
Social Problems in India

New Topics from Ram Ahuja Book





Poverty

Facts on Poverty in India

Tribals, Dalits and labour class including farm workers in villages and casual workers in cities are still very poor and make the poorest class in India. Sixty per cent of the poor still reside in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The reason for these states to be in the category of the poorest states is that 85 per cent of tribal people live there. According to the Global Hunger Index (GHI) report 2012, by the International Food Research Institute, India ranks 97th in global hunger index. Though there is no shortage of food production in India, our nation still has the highest percentage of underweight children under five. India is working hard to become a superpower, but what about these poor people in India, as our nation still lags behind in improving GHI.

India, at present, has a greater share of the poor around the world. Thirty years ago, India was home to one-fifth of the world's poor but now it is home to one-third of poor people. This means we now have a larger share of poor in India than thirty years ago, 66.5 crore Indians live in extreme poverty, about 4.9 per cent of the population. About 41.6 Indians escape poverty every second. India is on track to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030.

Poverty in India

India represents a dichotomy in development. According to UNIDO's yearbook of Statistics 2010' India has emerged as one of the world's top ten countries in industrial production. It ranks ninth in world industrial production and tenth in Gross National Production (GNP), yet it has a large population that is extremely poor. The United Nations Human Development Index (2013), based on three indicators - life expectancy, access to education and income levels - ranks in India 136th among 186 countries.

According to Ansari and Akhtar (2012), at the beginning of the new millennium, 26 crore people in India did not have income to access a consumption basket which defines the poverty line. Of these, 75 per cent were in the rural areas. India is home to 22 per cent of the world's poor. Such a high incidence of poverty is a matter of concern in view of the fact that poverty eradication has been one of the major objectives of the development planning process.

In India, the last decade of the 20th century has seen a visible shift in the focus of development planning from, mere expansion of production of goods and services and the consequent growth of per capita income, to planning for enhancement of human well-being. The notion of human well-being itself is broadly conceived to include not only consumption of goods and services in general, but more specifically to ensure that the basic material requirements of all sections of the population, especially those below the poverty line are met and that they have access to basic services such as health and education. This approach has resulted in the reduction in poverty along with overall improvement in the quality of life.

According to the data released by the Planning Commission, through poverty has shown biggest drop, one in five Indian is still below poverty line as the share of BPL population in the total population is 21.9 per cent, or 27 crore (the government has set the bar low, defining as BPL anyone earning ₹ 27.20 or less in rural areas and upto ₹ 33.30 a day in urban area).

In spite of reduction in the number of poor across the country, income disparity between rich and poor is growing rapidly.

Action Plan of Alleviating Rural Poverty

For reducing poverty in the rural area, following plan of action may be suggested:

1. Strengthening credit disbursing agencies.
2. Providing cheap power supply for agricultural and industrial use.
3. Activating cooperative societies for selling products of household industries.
4. Making allocations in poverty alleviation programmes flexible and sanctioning special allocations to district/block/village showing good results.
5. Integrating varied poverty alleviation programmes in one or two schemes and making the availability of benefits easier.
6. Developing human resources by focusing on education, health and skill programmes.
7. Introducing double distributive system for the destitute and the extremely poor.
8. Creating social awareness to arrest increasing debt growth among the poor.
9. Improving animal husbandry and developing dairy and poultry farming.
10. Activating Panchayats to focus on adult education programme, road construction and maintaining tree plantations.

11. Activating NGOs in role-play like digging of tanks, tree plantations, training of youth, imparting skills to women, creating social awareness among the people, and so forth.

Solutions

Poverty is a complex issue that affects millions of people, but some of the problems that cause it to exist can be fixed.

1. As over two-third of the population live in rural areas, public investment should focus on developing agriculture and basic infrastructures. It is time to improve agricultural productivity and employ the jobless or underemployed migrating to the cities. There is a need to provide technological support to traditional craftsmen and agriculture - based small scale industries.
2. If we want to change the scenario, then change is required in the economic policies, in our attitude towards poor and we have to accept the fact that without supporting rural economy we cannot alleviate poverty.
3. India needs to adopt the right development model. It has to realize that by blindly following GDP growth, it is only promoting inequality that sustains by keeping the poor in poverty.
4. India needs an economy that supports millions of small and medium enterprises that are suitable to employ low skilled poor people. It needs to promote women empowerment through education and health care; it will greatly help in dealing with poverty led by the population growth.
5. It is time when the government should start implementing its policies, ensure rule of law and simplify tax regime to encourage entrepreneurship.

Stress Points

1. Farmers must get all facilities for irrigation.
2. They should be trained and educated.
3. Agriculture must be made profitable.
4. The ever-rising population should be checked.
5. Family planning schemes should be introduced.
6. More and more industries should be set up to meet the needs of our country.
7. Activating Panchayats to focus on eradication of superstitions.
8. Developing human resources by focusing on education, health and skill programmes.
9. Improving animal husbandry and developing diary and poultry farming.

Unemployment

According to the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) report, the unemployment rate was at an all-time high of 6.1 per cent in 2017-18. The report also says that male youth had an unemployment rate of 17.4 per cent and 18.7 per cent in rural and urban areas, respectively while women youth had rates of 13.6 per cent and 27.2 percent respectively in 2017-18. The employees in the country are estimated to grow by 8 million per annum for the next decade and a half, which is a little part of the job requirements in the economy, with a lot of workforce still finding employment.

With fears that India is experiencing jobless growth and uncertainty abounding that the country may not be able to cash in on its 'demographic bonus', - the world's largest working-age population of 869 million by 2020 - because of limited progress on health, education and job skills. Seven warning signs are:

1. In the case of women living in urban areas, the unemployment rate was 12.4 per cent, while in rural areas, it was 6.4 per cent. The overall unemployment among women was 7.7 per cent across the country.
2. As many as 60 per cent of those with jobs do not find employment for the entire year, indicating widespread 'under-employment' and temporary jobs.
3. The formation of companies has slowed down to 2009 levels.
4. Companies are growing at 2 per cent, the lowest in five years.
5. With large corporations and public-sector banks financially stressed, the average size of companies in India is reducing, at a time when well-organized large companies are central to creating a job.
6. The statistics show the unemployment rate in India from 2007 to 2017 was estimated to be 3.6 per cent.
7. Unemployment rate in India increased to 6.10 per cent in 2018 from 3.52 per cent in 2017. There are around 3 crore unemployed seeking jobs now.

Suggestions

1. **Control on population growth:** It is disturbing as well as distressing to find that the standard of living of an individual is still below the desired level and unemployment is on the increase. The growth of population should be checked in order to solve unemployment problem. It is only when a real welfare state comes into existence that the curse of unemployment will disappear from our country.
2. **Development of non-agricultural subsidiary industries:** In India agriculture witnesses seasonal unemployment. Thus, in villages, some agriculture-related industries must be developed so that the farmer is able

to earn something during his free time. For this, the subsidiary activities of animal husbandry, poultry farming, gardening, milk business, etc. can be developed.

3. **Development of small and cottage industries:** Small and cottage industries should be encouraged so that people get employment at low capital investment. For this, such small-scale industries must be developed which are labour intensive. This will give part-time occupation to agriculturists and relieve the poor people who depend on these small decaying industries such as weaving, making carpets and mats or utensils of bell-metal. The government alone can help them with a loan and find a market for their goods. If these industries are revived, the rural people will live in happiness and peace.
4. **Full capacity utilization:** Many industries are working at less than their full capacity. Such industries must be encouraged to utilize their full capacity, so that employment opportunities may be increased in such industries. Investment in heavy and basic industries and consumer goods industries should be increased to provide more employment with more production.
5. **Exploitation of natural resources:** The government should search for such natural resources by which new industries may be established. It is a known fact that natural resources are in abundance in India, that is why it was named as the 'golden bird'.
6. **Increase in investment:** To increase the employment opportunities, household savings must be encouraged, so that more capital formation may be done leading to increase in investments. This would assist in the establishment of new industries and employment opportunities would increase.
7. **Demand and supply of labour:** The demand and supply of labour should be coordinated in various production areas. For this, the future demand and supply of labour should be estimated and arrangements for their training, etc. be made accordingly, so that the labourers in excess of the demand may find employment, elsewhere.
8. **Establishment of powerhouse in villages:** About 80 per cent of the population of the country lives in villages. To remove unemployment among the 80 per cent population the 'Bhagwati Committee' gave suggestions for the establishment of powerhouses in villages so that small industries may develop and no working be stopped in villages at night due to darkness.
9. The villages should become self-sufficient in their economy so that the villagers would not run to the cities in search of jobs. This would ensure that the large-cities are not overcrowded with a huge population. It would help maintain the balance between the job/vacancy and the job seekers.

10. **Promote industrialization:** So that more job opportunities can be created for the workers. The focus should be on heavy industries that employ thousands of man-power of varied skills. There is a growing demand for skilled people in various industries.
11. **Other suggestions for the solution of the problem of unemployment and underemployment:**
- a. Predetermination of a national policy for employment.
 - b. Formation of all India manpower services.
 - c. Change in the education policy.
 - d. Rapid industrial development.
 - e. Survey the human resources of the country.
 - f. Strengthen the job counseling services.
 - g. Maintain at least one office at each community development division.
 - h. Provide facilities to construct rural houses.
 - i. Expansion of small irrigation facilities.
 - j. Agricultural service centres to be established so that the technical people get employment in villages also.
 - k. There is a need for industrial, vocational and technical education.
 - l. Large-scale industries should be encouraged so as to create increased avenues for employment.
 - m. Planning should be on right lines so that public money may be properly utilized.

Population Explosion

A rapid growth rate in the population of the country was observed after independence as a result of a decline in death rates due to various health interventions. The average annual addition of population from 2001-2011 was almost 2.3 times the average annual addition of population during 1951 to 1961. However, according to the World Bank projections, the average annual addition of population is expected to reach 19.3 million by 2021 and will decline to 13.6 million by 2031.

Advantages of Population Growth

Economic Growth

The advantages of population growth include increased economic development, availability of labour and possibility of innovation. However, population growth may result in high unemployment rates, environmental degradation, food shortage and high dependency rates. The growth of population equates to increased purchases of items such as clothing, educational material,

food and other household goods. In addition, an increased number of family members encourages the movement of families into large houses. This results in an increased trade, which in essence supports several sectors of the economy like manufacturing, agriculture, construction and home improvement industries. Moreover, an increased population translates to an increased in tax revenue. This enables the government to have easy access to resources for its normal operations, security and infrastructural development.

Availability of Labour

Population growth causes an increase in the labour force. This ensures efficient utilization of resources and optimal productivity in sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing. Availability of labour is an essential tool for economic development.

Innovation

Population growth encourages innovations in fields such as medicine agriculture and production. In addition, population growth has led to a greater consciousness for more industrial and agricultural productivity to meet the demand of a large number of people. For example, the assembly line was devised as an adaptation for the need for more industrial production.

Disadvantages of Population Growth

Environmental Degradation

Rising populations may lead to deforestation so as to create more land for human settlement and agriculture. Deforestation greatly affects the weather cycle and may lead to climate change. An increased population translates to more environmental pollution through the release of greenhouse gases from industrial machinery and improper waste disposal. This results in environmental degradation and may cause loss of biodiversity and health complications.

Unemployment

In some situations, the rapid increase in population may surpass the number of employment opportunities created in the economy. This results in widespread unemployment. Unemployment has several negative effects on the society such as increased crime rates. Political instability, reduced standard of living and a decline in economic development.

Food Shortage

Unchecked population growth without an equivalent agricultural development may lead to food shortage. Factors such as reduced agricultural land and environmental degradation contribute to reduced agricultural yields, hence shortage of food.

Ageing Dependency

Increased population growth coupled with high life expectancy rates result in an increase in the number of aged population. This leads to high dependency rates, hence limiting economic development.

Property Shortage

Population growth encourages rural to urban migration in search of better employment and business opportunities. This leads to overcrowding in urban areas, resulting in shortage of housing and other social amenities. The shortage of housing in some underdeveloped countries led to the growth of informal settlements and slums.

Role of NGOs in population growth control

Success of any programme depends on its acceptance by the people. Unless the community is fully involved in the programme and it considers it to be its own programme, it may not be possible to achieve the desired results. This can be achieved in a better way by the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as these have very intimate relations with the people. Their role in removing deep-rooted beliefs favouring large families and male children, improving female literacy, raising statutory age of girls for marriage, essential newborn care, birth spacing, etc. can be very significant. Such organizations not only have the capacity to reach the remote areas but their activities are cost-effective also. The Department of Family Welfare has launched several schemes over the years to ensure better participation of the NGOs in the family welfare programme. Some of these schemes are: (a) Helping NGOs to the extent of 90 per cent of the cost of the project on promotion of small family norm and population control schemes. (b) Wide publicity by the government to inform voluntary organizations to come forward to undertake these schemes. (c) A large number of regional conferences were held in last four to five years to increase the involvement of the NGOs. (d) Recognizing its larger organizations in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and Lucknow as Mother Units for identifying small NGOs in their areas and giving them grants for approval schemes. (e) Setting up State Standing Committees on

Voluntary Action, set up under the chairmanship of the Family Welfare Secretary with power to sanction upto ₹ 10 lakh per project. (f) Asking states to identify one institution in the NGO sector for the purpose of providing training to health workers. (g) Arranging study tours for NGOs from states with poor community participation to better performing states.

Vulnerable Section

Facts and Statistics on Elderly (According to Census 2011)

1. The sex ratio among elderly people was as high as 1,028 in 1951 which subsequently dropped but again reached up to 1,033 in 2011.
2. The old-age dependency ratio climbed to 14.2 per cent in 2011 for India as a whole. For females and males, the value of the ratio was 14.9 per cent and 13.6 per cent and the old-age dependency ratios are 15.1 and 12.4 for rural and urban areas respectively.
3. The percentage of older persons, 60 years and above, is projected to go up to 19 per cent in 2050, increasing three-fold from around 100 million to 300 million by 2050, according to a population fund's India ageing report 2017.
4. The per cent of literates among elderly persons increased from 27 per cent in 1991 to 44 per cent in 2011. The literacy rates among elderly females (28%) is less than half of the literacy rate among elderly males (59%).

Ram Janambhumi-Babri Masjid Dispute

On 9 November 2019, the Supreme Court settled the centuries old Hindu-Muslim conflict that lingered in courts for nearly seventy years by handing over entire 2.77 acres of disputed land for construction of Ram Temple and set up a trust for the purpose. The Suni Waqf Board was allocated five acres of land at a prominent alternative location in the temple town. The unanimous verdict was in favour of deity Ram Lalla - one of the three litigans at Ayodhya because Hindu parties could produce better evidence to substantiate their rights. The verdict given after a marathon hearing of 40 days (200 plus hours) without being distracted, making it one of the greatest judicial verdicts in the world. Supreme Court's verdict on one of India's most community sensitive dispute case is a 'victory of the rule of law' which has balanced the interest of all parties. The dispute has been settled through arguments, evidences and records by the Supreme Court. The judgement is based on the evidences, facts and findings of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

The verdict is significant not just for its value in providing a sense of resolution and closure on such a long smoldering issue. It is significant because it is

directly related to the shifts that are currently underway in India - state institutions and its changing relationship with faith and customs, identity-based political mobilization and the inter-community dynamics on the ground. The Ayodhya chapter, it seems, has finally closed with the past burying its dead and will prove to be a mile stone and further strengthen India's unity in diversity in the cultural commitment.

Suggestions for the Eradication of Communalism

The following measures may be taken for the eradication of communalism:

1. **Abolition of communal parties:** All the political parties which thrive on religious loyalties should be banned or abolished by the government. Even non-political cultural organizations should always be kept under constant vigil so that they cannot preach communalism.
2. **Transmission of the past heritage:** Feelings of nationalism should be inculcated in the minds of people by reminding them about the glorious moments in history when Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were combined to safeguard the interest of the country.
3. **Public Opinion:** Efforts should be made through mass media for changing the attitude of people towards other communities. People must be aware of the evils of the communalism. Attention should be given for equal development of both the communities.
4. **Inter-religious marriage:** Youth organizations and other types of associations should be formed in every locality to give the opportunity to people of different communities to come closer and known each other. This may help them to practice inter-religious marriages which will lessen the social distance among the members of different religious groups.

The Constitution of India via its Article 355 says that it shall be the duty of the Union to protect every state against external aggression and internal disturbance and to ensure that the government of every state is carried on in accordance with the provisions of Constitution. But this constitutional provision by itself has not been able to check the sporadic events of communal violence in various parts of India.

Both the government and people should make efforts for eradication of communal tension and conflict.

Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019

The CAA amends Citizenship Act, 1955 to facilitate Indian Citizenship to non-Muslim immigrants Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, Parsis and Jains facing 'persecution' in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, who entered in the country on or before 31 December 2014. CAA also relaxes provisions for citizenship by naturalization - immigrants can become Indian Citizens after residing in the country for six years instead of eleven years.

In Chapter 2 of the Constitution, Article 5 and Article 11 specify that there are two bases for citizenship - geographical and one relating to blood. The Citizenship Act added two additional base - registration and naturalization. The 1955 Act has been amended in 1957, 1960, 1985, 1986, 1992, 2003, 2005 and 2015 without causing much furore. The issue with the current Act is that it is unconstitutional on the ground that in a secular nation, religion cannot be the basis of citizenship whether territorial or extra-territorial. It is also a violation of Article 14 of the Constitution which guarantees the right to equality.

Features

1. The Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 aims to make changes in the Citizenship Act, the Passport Act and the Foreigners Act and will grant the illegal non-Muslims migrants from three countries, the status of legal migrants.
2. The Act does not apply to the tribal areas of Tripura, Mizoram, Assam and Meghalaya because they are included in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.
3. The states and areas under the Inner Line Permit (ILP) system have also been excluded. The ILP is a special mandatory for citizens from other parts of India to enter Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland.

Arguments in Favour of CAA

1. It is against the infiltrators.
2. Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 is a way of correcting historical mistake that was done during India's partition.
3. The Act only extends citizenship, but does not take away anyone's citizenship. The Act (CAA) just expedites acquiring citizenship to prosecuted minorities. It does not change the basic structure of the Constitution.
4. Most of the opposition to CAA is crassly political and ignorance of a large section of society.
5. CAA only gives priority to most persecuted amongst the lot, seeking refuge in India.

6. Muslims in India do not have to worry as this Act concern only migrants.

Arguments Against CAA

1. This Act is against the spirit and values of Constitution.
2. This law is violative of the basic principles of the Constitution, which never put religion as a criterion for obtaining Indian Citizenship.
3. Religion as an instrument of determining citizenship was rejected by the constituent assembly.
4. The Act points out the demography and linguistic uniqueness of North-eastern states.
5. Citizenship cannot be determined or linked to religion.
6. CAA is discriminatory against Muslims. Religion cannot be the basis of discrimination. It puts the Muslims. Religion cannot be the basis of discrimination. It puts the Muslim Community under a glare of mistrust and alienation. The cutoff date (31 December 2014) is arbitrary.
7. There is no clarity in the Act on which criteria is to be applied on determining the scale of persecution.
8. CAA is ambitious, unnecessary, deceptive and unconstitutional.

Protests and demonstrations against the CAA first erupted in the Northeast and then spread across the country. People of all communities are involved in the protests. General opinion was that the implication of the CAA has not been fully thought through. It is a bundle that undermines Indian ethos, values, citizen rights, foreign relations and international image. However, the implementation of the CAA will be dependent upon the ruling of the Supreme Court. On the issue the Apex Court has an opportunity to pass a judgement that is pragmatic, constitutional and restore peace in society at large.

Regionalism

The Effects of Regionalism

Regionalism has both positive and negative effects on the nation, but negative effects are more.

1. On the positive side, it helps in strengthening the nation. Creation of new states has helped the nation as these have removed the fissures which would have continued to exist and may have become fatal.
2. It has brought imbalanced regional development and regional issues to focus and opportunity to solve them at the same time regionalism affects negatively as:

- (i) It hampers the economic growth. The instability created by it erodes the faith of investors.
- (ii) It created serious internal security challenges which can be exploited by forces not favourable to India.
- (iii) It affects the politics of the country, as regional demands become national demands. It has many times resulted in an extra burden on the exchequer in the form of grants, special packages, etc.

Solutions to Contain Regionalism

1. Political parties should try to avoid partisanship. They should aim at bringing a national unity besides all sectarian interests.
2. Economic development of our country must be uniform and measures must be taken to ensure it. The development of underdeveloped, backward regions and Naxal hit areas must become a priority to avoid discontent of people
3. The role of National Integration council must be revamped to solve conflicting regional aspirations.
4. The existing mechanisms like zonal councils, interstate council, national development council, etc. can be strengthened.
5. Creating strong interdependence among states. Each state must see other as a partner in development. This will help in ensuring all-round development of the state.
6. New institutional structures like NITI Aayog can be utilized to find out the solutions to the problems of the state.
7. Uniform development of all regions should be taken up so that no region feels isolated and left behind.

Child Labour

Facts and Statistics on the Issue of Child Labour in India

1. One in every 11 children in India is working.
2. 80 per cent of working children live in India's villages, where most of them work in agriculture. Some of them also work in household industries and are employed in home-based businesses.
3. More than half of the 5.5 million working children in India are concentrated in five states - Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.
4. Adolescents doing hazardous work form 20.7 per cent of those employed in this age group, while almost 25 per cent of adults work in hazardous conditions.

5. Children between 14-17 years engaged in hazardous work account for 62.8 per cent of India's child labour workforce.
6. Nearly 10 per cent of adolescents working in hazardous conditions are working in family enterprises.
7. 56 per cent of the working adolescents are no longer studying.
8. More boys (38.7 million) than girls (8.8 million) are involve in hazardous work.
9. In 2018-19, out of 35,000 child labour complaints received nationwide, begging constituted the highest (45%), followed by employment in restaurants and dhabhas (23%).

Steps to Overcome the Problem

Child Labour Laws

The Indian government has done a great job in an attempt to overcome child labour. Factory Act, Mines Act, Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, Right To Free and Compulsory Education Act were framed to safeguard children from labourious tasks and helping them to rise. The government has implemented new rules for employers of child labourers. These employers can deploy children only in non-hazardous work. They have to ensure that all underage workers are sent to night schools in efforts to eradicate child labour. Amendments made to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act prescribes severe punishment for people found guilty of retaining bonded labour. The amendment stipulates rigorous imprisonment for those who force children to beg, handle or carry human waste and animal carcasses.

Awareness

Parents must be given awareness about child abuse and bad effects of child labour. This will bring change in the society and minimize the cases of child labour. Many NGOs and agencies like Bachpan Bachao Andolan, CARE India, Child Rights and You, Global march against child labour, RIDE India, Childline etc. have been working to eradicate child labour in India and need support from government to make more people aware specifically the poor people living in villages or slum areas.

Social Alertness

Society must pay attention to the child labour going on in cities, factories or shops. They must report the cases to the police. It is a social etiquette to stop child

labour running in your society and supporting those children toward education field.

Honour Killings

An honour killing is the murder of member of a family/social group by other members, due to the belief of the perpetrator (s) that the victim has brought dishonour or shame upon the family/group by his/her act. The apparent dishonor or shame could be caused for having a relationship that the family/group considers to be inappropriate, having sex outside marriage, dressing in ways which are deemed inappropriate, etc. Honour killings are rooted in tradition and cannot be justified by any major world religion because none of the major world religions condones honour-related crimes. The most prominent areas where honour killings occur in India are northern regions. Honour killings are especially seen in Haryana, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. Honour killings have notably increased in some Indian states which have led to the supreme court of India, issuing notices to both the Indian central government and six states to take preventative measures against honour killings.

Honour killing is different from the dowry deaths that are also a very common practice in India as, in the case of dowry deaths, the perpetrators of that action claim that they have not been given enough material rewards for accepting the woman into the family. In that case there is a lot of harassment from the in-laws and many times, it has been noted that the wife commits suicide rather than being killed by the in-laws, though it has to be said that she has been mentally killed, if not physically.

In India, according to a report, more than 1,000 young people die every year owing to honour killings linked to forced marriages. Such killings have been reported from those areas the most where the Khap Panchayats are active. These include Jhajjar, Jind, Fatehabad and Rohtak districts in Haryana and Meerut, Baghpat and Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh. These groups, though not directly involved in the crime, have provided the catalytic support to this heinous crime.

In today's scenario, if a young couple wishes to marry outside their caste and community, their endeavour does not received active support from the state. The procedural requirements of the Special Marriages Act continue to pose difficulties for the consenting adults as a minimum waiting period of one month is required before they can marry. Instances of non-intervention by the police in providing protection to young couples continue to occur with impunity.

However, in our country, honour killing has been made a separate provision having severe punishment.

As is evident, honour killings are directed mostly against women and girls. The large number of such killings in the country in recent years has prompted both the government and society to think about this social menace and take measures to prevent it from happening further. First of all, the mentality of the people needs to be changed. It means that parents should always accept their children's wishes regarding marriage as it is they who have to lead a life with their life partners and if they are not satisfied they will lead a horrible married life which might even end in suicide. Second, we need to have stricter laws to tackle these kinds of killings as this is a crime which cannot be pardoned and it needs to be the Hindu Marriage Act can be amended.

According to the latest National Crime Record Bureau statistics, honour killings in India have grown. This spike could be a result of more vigilant reporting of these crimes, which earlier largely went unreported. A Supreme Court 2006 judgment on such killings has called it 'barbaric'. There is nothing honourable in such killings, and in fact, they are nothing but barbaric and shameful acts of murder committed by brutal, feudal-minded persons who deserve harsh punishment'. There is no separate law to punish those found guilty of such murders, and prosecutions are usually among various sections of the Indian Penal Code for homicide and culpable homicide not amounting to murder. Several efforts have been made to create a separate law dealing with honour killings but they have been unsuccessful so far.

Illiteracy

Facts about Illiteracy in India

1. The basic definition of literacy is having the ability to read and write.
2. 47.78 per cent of school children are girls. In the next census, they will be calculated as illiterate women, which would then have a ripple effect on the education of their children.
3. Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh are amongst the bottom five states in terms of literacy of Dalits.
4. India's literacy rate has increased six times since the end of the British rule from 12 per cent to 74 per cent in 2011, yet, India has the world's largest population of illiterates.
5. The literacy rate of female Dalits in Bihar is 38.5 per cent in 2011. It is far behind India's progress trend.
6. 60 lakh children in India are still out-of-school.

7. India has rolled-out the Right to Education Act but is yet to witness its complete and proper implementation. Only 0.92 per cent of government schools are yet to fully implement the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009.
8. India is ranked 123rd out of 135 countries in female literacy rate.
9. In the South Asian region, India ranks fourth, behind Sri Lanka with a female-male ratio of 0.97 and Bangladesh with a female - male ratio of 0.85.
10. The percentage of women to the total number of school teachers has gone up from 29.3 per cent in 1991 to 47.16 per cent in 2013-14.
11. Despite government programmes, India's literacy rate increased only 'sluggishly'.
12. There is a wide gender disparity in the literacy rate in India - effective literacy rates (age 7 and above) in 2011 were 80.9 per cent for men and 64.60 per cent for women.
13. The low female literacy rate has had a dramatically negative impact on family planning and population stabilization efforts in India.
14. The census provided a positive indication that growth in female literacy in the 2001-2011 decadal period, which means the gender gap appears to be narrowing.

Urbanization

Some Facts about Urbanization in India

- As per 2018 data, a large number of Indian cities have a population between 3,00,000 and 1 million inhabitants.
- There are 120 medium-sized cities of such population size and only five urban settlements with 20 million or more inhabitants.
- The seven largest cities in India will become even bigger by 2030.
- Prospects suggest that the population growth of India's capital New Delhi will increase about one third within the next decade up to 38.9 million people.
- Of the 121 crore Indians, 83.3 crore live in rural areas while 37.7 crore stay in urban areas i.e. approx. 32 per cent of the population.

Cyber Crimes

Cyber Crimes can be defined as the unlawful acts where the computer is used either as a tool or a target or both. Cyber Crime include illegal access, illegal interception, system interference, data interference, misuse of devices and fraud. In today's digital world, the amount of personal data being generated, transmitted and stored on to various digital devices is growing. The critical nature of this data and the complexity of the systems that support its transmission have created a gamut of cyber risk and crimes. To encourage the use of digital payment methods

by a larger proportion of population, redressal of such cyber-crimes should be given utmost priority by mobile service providers and concerned authorities. A 77 per cent rise in number of cybercrime cases was observed in 2017, compared to 2016 (NCRB).

Types of Cyber Crimes

Cyber Crimes can be categorized in two ways:

1. The crimes in which computers are the target. Examples of such crimes are hacking, virus attacks, DOS attack, etc.
2. The crimes in which the computer is used as a weapon. These types of crimes include cyber terrorism, IPR violations, credit card frauds, EFT frauds, pornography, etc.

E-crimes such as money frauds, hacking of bank accounts, online scams and social media threats like stalking, pornography, bullying, defamation and online harassment are tremendously increasing. The internet has been misused for terrorism, copyright infringement, fraud, software piracy, illegal trafficking, and web defacement. According to the National Investigation Agency, every sixth cybercrime in India is committed through social media. Different kinds of cybercrimes are:

1. **Theft:** This crime occurs when a person violates copyrights and downloads music, movies, games, and software.
2. **Unauthorized access:** It means any kind of access without the permission of either of the rightful or person in charge of the computer, computer system or computer network. This is a type of crime wherein a person's sensitive information can be accessed. Some hackers hack for personal monetary gains, such as to stealing the credit card information, transferring money from various bank accounts to their own account followed by withdrawal of money. Government websites are the most targeted sites for the hackers.
3. **Malicious software:** These are internet-based software or programmes that are used to disrupt a network. The software is used to gain access to a system to steal sensitive information or data or causing damage to software present in the system. Malware or malicious software can be used for stealing, encrypting or deleting sensitive data as well as for hijacking computing functions.
4. **Web hijacking:** Web hijacking means taking forceful control of another person's website. In this case, the owner of the website loses control over his website and its content.

5. **Child pornography:** The internet is being highly used as a medium to sexually abuse children. The children are viable victims to the cybercrime. Computers and internet have become a necessity for every household, the children have got an easy access to the internet. There is an easy access to the pornographic contents on the internet. Paedophiles lure the children and start actual exploitation of the children by offering them some money or falsely promising them good opportunities in life. Under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offence (POCSO) Act, 2013 whoever uses a child or children for pornographic purposes shall be punished with imprisonment upto five years and liable to fine.
6. **Identity theft:** This has become a major problem for people using the internet for cash transactions and banking services. In this cybercrime, a criminal accesses data about a person's bank account, credit cards, social security, debit card and other sensitive information to syphon money or to buy things online in the victim's name. It can result in major financial losses for the victim and even spoil the victim's credit history.
7. **Cyber stalking:** This is a kind of online harassment wherein the victim is subjected to a barrage of online messages and emails. Typically, these stalkers know their victims and instead of resorting to offline stalking, they use the internet to stalk. However, if they notice that cyberstalking is not having the desired effect, they begin offline stalking along with cyberstalking to make the victims' live more miserable.

Cyber Laws

The Internet has now become part and parcel of human life. Internet access is a fundamental right under Article 19 of the Constitution. It is the most important source of information and communication and is used for multifarious purposes such as entertainment, online shopping, job hunt, banking, commerce, online study and networking, etc. However, it poses challenges to our existing legal system as it deals with jurisdiction issues, difficulty in tracing the culprit, public unawareness and underreporting of cases. Our law needs to be stricter and enforcement mechanisms more effective to tackle the problem. To combat the crimes related to internet the Information Technology Act, 2000 was enacted with the prime objective to create an enabling environment for commercial use of IT. The IT Act 2000, is primarily meant to be legislation to promote e-commerce. It is not very effective in dealing with several emerging cyber-crimes like cyber harassment, defamation and stalking. Although, the Information Technology Act, 2000 modishly deals with cyber-crimes but it does not specifically cover all internet-based crimes. Online infringement of intellectual property rights, cyber-squatting, tax evasion, online sale of illegal articles and money laundering cases occur very frequently but these crimes are not explicitly covered under IT Act.

There is a need to amend the IT Act so as to cover other internet-based crimes. New threats relating to bitcoins and cryptocurrency are required to be defined clearly. The IT Act specifies the acts which have been made punishable. The Indian Penal Code, 1860 has also been amended to take into its purview cybercrimes.

A Cyber Security Policy adopted in 2013 was aimed at creating safe and secure cyber space. The policy had several action points. Important ones relate to setting up a National Cyber Security Centre, Malware Monitoring and Cleaning Centre, National Critical Information Infrastructure Centre, etc. We, however, need to review the 2013 policy and take corrective steps to strengthen the system to enhance resiliency of cyber infrastructure in the country, particularly critical infrastructure.

Since users of computer system and internet are increasing worldwide, where it is easy to access any information easily within a few seconds by using internet which is the medium for huge information and a large base of communications around the world. Certain precautionary measures should be taken by netizens while using the internet which will assist in challenging this major threat. With the increase in the number of netizens, the internet has been misused by some criminal elements against persons, property, government and society. Indeed, the use of internet has made our modern lifestyles easier, but when we see the other side of the coin, there are many limitations attached to it. The lure of the virtual world has also given rise to many new types of crimes. The widespread use of social media has also provided a clear platform to cyber criminals to take an undue advantage of those vulnerable.

Mob Lynching

The Webster's dictionary describes 'lynching' as - putting to death by mob action without legal approval. Lynching is an act of violence by a mob. There has been a number of incidences of mob violence in the country in the last three years. The governing sentiments of mob sometimes pertain to child lifting, witchcraft, cow protection, cattle or any other theft and caste-related violence. Lynching and vigilant attacks are usually targeted on Muslims and Dalits.

The crowd is of general perception that judiciary and police administration cannot provide justice and there is a chance that accused will go scot free. This shows that people in the country have lost their trust in judiciary on law and order. In fact, people have to understand that their act of providing 'instant justice' is itself a crime. Mob lynching is the result of a particular set of social or psychological factors and circumstances.

The Protection from Lynching Act, 2017 provide effective protection of the constitutional right of persons and to prevent the lynching of innocents. The Supreme Court in its judgement on 17 July 2018 laid down a string of preventive, punitive and remedial measures to curb incidences of mob vigilantism. Supreme Court guidelines for a tough anti-lynching law sees tardy progress. A separate law is needed as lynching is not define in the IPC or CrPC. In order to combat a crime, we need to define it first. The object of the anti-lynching law will also ensure accountability in the police force.

Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

The Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 was enacted to replace the existing Indian juvenile delinquency law, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000, so that juveniles in conflict with the law in the age group of 16-18 years, involved in heinous offences can be tried as adults. It is an Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to children in need of care and protection by catering to their basic needs through proper care, protection, development, treatment, social re-integration, by adopting a child-friendly approach in the adjudication and disposal of matters in the best interest of children and for their rehabilitation through processes provided, and institutions and bodies established for matters connected therewith.

Key Provisions

Change in nomenclature from 'juvenile' to 'child' or 'child in conflict with law', across the act to remove the negative connotation associated with the word 'juvenile'.

1. The inclusion of several new definitions such as orphaned, abandoned and surrendered children; and petty, serious and heinous offences committed by children.
2. Clarity in powers, function and responsibilities of Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) and Child Welfare Committee (CWC).
3. Special provisions for heinous offences committed by children above the age of sixteen years.
4. Adoption provides for detailed provisions relating to adoption and punishments for not complying with the laid down procedure.
5. The inclusion of new offences committed against minors.
6. Penalties for cruelty against a child, offering a narcotic substance to a child, and abduction or selling a child have been prescribed.
7. Mandatory registration of Child Care Institutions.

Protective Factors

Protective factors are traits or experiences that help counteract risk factors. These protective factors may reduce the likelihood of delinquent behaviour:

1. **Youth resilience:** Include hopefulness, spirituality, positive view of self, overall positive attitude, trust in others, sense of empowerment, realistic belief in one's ability to succeed, motivation, sense of purpose, positive future orientation, and taking responsibility for oneself.
2. **Social Connectedness:** Signs of social connectedness include warm, supportive relationships with parents and other adults, friends who disapprove of anti-social behaviour, and positive school climate.
3. **Cognitive and social-emotional competence:** Signs include realistic belief in one's ability to succeed, personal goals, self-esteem, thinking about the consequences of one's behaviour, personal failings, and personal strengths.

There are some measures which may help in reforming these children:

1. Instill in them a sense of security and give them the love and affection that they may have been deprived of.
2. Parents should be counseled to detect early signs of maladjustments. So that any tendency towards delinquency may be destroyed at the roots.
3. A sense of moral and social values should be instilled in them from the very beginning.
4. Bring about a change in the community that encourages such behaviour.
5. Schools should adopt the option of skill management and vocational training so that children who are not academic by nature have the option of developing a skill which will give them the opportunity to earn a livelihood even without formal education.
6. Once the delinquent behaviour has been detected, one must remember to reject the behaviour and not the individual.

Remedies for Combatting Domestic Violence

In the present scenario, strict and stringent steps need to be taken out against the growing evil of domestic violence. Some of the steps which can be taken to mitigate the rising crime of domestic violence. Some of the steps which can be taken to mitigate the rising crime of domestic violence can be:

1. The basic support system needs to be established which may include immediate medical assistance to the victim, shelter and emotional support and counselling.
2. The Indian Parliament must come out with a more stringent law to protect the rights of women who are victims of violence of any kind occurring within the family so that it would work as a preventive measure to eradicate the crime.
3. New legislation is needed to provide for granting 'Interim Relief' (A big sum of money that is paid by the perpetrator) to a victim of a severe sexual assault. The money may be utilized for rehabilitation of the victim. Rehabilitation of the victims of brutal sexual assaults should be the State's responsibility. The legislation should provide for enhanced punishment for violence perpetrated against women with mental illness.
4. The role of non-governmental organizations in controlling the domestic violence and curbing its worse consequences is crucial. They must encourage more and more people to report any case of domestic violence so that proper action may be taken against the culprits.
5. Police plays a major role in tackling the domestic violence cases. They need to be sensitized to treat domestic violence cases as seriously as any other crime.
6. Studies on prevalence, risk and protection factors as well as consequences need to be carried out.
7. An awareness programme for protection of women should be launched by the government because domestic violence in one or another way, affect the national productivity and lesson to protect and respect the women.
8. Prosecution shortcoming in the handling of domestic violence case must be addressed and conviction rate should be increased in case like domestic violence to create fear in the mind of violator or abuser.
9. There is a need to inform, educate and communicate to the society about domestic violence and the existing laws to protect women against domestic violence. Efforts in this respect through community participation along with social welfare will be a better sustainable solution to the problem. As long as we as a culture accept and tolerate violence against women, men will continue to be abusive.

Farmers' Suicides

In brief, India is transforming rapidly into a primarily urban, industrial society with industry as its main source of income and the government and society both have become unconcerned about the condition of the countryside, particularly farmers. Thus, in the absence of any responsible counseling, either

from the government or civil society, there were many farmers who did not know how to survive in the changing economy.

Government Responses to Farmers' Suicides

1. Farmers Counselling Centres should be established at the Mandal Panchayat level with the appointment of trained staff comprising a social worker, psychologist, agricultural scientist, doctor and elected representative of Mandal Panchayat.
2. Proper training should be imparted to the farmers by agricultural experts regarding use of pesticides and fertilizers.
3. Awareness should be created among farmers regarding scientific farming of different crops to get better yield and good price for their products.
4. An advisory Council should be formed for the prevention of farmers' suicides both at the district and state levels to advise and supervise the members of the Counselling Centres.
5. It should be made mandatory to the college level NSS units to organize camps in the villages and create awareness in the farming community about the effect of suicide and its impact on other members of the family.
6. Encourage the farmers to adopt the allied activities like dairy, poultry, etc. along with farming activities.
7. Encouragement of networks of relatives, friends, neighbours and members of the faith community to decrease isolation, which is one of the strongest risk factors for suicides.

The policy implication from the above discussion calls for an emphasis on the larger crisis. However, the trend can be reversed through active participation of the government institutions in addressing the real issues of the farmers that are driving them to suicides. Social responsibility or the involvement of civil society can also go a long way to help the farmers.

Suggestion to Prevent Farmers' Suicides in India

1. Farmers should be educated and training and farming awareness programmes should be started for them.
2. Eligibility criteria of the farmer should be determined.
3. Farmers should be compensated for the bad monsoon period.
4. The government should adopt an appropriate price policy for the farmers so that they get an optimum reward for their hard work.
5. To check the fragmentation and division of holdings, self-employment programmes should be started in rural areas.

6. Farmers should avoid the unproductive expenditure like expenditure on marriages, false rituals, etc.
7. Develop the banking habits among the small and marginal farmers so that they save enough to meet their emergency needs for natural calamities like earthquake, floods, famines, etc.
8. Farmers should be given credit facilities to start agriculture subsidiary activities.
9. Policies of integrated pest management to prevent pest damage - an all-inclusive approach that integrates biological, chemical, mechanical and physical methodology should be used to prevent crop damage.
10. Helping fertilizer industries to cut down on fertilizer costs, through internal funding rather than external borrowing should lower the input costs.
11. Leveraging advancements in science and technology by ensuring that state seed policies focus on new genotypes, contract farming and sensitization to adverse weather conditions.
12. Farm equipment policy must focus on imported equipment's to provide for cheaper local manufacture, some incentives like grant of duty credit scripts may be tried.
13. Subsidies must be rerouted towards capital generation and the implementation must be ensured in a timely fashion
14. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) must be encouraged in the agricultural sector, particularly towards capacity - building and the skill development.
15. Institutional financing must also be ensured to be adequate and inclusive rather than catering to the elites within the farming community.
16. Cooperative farming must be promoted amongst small and marginal farmers to ensure that they are not left lurking while the big farmers reap the benefit at their cost.
17. Doubling the farmer income by 2022 is a healthy aim, but loan waivers cannot be the answer. Instead, sustainable agriculture that thrives on re-investment and restructuring is the way ahead.
18. Small and marginal farmers can be provided one-time state assistance to rid their personal debts taken from local moneylenders at exorbitant rates. The money so given as assistance must be recorded as interest-free loan from the government payable only in case the land is sold by these farmers. This will ensure that while the economic status of farmers will improve, the money will not be misused. The land shall not be allowed to be mortgaged to anyone except banks for crop loan only.

Direct Interventions

1. Options for restructuring loans must be used wherever possible.
2. Insurance claim settlements must be speedy and just.
3. NABARD and local administration must take control of the situation and play a greater role in curbing farmers' suicides.
4. Efforts like Agro-Climatic zoning, education through DD Kisan, Soil Health Card Scheme, various crop insurance and facilitative schemes like PM Krishi Sinchayi Yojana will go a long way in helping out.
5. Community-led awareness must be taken employing a role model approach highlighting the progress of farmers who have benefited from sustainable and climate-tailored agricultural practices.

