

# Indian Mining Exchange

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The Times of India, December 6, 2011

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## LIVELIHOODS

### AGRICULTURE

Press Information Bureau  
Government of India  
Ministry of Agriculture

### Share of Agriculture Sector in GDP

As per the estimates from Central Statistics Office (CSO), the share of agriculture and allied sector in GDP of the country has declined from 47.6% in 1960-61 to 14.4% in 2010-11 at 2004-05 prices. This is due to structural changes in the economy and more employment opportunities coming up in new areas. The details of the share of agriculture sector in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country from the decade of sixties till the present decade is in the table below:

Year	GDP SHARE OF AGRICULTURE & ALLIE SECTORS TO TOTAL ECONOMY – at 2004-05 prices (%)
1960-61	47.6
1970-71	41.7
1980-81	35.7
1990-91	29.5
2000-01	22.3
2010-11	14.4

The Government has launched several schemes to increase investments in agriculture sector and thereby improve agriculture's performance in the overall economy.

This information was given by Shri Harish Rawat, Minister of State for Agriculture and Food Processing Industries in written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha today.

MP:SB:CP: share (9.12.2011)

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=78369>

**As per latest Agriculture Census 2005-06, marginal operational holdings (operated area below 1.0 hectare) constituted 64.77 percent of total holdings in the country.**

(Source: <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=78366>)

Rural Indian women are extensively involved in agricultural activities. .... share of agricultural work force to total work force comes to about 60 percent. .... India, the prosperity of the household depends on the prosperity of agriculture and allied ...

(Source:

<http://ncw.nic.in/pdfreports/Impact%20of%20WTO%20Women%20in%20Agriculture.pdf>)

#### **V Kumaraswamy: Greening for employment**

Business Standard, Saturday, Dec 10, 2011, 0:44 IST

India needs to improve its forest cover rapidly for its own good. Mere laws by the government won't help. Tribal and forest dwellers need higher income to come out of perpetual poverty. Since their income levels are low and credit facilities hard to come by,

they are not able to wait for five or seven years for the plants to mature and attain their optimal economic value. Thus, most of non-agriculture forest/rural land is used to cultivate low-quality fuel wood (which accounts for nearly 90 per cent of wood consumed in India). Given the scarcity of land in India, we need a land use policy that maximises the yield every acre — of produce as well as employment.

Proper policy intervention can deliver far better incomes for tribal/rural people besides increased yield from land, as has been successfully demonstrated by countries like Vietnam – its land tenure and ownership rights are different from India's (communist in flavour) – Brazil (pulp wood), Malaysia (oil palms) and Syria (with olives), whose land rights are similar to India's.

In the mid-1980s, a few Vietnamese officials attended a presentation in Malaysia on growing trees as a plantation activity to create employment even while producing marketable output (like oil palm plantations which had preceded them). Vietnam created a model for hybrid Acacias. Since then, Vietnam has been promoting state-sponsored reforestation programmes.

Vietnam's latest greening programme started in 1998 with an aim to reforest five million hectares. Under the programme, called 5MHRP, land is allotted to individuals, state forest enterprises and corporations with minimal subsidies and concessional credits, besides allowing flow of overseas development funds. The growers get to market the produce and share royalty with the state. By 2005, 2.8 million hectares of forests had been developed under the programme.

The economic outcome of this initiative is to create permanent employment for about two million people. Vietnam, whose forest product exports were \$108 million in 1998, saw it grow to \$ 1,700 million by 2005. It is now the second-largest exporter of woodchips after Australia. Vietnam does face problems in land allocation, coverage, pace and allotment , as is expected in any social system. Yet, the achievements are impressive: an increase in forest cover by about three per cent in seven years, besides the additional employment and marketable output mentioned above.

India has, in government control, over 28 million hectares of cultivable wasteland and degraded forest land besides sizable miscellaneous area wrongly classified as forest land (the Nagpur leg of Maharashtra state Assembly is supposedly sitting on one such "forest"). Per capita land area in India is the lowest in the world. Therefore, we cannot afford to keep land under/ unproductive.

The government can grant specific (tree growth) land use rights to interested commercial establishments in timber, plywood, paper, biofuel and other forest products; for this it can appropriately relax land acquisitions laws (haven't we done it in tea, coffee and other such plantation industries?) The allottees can have secure right to produce and harvest

commercial trees with a share of harvested value going to the state in lieu of land rent. The conditions could include limiting the degree of mechanisation (to ensure maximum employment potential), restrictions of using only local labour, and regulation on the pattern of land use (including for forest dwelling and fuel wood generation). The marketable value of harvest varies from Rs 240-260,000 per growth cycle of five years assuming 120 to 130 tonnes of output per hectare at Rs 2,000 per tonne. The wage component can be half — Rs 120,000 per hectare per cycle, given that it is the main input. Indonesia has contractually mandated the land lessees to carry out social developmental activities in lieu of a part of its share of rent which further benefits the local inhabitants.

India's tea industry is spread over 450,000 hectares and provides direct and permanent employment to about 1.1 million people, roughly 2.4 people per hectare. Wood plantations are much less intensive and may be capable of employing one person per hectare. Five million hectares of otherwise below-optimally used land can mean employment for five million people.

The average consumption at such low levels of income being near total, the income multiplier is very high. The employment multiplier can be safely assumed at three times, thus providing employment to 15 million people. Such employment can be the best antidote to perpetual poverty in rural areas and naxalism. It can also boost the average income of agri-rural sector by releasing partially employed labour.

If the maturation time is five or six years and one-fifth is harvested each year in a cycle, it will ensure an outstanding green cover of at least 80 per cent at any point of time.

There is a beneficial synergy of positive circumstances in India. We have wasteland/degraded land; we need green cover. Our tropical climate is conducive to the growth of trees. There is commercial demand. The local skill sets can be upgraded easily by providing minimal training for this purpose — training for any other activity is bound to be longer and in an unfamiliar subject for the tribal/rural inhabitants.

There are sufficient examples outside India. It may be nice to be green elsewhere. For us, it may be a necessity to solve rural poverty and unemployment.

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The author is CFO of a paper company.

<http://business-standard.com/india/news/v-kumaraswamy-greening-for-employment-458066/>

## **BIOFUELS**

### **Biofuels and land alienation claim one more life in Balangir**

Vasundhara, Bhubaneswar, 12th September 2011

Lingaraj Sahu, a farmer from village Ghumer in Patnagarh block of Balangir district has died. He was one of the farmers affected due to the case of land alienation through fraudulent means by a private company for promotion of Jatropha plantation. It is the second death as a direct consequence of negligence on the part of district administration to take corrective measures in this case which is pending for more than seven years now.

In 2005, 10 companies (9 from Delhi and 1 from Agra) purchased lands from farmers of 11 villages in Patnagarh block of Bolangir with the promise that enterprises like incense stick making, dairy etc will be promoted for their benefit. Land taken for the plantation included private cultivable land and is about 358.43 acres of more than 70 farmers from 11 villages. While purchasing the land the company misinformed the farmers that lands are taken on lease for three years. But later on the farmers and locals alleged that all these lands were taken fraudulently by the company which reportedly made the farmers to come to Goru Bajar of Bolangir to do the sale deeds in ten o'clock at night. Some of the affected villages in Patnagarh are Jalpali, Ghumer, Ainlatunga, Ghunghutipali.

After taking lands the company started Jatropha plantations instead of diary development and other livelihood enterprises which it had promised. By the time the farmers came to know about this they had already lost the land and livelihoods and even the farmers who protested were barred by the company to enter into their lands. This incident and shock led to such distress that one of the farmers, Madan Kand died in 2007 and another farmer Lingaraj Sahu became mentally ill.

In 2006 this matter came to light after a fact finding by Vasundhara and Adhar which revealed serious violations in the way lands of farmers are taken away by the private company for Jatropha plantations. It also found how promotion of Jatropha (Biodiesel plantation) by the government has led to alienation of farmers' land and affected the local agro-biodiversity and food security. In the same year a consultation was done at the district level by farmers group and NGOs to discuss the issue. Following this the district administration and government authorities were informed about the issue and were asked to intervene. The findings were also shared with the Revenue secretary. Meanwhile fact findings were carried out by other civil society groups.

In 2007 August the then Revenue Secretary GVV Sharma instructed the RDC Madhusudan Padhi to institute an enquiry into the matter after getting instruction from the Chief Minister. The RDC enquiry confirmed gross irregularities and violations in the land dealing by the private company and submitted its report to the government for further action. The RDC report was asked for by NGOs, but it was not shared. It took five years from 2007 to 2011 to obtain copy of the RDC report through RTI and that too after a case was filed at the appellate authority of RTI after non-response for a long time. The key observations and findings of the RDC enquiry are as follows.

- The RDC report has observed that the companies involved in the case are fake companies.
- That there is a nexus between purchaser, middlemen and officials.
- The provisions of law are circumvented and land purchased through unfair means and surreptitious practices and the companies are created to bypass the ceiling provisions of Orissa land reforms act.

The RI concerned and Tehsildar who liberally mutated the land are perhaps guilty of abuse of power.

The head clerk of sub-registrar office Patnagarh office is also equally guilty of all omission and commissions. Departmental Proceeding may be initiated against him for his complicity in the matter.

The RDC has also made some recommendations as follows:

- Call for explanation from the concerned Tehsildar, .R.I. and Head Clerk of the sub-registrar office and initiate disciplinary action.
- If some of the tenants are willing to file case sin the civil courts for restoration of their land by declaration of the sale deed as null and void, legal support to them may be given to them by way of services of Govt. Advocate.
- The mutation process should be held up for balance cases where there is dispute between shareholders over the sale where one shareholder has sold the entire land without consent of other shareholders.

The case has been followed for last five years and the issue has been discussed with people's representatives, revenue secretary and revenue minister, agriculture minister for necessary interventions. As a follow up, in 2010 the matter was discussed in a meeting with the Revenue Minister who after enquiry informed that following the RDC report the cases are now pending at the Board of Revenue. During the hearing, the Board of Revenue in October 2010 issued notice to the affected farmers of the villages to be present at a hearing fixed for the matter in 20th December 2010 at the BoR office. On the said date farmers of the villages had come for the hearing but it could not take place as the member board was not present.

After obtaining the RDC enquiry report in August 2011 copies of the report have been shared with all concerned officials and ministers with a letter for urgent intervention to restore land to the farmers. The reports have been shared with the media groups and have come in the media (see <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-otherstates/article2413967.ece>).

Meanwhile on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2011 Lingaraj Sahu, one of affected farmer, who had become mentally ill after losing land, died on the same land which was taken away from him by the company.

Just after the incident the revenue minister was contacted who said that he has asked the collector to initiate action against the concerned officials and persons involved in the case.

It is matter of grave concern that it is the second death in the district as a direct consequence of conversion of agricultural lands for cash crops at the cost of loss of commons and food security in vulnerable areas of KBK districts where land and food security situation is already grim. Before this another farmer Madan Kand had died for the same reason.

It is important to point out here that there are larger issues involved in this case which are of loss of commons (gauchar), land alienation and threat to food security due to the use and conversion of common lands and agricultural lands for active promotion of private interests and cash crops which are happening taking advantage of the govt's policies and in collusion with authorities.

Locals inform that the last words heard from Lingaraj Sahu when he was dying on his land were *Mor Jami Mor Jami* meaning My land My land. Perhaps it was his last assertion for his land. And perhaps it was his last attempt to convey the distress and suffering he and his fellow farmers have undergone because of this case and negligence. As other affected families wait for justice we appeal to the civil society groups, activists and concerned citizens to intervene in the issue and ask the govt to take urgent remedial steps before more lives are lost.

## **ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS**

### **Japan to continue supporting forestry projects in India**

02 December 2011 20:21:19 by IANS

New Delhi, Dec 2 (IANS) The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Friday said it will continue to support forestry projects in India by making focussed efforts to rejuvenate the forests and help communities earn a sustainable livelihood.

"India is the largest recipient of Official Development Assistance (ODA) from Japan. Since 1991, we have been making focussed efforts to rejuvenate India's forests and help communities earn a sustainable livelihood," said Shinichi Yamanaka, JICA's chief representative in India.

"The results have been very encouraging, and today, ODA loans to forestry sector have been extended to 21 projects across 11 states," he added.

A Japanese government financial institution, JICA, which is the world's largest bilateral aid agency, had along with the Indian government's environment and forests ministry, Friday organised a forum to share impacts and challenges of JICA-assisted forestry projects in India.

The forum discussed future challenges pertaining to the projects and the forestry sector in India along with discussions on areas such as enhancing sustainability of project mechanisms and impacts, capacity development of stakeholders, and effective implementation mechanisms.

"We appreciate the support that JICA has been providing the Indian forestry sector for the last two decades, in the vital area of restoration of degraded forests and improvement of livelihood of the poor and needy communities around forest areas," said A.K. Bansal, additional director general in the environment and forests ministry.

"The projects facilitate convergence of other government department schemes for the holistic development of convergence of project areas. We value the interventions since they lead to socio-economic development of communities," he added.

[http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/business/japan-to-continue-supporting-forestry-projects-in-india\\_100581245.html](http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/business/japan-to-continue-supporting-forestry-projects-in-india_100581245.html)

### **Himalayan region faces grim future**

Glaciers Feeling The Heat: Reports - Subodh Varma

The Times of India, December 6, 2011

Remember the embarrassing controversy a few years ago about whether or not Himalayan glaciers are retreating due to global warming Finally, the foundation for a thorough scientific study and monitoring has been laid, with the release of three key reports on the sidelines of the Durban climate change summit.

Prepared by scientists working with the Kathmandu-based International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) the reports have for the first time identified over 54,000 glaciers spread over 64,000 square kilometres of the Hindu Kush-Himalaya (HKH) region, home to some of the world's highest peaks and the biggest storehouse of freshwater outside of the North and South Poles.

The reports clearly say that not enough study has been done on the snow and ice systems of this vast ecologically fragile system. But it provides a snapshot of kind of changes that global warming is likely to cause in the coming decades.

Within the HKH region lie the origins of 10 crucial river systems that provide life to an estimated 1.3 billion people. These rivers Ganga, Brahmaputra, Indus, Amu Darya, Irrawaddy, Mekong, Salween, Tarim, Yangtze, and Yellow flow through 10 nations. This makes it a global warming hotspot changes in temperature can lead to rapid and



devastating changes in river water flows that would affect millions. Up until now, there has been complete uncertainty on the numbers and area of glaciers and the present status of their environmental conditions in the region. This research give us a baseline from which to measure the potential impact of climate change, said Basanta Shrestha from ICIMOD.

One of the report points out that only 10 glacier systems have been thoroughly studied till date. So, information is patchy and incomplete. Glaciers in the central and eastern Himalayas are shrinking, while changes in the western Himalayas and Karakoram are more uncertain, says the report. Climate Change in Hindu-Kush Himalayas.

Based on data collected by the Snow and Avalanche Study Establishment, Chandigarh, the report says that average winter temperature in the Indian part of the region increased by 0.6 to 1.3 degrees celsius between 1975 and 2006. Besides this, there were other clear signs of warming: the number of warmer days increased, the number of cold nights decreased, there was more rain and less snowfall and consecutive number of dry days went up while wet days went down.

Latest studies show that river water flows are likely to be affected in much more complex ways than earlier imagined. While increasing temperature will cause snow and glaciers to dry up causing less water in the rivers 40-50 years into the future, this would be swamped by the much higher increase in monsoon rains in central and eastern Himalayas. The ICIMOD reports indicate that much more research is needed to fully understand these dynamics. The reports also spell out a complex struggle for the over 25,000 species of plants and animals that inhabit the HRH region. As temperatures rise, all species will try to move upwards to cooler locations. This will spell doom for summit species inhabiting the top most levels like the brown oak. With a 1 degree rise, almost 40% cover of this common tree will be wiped out, the study says.

#### MELTING POINT:



#### YALA GLACIER (LANGTANG VALLEY, NEPAL):

The lake in the foreground is evidence of glacial retreat

#### HINDU KUSH HIMALAYAN REGION

Average temp rise | 0.010.03C per year in western and eastern Himalayas 0.030.07C in central Himalayas and Tibetan plateau Global average temperature rise | 0.007C per year  
Total area | 4m sq km No.of glaciers | 54,252 Area covered by glaciers | 64,000 sq km No.of people living in HRH region | 210m No.of people living in river basins | 1.1bn

### **EVENTS CONCLUDED**

Consultation on Biofuels: Revisiting our Understanding and Planning Ahead, 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> December. Organised by ECONET, Pune in collaboration with FIAN, India at BAIF, Pune.

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