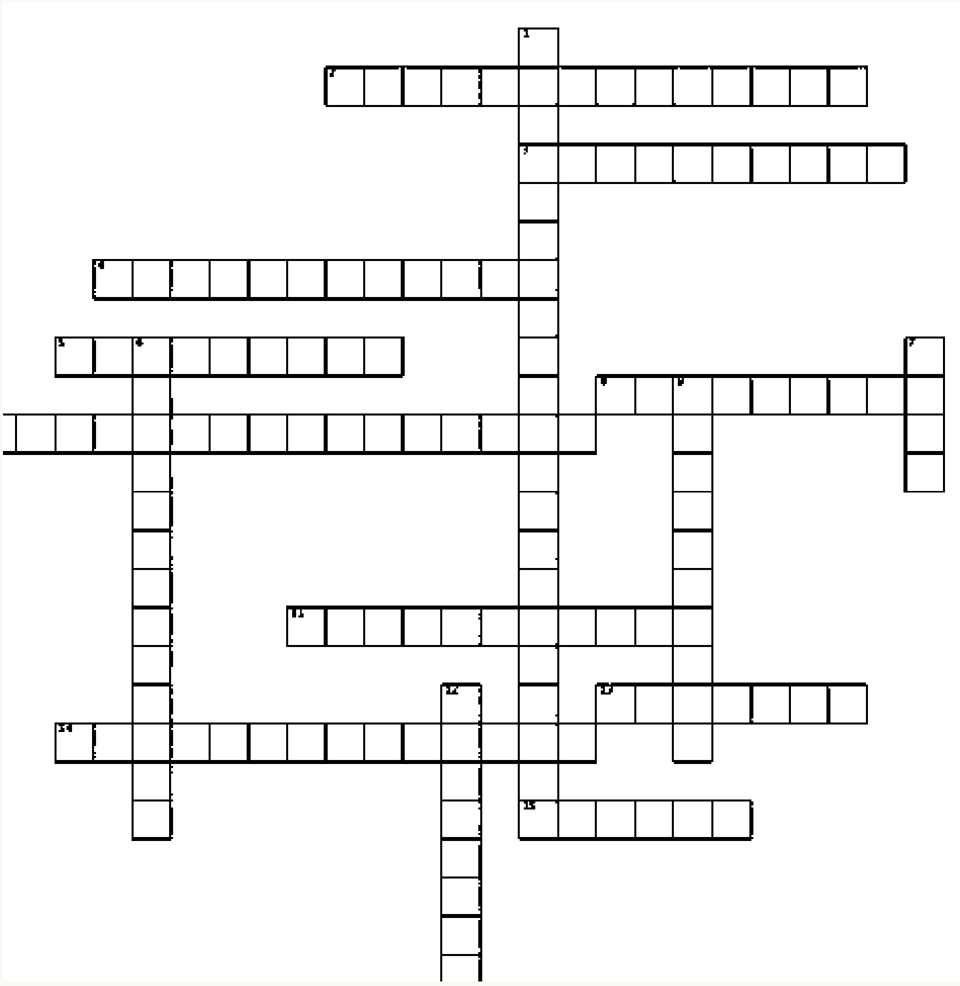
A major issue with the farmers was with regarding the Minimum Support Price (MSP) because currently selling in the APMC yards enables them the MSP for certain crops, whereas selling outside the state to a buyer may not assure them the same. Moreover, this amendment would have benefitted the large farmers more than the small farmers as the latter were already selling their crops independently in their state frequently. Moreover, the high cost of logistics and transportation would not have made this amendment feasible for small farmers.

The amendments made to the essential commodities act were not harmful to the farmers as they and the retail stores got the benefit of selling the items until the price levels breached the 50% and 100% increase in retail price for the respective commodities. However, it had the potential to hurt the consumer’s pocket.

India being a culturally diverse country has people from various states growing different agricultural produce. Thus, there shall not be a centrally enforced law controlling the farming activities in the country. Albeit the laws had many benefits for the farmers, they also had their flaws which should be worked upon and made more flexible for adoption by different regions.

Crossword

Are you a stock-market freak? Here is a crossword to test your acuity in the field!



ACROSS

2. Digital asset created by computer.
3. Periodic price movements and changes experienced by the markets.
4. Account that holds your shares in electronic format.
5. Act of buying security in one market and selling it in another market.
8. A bond issued with no collateral.
10. Assets that can be sold over the internet.
11. Financial professional who buys and sells stocks.
13. Investment alternatives.
14. Collection of stocks that you invest to make profit.
15. Benchmark index of BSE.

DOWN

1. Investment that can be changed from its initial form into another form.
6. Shares of very large and well recognized companies with financial performances.
7. It measures the expected move in a stock relative to movements in the overall market.
9. Period in which assets rise continuously.
12. Standardized number of shares defined by a stock exchange.

ANSWERS

ACROSS

2. Cryptocurrency
3. Volatility
4. Demat Account
5. Arbitrage
8. Debenture
10. Non-Fungible Token
11. Stock Broker
13. Avenues
14. Stock Portfolio
15. Sensex

DOWN

1. Convertible Securities
6. Blue Chip Stock
7. Beta
9. Bull Market Stock
12. Board Lot

From the Editors-in-Chief

Being appointed the Secretary of Editorial of the Economics Association was a dream come true. It has thus far been the most significant achievement of my college days, both personally as well as professionally. I am indebted to the teachers in-charge and the Core Team of the association for placing faith in me for this job, for it has only enabled me to do what I love most — write and edit, and do it more and better.

From conducting an early-morning writing session for all team members to working towards Instagram content; inviting articles from undergraduates around the country, and burning the midnight oil for the magazine — all of it has been nothing short of an adventure. Each word I penned for the Association came out with utmost conviction, and thanks to the bulk and wide range of work on my plate, the writer in me has witnessed a stark growth.

They say that a leader is nothing without a great team, and rightly so. None of what has come about during the year would have been possible without our remarkable team of writers, who wrote exceedingly well, never said no, were extremely receptive of feedback, and punctual with deadlines. Collectively as a team, Econ-Expressions is our greatest feat of the year. It has been a beautiful journey seeing it transform bit-by-bit, from individual articles into an entire newsletter, and as it all draws near its culmination, we couldn't be more impatient to hold it in our hands!

Lastly, I'd like to express my gratitude towards the Marketing Department for designing the magazine with such detail, precision and aesthetic. We surely could not have done it without them.

- Rishika Chutani

My college experience has truly been like the sine curve — ups and downs across the two years. Even though this mostly online ride has not been perfect, it was still worthwhile. And in the few months that I have been in the position of the Secretary of Editorial of the Economics Association, I have come a long way from where I started.

For this, I express my sincere regards to the Editorial Team, all other departments, the Core Team, and the teacher-in-charges for giving me this opportunity and creating such a euphoric environment to work in. From editing the write-ups of various seminars, writing captions for our Instagram page and researching and writing for our magazine, it has been quite a lot of learning and a wholesome experience overall.

As the Editorial Team, our dearest feat has been writing for and editing our annual journal. With utmost dedication and enthusiasm, all our members, Rishika, and I worked for over two months to make the newsletter dream into a reality. And so, we the whole-heartedly hope that you take home lots of new things from the newest edition of Econ Expressions, and our efforts bear fruits!

- Megh Utsav

CREDITS

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Rishika Chutani
Megh Utsav

MARKETING HEADS

Yukti Mahajan
Manya Bassi

SPECIAL THANKS

Araba Kongbam
Ridhima Ahluwalia

EDITORIAL BOARD

Abhinav Mankotia
Aditya Anand Jha
Anjali Rao
Arsha TS
Harshita Rao
Ishita Garg
Kashaa Swami
Mahek Gupta
Nupur Mehra
Reva Singh
Ruchitha Reddy
Vishavjeet Kamboj

MARKETING TEAM

Ananya Chopra
Disha Jindal
Haripriya Muralidhar
Harshita Rao
Ishita Garg
Mahek Gupta
Priyanshi Talwar
Ritika Sharma
Riya Kapoor
Ruchitha Reddy

Econ-Expressions'22

Annual Newsletter
Economics Department, Sri Venkateswara College