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ADVANCE NOTES ON SYMPOSIA AND DISCUSSIONS

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**(I) APPROACHES TO EMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS IN RURAL
AREAS OF INDIA.**

P. K. Bose—Convener

P. K. Bose (Calcutta) : *Approaches to Employment Problems in Rural Areas of India.*

The incidence of poverty in our rural India is fairly well known. After 20 years of planning there is a very slow decline of the proportion of population below the poverty line. At present more than 50% of the population in the rural India earn less than Rs. 20.00 per month (at 1960-61 prices).

In India there are 5,75,840 villages having a population of 43,88,55,500 and 2,921 towns and cities having a population of 10,87,87,082 (Census 1971). Approximately 75% of the total population live in villages.

Neglecting disguised unemployment-underemployment about 2.5 millions of people are unemployed in rural India.

To solve this problem following measures may be adopted :

- (i) to introduce some general policies that will reduce in the long run the supply of labour ;
- (ii) to provide a package of policies in the educational sector, aimed at improving the employability of young people ;
- (iii) to introduce economic policies relating to wage, investment and price ;
- (iv) to launch autonomous apprenticeship programmes,

K. V. A. Bavappa (Kasaraged), *Approaches to Employment Problems in rural areas of India.*

It is estimated that about 70 percent of the population of the country will have to depend on agriculture for employment. Approaches to employment problems in rural areas will, therefore, have to be by and large based on the employment opportunities that could be generated in agriculture. A study undertaken on the labour-requirement of different cropping systems has shown that while one ha of pure stand of cocoanut requires 150 man-days for its maintenance, a mixed farming programme taken up in the same area will require 1,000 man-days. In areas of assured water supply intensive cropping systems which are also labour intensive could be developed. The viable size of the unit which can find employment for the family labour of two to three persons can be worked out for each area. Cost benefit ratio analysis as well as financing of such holdings should be taken into account. The family labour so that the present standards for financing based on hired labour are suitably adjusted. Labour intensive cropping systems developed in larger holdings will also partly absorb the surplus labour. Small-scale industries based on agricultural raw materials such as cocoanut husk, pineapple and banana for fibre, fruit canning, cashew processing, etc. are other avenues for employment. Various aspects of the above approaches are discussed in the paper.

A. Viswanathan, San Thome (Madras) *Approaches to Employment problems in rural India.*

Before considering a solution to the problem two basic factors should be borne in mind :

i) Rural population has been declining in terms of percentage in most developing nations including India Expressed as a percentage of the total population, about 85% was rural in 1950 and is expected to be around 55% in 2000.

ii) Yet the number of workers dependant on agriculture in India is ever increasing in absolute terms on account of 'exploding population.' The number of agricultural workers increased for instance by about 20% during the decade 1961-71.

Then unfettered growth of urban unemployment has been in effect a direct consequence of the governments' efforts so far to promote

rapid industrialisation at the expense of rural development. Mrs. Gandhi has rightly decided to remedy the situation, as evidenced by her cabinet colleagues's appeal to industry to 'adopt' villages.

Much more is needed in a truly Gandhian way. The Mahatma was not an economist in the academic sense of the term. The methods he advocated for the country's development, were however very fundamental and relevant to the Indian context. The spinning wheel-based economy is a labour-intensive activity which alone will be effective in our society.

During the author's visits abroad, including the most recent year-long stay in the U.S.A. it was noted that cotton khadi preferably treated for easy care and khadi silk are in great demand in the developed countries. Likewise skills in rural arts like pottery, smithy, wood and ivorywork etc. should not only no longer remain the prerogative of a few, but can and must be improved so as to meet the excellence of craftsmanship anywhere in the world.

This would in turn attract the notice of the well-to-do classes both within and beyond the borders of the land. Details of how prosperity and abundance of the type the Father of the Nation envisaged could accrue to the country will be described in the paper.

R. S. Paul (Calcutta): *Approaches to Employment Problem in Rural Area of India.*

India is an agricultural country. Eighty percent people of India lives in Rural Area. But our rural economy is such that scope of employment is very limited. Ninety percent Rural people depend on Agriculture. In the primitive method of Agriculture, which our Agriculturists are adopting, old method of Agriculture have got very little scope of employment. Only Agricultural labour can be employed in rural area. Agriculture work is done by Agriculturists and their family members. The village School Master, village Black Smith, Village Carpenter are running their own business. Their business is so small that they cannot give employment to persons living in rural area. The educated people of rural area flock to urban area for employment ; when they get employment in urban area they do not think about any development project which can create employment in rural area.

Gandhiji's ideal of Sarboday is to create each village self sufficient in all its need and to provide employment to all people of rural India.

But this idea did not get foothold due to the fact that educated and well to-do people are not willing to live in rural area as they do not get modern amenities of life there.

Of late Government is giving much attention to the development of rural area. State Electricity Board is providing electricity in villages. This will help people to establish Cottage & Small Scale Industries. In villages, agriculturist, who sits idle during off-agriculture season and educated unemployed young men of the villages will also be able to establish Cottage industry in villages with the help of Electricity.

Modernization of Agriculture with improved mechanized agricultural implements is a great source of employment in village. Batches of young men are to be trained in the operation and maintenance of agricultural implements. With the help of modern implement they can till lands intensively at a low cost.

The cost of tilling will not be high. The yield will also be higher than that old method of agriculture.

For maintenance of Pumps, Agricultural implement, Maintenance Workshop are to be established in important village Centres. This will be a source of employment to educated young men of villages.

Opening Agro Centre for the sale of pumps, improved seeds, fertilizers in village will create employments for a good number of people. Co-operative Marketing Society for the sales of agricultural products is another source of creating employment.

Villagers need marketing societies very badly to get their product sold at fair price. Large number of educated people can be employed in such Marketing Co-operative Societies.

Agro based industries like Mini Sugar Plant, in sugarcane belt small paper pulp factories, with Jute Still as Raw Materials, Jute Rope factories may be started in rural area for creating employment for rural people. Cigar may be manufactured in Tobacco growing area for creating employment. Starting of Agro based industries in village area is essential to create employment in rural India. In Coconut growing area Coir rope, Coir mat, Coir brush can be manufactured. This will create employment. Lock manufacturing can be started as Cottage

Industries. In Howrah District of West Bengal Lock Industries provided employment to good number of rural people. In 24 Parganas District Brush making industries can also provide large number of people in rural area. Improvement of Handloom Industry can provide employment to larger number of rural people.

Hand made paper, soap making, spinning through modern spring wheel can also provide employment to large number of rural people. In short, if we can adopt Sorboday principle in rural area we can surely provide employment for large number of people of rural India and provide modern amenities of life to rural people. This will make villages self sufficient and people will not leave their villages to seek employment in urban area.

S. P. Mukherjee (Calcutta) : *Problem of Rural Unemployment in India.*

Unemployment including under-employment, seasonal employment is a problem in all developing countries. In the absence of a micro-level rural planning and the consequent under utilization of skills, low standards of living, large-scale mechanization of various agricultural operations, absence of Institutions for proper growth and cultural operations, absence of Institutions for proper growth and sustenance of small cottage industries are some of the factors explaining the high incidence of unemployment in rural areas of India. Contrary to popular belief, the incidence of rural unemployment is very low in several agriculturally backward state, of India. However, because of low wages, incidence of poverty is likely to be much higher in these states (Panday, 1974).

The following measures may be tried to generate more employment in rural areas.

1. Maximum utilization of skills and skilled workers. For this, training programmes to develop skills already existing among peoples in different areas should be organised. Local chambers of handicrafts and cottage industries representing all trades and services in the community which may take the responsibility of training and even certification of competence of the trainees and of underwriting loans on account of seed money should be set up.

2. Rational choice of technology suited to the surplus labour market, Projects of power generation and transmission, irrigation, road construction, rural housing, a major project for linking up the

important rivers in the country should be taken up to absorb more persons.

3. Raising standards of living of rural masses. This will mean creation of more units in the service sector and the employment of more persons in that sector.

4. Re-orienting educational policies to make it more employment-oriented and to encourage educated persons to engage themselves in entrepreneurial activities.

M. N. Rao (Durgapur) : *Approaches to Employment Problems in Rural Areas of India.*

India lives in villages and its prosperity will largely depend on the development of rural economy. This paper emphasises the need for the development of rural industries, particularly agro, forest and marine-based industries, by providing employment to a sizeable number of people living in the rural and backward areas. The idea of self employment should be given wide publicity. The need for promoting local entrepreneurship, which is an important element in the development of small-scale industries is stressed. Agriculturists should be given first preference for Local entrepreneurship. Artisans and technically qualified and educated persons should be considered next. An attempt is made in this paper to advocate the establishment of Rural Institutes with a view (i) to teach the villagers trade at an early age,

(ii) to prepare students for a diploma in Rural services and a diploma in Civil and Rural Engineering (on the lines of Mouni Vidya-paeth in Maharashtra) and

(iii) to create in the heart of a purely rural area, a many-sided educational centre for revitalising the life of the rural folk by reconstruction through education.

Development of bio-gas plants, domestic water treatment techniques, low-cost housing, rural electrification, etc., would not only improve the living standards of the rural people, but would generate employment potential as well.

The best approach to employment problems in rural areas of India, however, seems to lie in educating and training the villagers for self-employment.

Ch. Lakshminarayana (Rajahmundry) : *Development of Rural Economy Through Commercial Banks.*

The real development of Indian economy lies in rural development as majority of the nation's population are rurally inhabited.

The country's predominant economic activity is agriculture and an estimated 70% of the population have this vocation. Next comes the Cottage and village industries and supplementary non-farm activities like Poultry, Piggery, Dairy-farm etc. If India succeeds in claiming a major break-through in the rural economic conditions, it would proudly enter affluent nation's club. The role of Commercial Banks in the development of rural economy is stressed in this paper.

The rural banks as well as the reorganised viable Primary Credit Societies should be equipped to provide production loans for all purposes which help either directly or indirectly in improving the production capacity and income of the farmers. Farm guidance and supervised credit programmes are important factors in ensuring efficient use of credit. The legal impediments in the case of commercial banks in their way of taking action against defaulted borrowers should be removed by the State Governments expeditiously. Close coordination between the concerned cooperatives and commercial banks is necessary to ensure that the total finance provided is adequate and is properly utilised.

Small artisans and other self-employed persons in the rural areas may be encouraged to form themselves into co-operatives or associations wherever feasible, which could look into financial operation of artisans and help the credit agencies with information about them when processing loan applications. There should be non-financing multipurpose agencies functioning as purely advisory bodies, providing advice, guidance to small industrial units regarding the availability of raw materials, other resources, marketing prospects and institutional sources of finance and technical matters.

In consonance with the social objectives, the banking sector in India is fast expanding in rural areas viewing the inherent results of the social objectives as their profits.

B. Mukherjee (Calcutta) : *Approaches to Employment Problems in Rural Areas in India.*

Considerable difference of opinion exists on the subject of how

employment potential of Indian youths can be increased in the Rural areas of the country. Industrialisation has so far touched only fringes of urban areas. There is hardly any efforts so far to channelise industrial potential to the vast Rural areas of our country. Whatever be the approaches suggested the central core of the matter will be the harnessing of science and technology towards rural economy to bring about a revolution in rural life and society.

It is difficult to think of an aspect of modern life that does not bear the strong imprint of science and technology. Indeed, some have argued that the imprint is too strong during the post-1960 era. In the nuclear age with its tremendous evil potentialities for total world destruction, the argument has a certain appeal. The fact is, however, that there never was a "safe" plateau on which man could pause, even if he wanted to. Nor has any plateau ever been high enough to satisfy man's aspirations. Certainly the present one is not. Too much of the world is short of food, water, energy, medical care, housing and labour saving machinery to call a halt now. Science cannot meet and probably will not be able to meet and satisfy all the requirements of man directly. But without forward looking scientific inquiry and investigation, there will be no atomic power plants, no solar batteries, no antibiotics and wonder drugs for disease control, no pesticides and agrochemicals for crop protection and better yield of food crops, no means of increasing potable water supply or of desalting sea water, no transistors for automatic control of machinery, no new metals and alloys, no television, no satellites or space travel, etc. No civilised nation can exist in today's world without coming face-to-face with the mighty and challenging impact of science. It is a vital force now in all Nations' life and in individual life too. To ignore science today is to invite chaos and disaster in any nation's future progress. In India, our National Government have fortunately made a wise and significant decision to foster and stimulate all kinds of science. Adequate balance and emphasis, however, have not been placed in different directions and the total scientific effort has been regretfully slow. There is no denying that India is lagging behind even some of the newer nations in scientific awareness and technological progress, inspite of the fact the planners have tried hard to create a 'climate' in which science and technology might develop for the good of the common man.

Some of these ideas will be developed and its special impact on Rural economy will be discussed in detail in the full paper.

(II) COMPULSORY RURAL SERVICE AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF 10+2+3 EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

S. K. Banerjee : *Compulsory rural service as an integral part of 10+2+3 Educational System.*

Introduction :—

- a) **Concept of rural service**—a basic component of educational structure of developing country like ours having more than 80% rural population.
- b) **Rural reconstruction and Community services**—Role of students—Motivation—the role of educational institutions and adoption of Syllabi to motivate the students in rural service through integration of academic teachings to solve rural problem.

Basic education linking up with non-formal education and knowledge of functional literacy-possibilities through rural service and first hand knowledge about rural societies and environment—Multifronged approach towards rural reconstruction through restructuring educational system—Adoption of need-based syllabus—education based on job orientation—Syllabus to be chalked out to fetch direct benefit to our bigger Society i.e., rural population. Existing System—revised system through compulsory adoption of rural service in curriculum—help to bridge up gap between urbanised and non-urbanised population—reality in thinking planning and purposeful approach to environmental needs.

How big gap/vacuum in present educational system—unable to cater the needs of society-frustration among the rural population-repulsion in the development of educational outlook among rural population to rural population-present system is nothing but to hoodwink underprivileged class and nothing but expansion of knowledges of exploitation through this system. The very idea creates a bottleneck in bringing about transformation in realistic manner in the educational system—the gap between the urban and non-urban population widens by the system and incohesive thinking among the literates & illiterates. Scopes for multifarious rural services by the students as a part of their curriculum-enrich their knowledge-help them to know themselves-know their environments his/her country (Culture based on rural socio-economic structure).

Ways and means to integrate the actual services of those types with the academic curriculum of the University-system of job orientation in the curriculum.

Placement of students in those subjects curriculum as per individual mental inclination—Sense of self confidence & initiative can develop through these services. Scope for utilisation of professional students in rural service through inclusion of practical works in syllabus in rural areas.

The integration of rural service in curriculum possible in phases—At first making it a precondition to award of a degree—through rural service after final examination (Preliminary approach to ultimate integration with the syllabus—Conclusion).

D. Banerjee : *One year rural service as a part of 10+2+3 Educational System.*

Educational Institution, particularly those at the higher levels, have been occasionally described as ivory towers whose products are not equipped during their study to serve the country and the people. In order that College and University students can be motivated and trained to render service to the community at large, it is essential to introduce rural service in some form or other as an integral part of the curriculum. The duration of this programme should depend on the total duration of the course and the exact form should also differ from one course to another. For instance in long term courses like medicine or engineering or in such specific courses as social welfare, one year rural service either at a stretch or in yearly instalments may be feasible. In short term courses like P. U. or 3-year degree courses, however, students may be enjoined to do rural service during their vacations.

To render service with certain objectives to fulfil, students must receive some formal training in certain areas. Some of these may be as follows :

- 1) Eradication of illiteracy,
- 2) duties and obligations of citizens,
- 3) health education—nutrition,
- 4) environmental hygiene—public health,

- 5) first-aid training,
- 6) immunization and inoculation programme,
- 7) family planning—child care,
- 8) development of local skills and economy.
- 9) village co-operative farming and cottage industries,
- 10) motivation, orientation and participation in various National programmes in state and all-India level.

Organisations like the National Cadet Corps, National Social Services Scheme, National Sports Foundation and Indian Medical Association have been directly or indirectly encouraging their participants to do some voluntary rural service. Many other Institutions have come to their help. It is important, however, to coordinate the activities of all these Institutions to make the project of introducing rural service in University curricula effective.

To ensure seriousness of participants it should be appropriate to reserve some marks in the examination for rural service. Award of prizes, medals etc. will encourage participants to take up rural service earnestly. In courses where rural service is to be introduced as a part of the curriculum, satisfactory completion of rural service must be a prerequisite for the award of diploma.

N. R. Dhar (Allahabad) : *One year rural service as a part of 10+2+3 Educational System.*

One of the trends often not appreciated by citizens of advanced countries, themselves preoccupied with overgrown cities, is the urban explosion overtaking underdeveloped regions. The figures are revealing and frightening: between 1920 and the end of this century, urban populations in advanced countries are expected to quadruple, but urban populations in underdeveloped regions will multiply twentyfold. And whereas the rural populations of advanced countries will fall by one third, rural populations of underdeveloped countries will more than double. By the end of the century, the total urban populations of underdeveloped regions is expected to equal the urban population of advanced countries—some 2,000 millions in each case. But whereas the advanced countries have invested and will continue to spend very large sums on keeping their cities habitable (and even so, are not

really succeeding), the underdeveloped countries do not appear to have the remotest prospect of raising the capital or skill needed.

Already some of the sprawling shanty towns of these regions have become notorious. But they are only a shadow of the frightful environmental sores they seem certain to become in the next decades, sources not only of disease and misery, but probably of violent unrest. The towns directly, or indirectly, are the source of most of the worst environmental problems, either through the direct effects of pollution and effluents, or from the pressure exerted on water supplies, farming practices and land use.

The world population was only half a million in 8,000 B.C., it rose to 545 millions in the beginning of this century and it is now nearly 4,000 millions and may go up to 6,000 to 7,000 millions by the end of this century. Hence the progress of mankind living in villages or cities is almost impossible due to this frightful population explosion.

I strongly feel that India still consists of more villages (rural areas) than cities and hence rural areas should not remain backward and certainly University students can render great service to rural areas if they are compelled to serve rural areas for one year as a part of University course and training. At the present moment due to shortage of food and other amenities for human existence and frequent occurrence of thefts, robbery etc., villagers are migrating to cities in large numbers and find jobs as labourers in business houses and also take up drawing of Tongas, Ekkas, Rickshaws etc. and live in very unsatisfactory conditions in cities. On the other hand, in Europe with its urban civilisation, the city dwellers are doing their best to get away even to Semi-urban areas 50 or 60 miles away from their place of work. This is more common in U. K., U.S.A. and other rich countries. If well educated people reside in villages where creation of law courts, dispensaries, restaurants must be encouraged, the rampant poverty can be fought.

M. L. Sharma, Ram Kumar and Kuldip Singh Dhindaa (Haryana):
*One year Rural Service as an Integral part of the University Curriculum—
A case for Agricultural Graduates.*

Education is key to progress. It has a large role to play in the development of human and physical resources. From this point of view educational planning is a most useful weapon for determining the nature

factories, plants and construction sites, on State and private farms, bringing the scientific knowledge to the people in accessible form. They should aid the national economy. During summer vacation thousands of students should join construction teams to help the government to build houses, dig canals, construct community centres, kindergarten schools etc.

Unfortunately this great reservoir of force still remains untapped. We have stated some programmes under National Service Scheme in the different universities but still it is unorganised and due to paucity of funds, constructive programmes have not been undertaken. Without delay 'Rural Service' should be made compulsory for all categories of students in India.

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