

What is new(s) from GIFT

1. GIFT webinar series

Post Budget Discussion on the Kerala Budget 2021-22, 10 June, 2021

This discussion was inaugurated by Shri KN Balagopal, Hon'ble Finance Minister of Kerala and chaired by Prof T M Thomas Isaac, former Finance Minister. There were two sessions in the discussion- (1) The development perspective of Kerala budget 2021-22: The short run and long run and (2) the Sectoral Focus. Shri R. K Singh, Additional Chief Secretary (Finance), Professor M A Oommen, Dr Ravi Raman, Planning Board member, Shri C.. P. John and Shri G. Vijayaraghavan, former members of State Planning Board, Professor Alwin Prakash, Dr. Mary George, Dr B.Ekbal, Prof R Ramkumar, Professor Irudaya rajan, Shri S. Adikesavan, Shri Binu Jacob, Shri E. M Najeeb, Dr. Nirmala Padmanabhan, and Dr. Sonia George were expressed their views and suggestions in the discussion. Professor K.J Joseph, Director, GIFT delivered the welcome address. Senior economists, experts, GIFT faculty and students also participated in the discussion.

Second Lecture in the Public Lecture Series on Kerala Economy in Transition “ An Interpretative introduction to Kerala’s Development Trajectory ” Prof M A Oommen 28 May, 2021, jointly organised by GIFT and KEA

Abstract: This lecture is a quick run through Kerala’s developmental narrative during the last six decades and examines afresh its ontology. For analytical purposes the presentation is divided into two phases: the egalitarian phase and the accelerated growth phase. There is no strict borderline and the discussion spills out back and forth. November 1, 1956 that marks Kerala as a socio-political entity is not a discrete moment, but a watershed in a continuum. The Aiyka Kerala demand helped in the progression to a developmental entity and was successfully supported by the avante garde writers and artists, social reform movements, communist party and many other driving forces. The paper was organised under four heads:

(i)Development: Some conceptual clarifications. This is needed not only for conceptual clarity but also for evaluative purposes.

(ii)The first quarter century: An egalitarian phase. Its salience is a politics of knowledge, reason, fight for unfreedoms of all sorts and seeking justice. Critical variables are identified.

(iii)The Accelerated Phase. With several billion dollars flowing into the state economy during the last four decades along with a neoliberal reform initiative (with no policy choices to harness resources more prudent and productively) Kerala became a high consumption economy which produced several negative consequences. Its economy, society and polity changed. Some of them are documented in the lecture. Much of what follows is derived from this paradigm shift.

(iv)Working Towards a New Architecture. This section briefly outlines the indicative contours of a new Kerala that builds on its strength, but seeks to rectify its weakness and make reforms for working towards a social democratic alternative. The much discussed 'Kerala Model' story is set aside and endorse Amartya Sen's postulate that Kerala never needed a frozen model of conformist approbation.

Prof S R Sheeja , Department of Economics, Kariavattom , University of Kerala moderated the discussion. Dr Hari Kurup K K, Associate Professor, Government College, Kasaragod was the discussant.. Professor K J. Joseph, Director, GIFT, delivered the welcome speech. GIFT Faculty, KEA Executive members and many distinguished academicians and students in Kerala and from outside Kerala participated in the webinar. Prof SR Sheeja proposed the vote of thanks.

Third Lecture in the Public Lecture Series on Kerala Economy in Transition "The Downside of Kerala Model of Development: Some Questions and Reflections" Prof K P Kannan, 11 June, 2021, jointly organised by GIFT and KEA

Abstract: Kerala's development experience attracted a good deal of attention in the world of development scholars and policy makers ever since the publication of the CDS study on Poverty, Unemployment and Development Policy: A Case study with special reference to Kerala in 1975. From a state known for high human development with low economic growth, Kerala has transited to one with a high human development and high economic growth. Professor K P Kannan characterized this transition as Kerala entering a phase of 'virtuous

cycle of growth' based on a revisit of Kerala's development experience prepared by a CDS Team and published as Kerala Human Development Report 2005.

The Kerala economy continued to grow, in fact at a higher pace, since the turn of the 21st century. The COVID pandemic might put an end to it, if not seriously attended to. However, there are downsides of the KMD that raises serious issues of quality of life and utilization of the capabilities of a significant segment of the population especially the younger generation. One striking manifestation is the problem of educated unemployment. Tackling this challenge calls for a qualitative change in governance. Here we come across a deeper malaise in the form of declining efficiency in public finance management that includes tax collection efficiency and the perpetual net loss of the public sector units. The lecture focused on these striking down sides and offered some tentative explanations.

Dr R Ramya, Head of the Department of Economics, Sri C Achutha Menon Govt College,, Trissur moderated the discussion. Dr. Shaijumon C S, Associate Professor of Economics, Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology, Dept of Space, Govt of India was the discussant.. Professor K J. Joseph, Director, GIFT, delivered the welcome speech. GIFT Faculty, KEA Executive members and many distinguished academicians and students in Kerala and from outside Kerala participated in the webinar. Prof Hari Kumar, Dean CUSAT and Vice President KEA, proposed the vote of thanks.

Fourth Lecture in the Public Lecture Series on Kerala Economy in Transition "Kerala- The Recent Development Trajectory", Prof V K Ramachandran, 25 June, 2021, jointly organised by GIFT and KEA

Abstract:In the last four years, Kerala has seen a relatively better performance in the economic field, despite major setbacks at the international and national levels. State average 5 from 2016-17 to 2019-20. Achieved 4 percent growth. Average growth over the previous four years 4. It was 8 percent. The achievement was significant even in the face of adverse conditions such as the note ban, the Nippa and the floods for two consecutive years.

The aim is to bring the standard of living in Kerala within the next 25 years on par with the developed countries in the middle income group. At the heart of project management is the fact that not a single person is left behind in the development process. Kerala will move forward in the next phase on the three pillars of agriculture, industry and higher education. The main development strategy will be to maximize employment.

What is special about the Government of Kerala is that it takes the election manifesto very seriously and tries to implement its recommendations. This is a rarity in India. Another feature of this government is that it views planning as a fundamental principle of development. Even at the central level, Kerala is vigorously implementing the Thirteenth Five Year Plan at a time when planning is being alienated. We are currently in the final year of the Thirteenth Plan. As part of this, strong interventions could be made in critical areas. The agricultural sector in Kerala, which has been steadily declining since 2017-18. It was able to achieve a growth of 11 per cent. Production of agricultural crops¹. It rose by 52 per cent. In the last five years, the utilization of funds for the agricultural sector has grown by 221 per cent.

The inflow of milk from outside the state was 9 lakh litres per day. It has been reduced to 2 lakh litres. The manufacturing sector in Kerala has also made a comeback. In the financial year 2019 - 2021. 5 per cent growth was achieved in this sector. The state has also made significant achievements in the areas of health, education, infrastructure development and housing. Through the Life Mission Project². 5 lakh houses have been completed. It was a record achievement in the history of Kerala. The state is moving into the Fourteenth Five Year Plan. This was a continuation of the Thirteenth Plan. Kerala is notable for the state government's adherence to economic planning. Kerala has the distinction of attracting world attention in the field of development. Public participation in development is one of them. The state would enter a new phase of development to ensure continued participation of the people.

Head of the Department of Economics, St. Peter's College, Kolancherry. Dr Gigi Elias moderated the discussion. Dr. C. A. Priyesh, Associate Professor, University College, Thiruvananthapuram was the discussant. Professor K J. Joseph, Director, GIFT and President KEA, welcomed the Programme. GIFT Faculty, KEA Executive members and many distinguished academicians and students in Kerala and from outside Kerala participated in the webinar. Smt Aniha Kumary L, Associate professor GIFT proposed the vote of thanks.

**Fifth Lecture in the Public Lecture Series on Kerala Economy in Transition
"Reflections on Kerala's Development Strategy" Prof Prabhat Patnaik, 09 July, 2021,
jointly organised by GIFT and KEA**

Abstract: Kerala's development strategy focussing on a direct improvement in people's welfare, rather than on GDP growth and enticing big capital to invest in the state for

increasing this rate of growth, in the hope that its effects will trickle down to the people, has been widely hailed as the "Kerala Model". Gujarat constitutes the diametrical opposite of the "Kerala Model" by following precisely the "enhance-growth-and-its effects-will-trickle-down" strategy, which has left Gujarat's human development indices way behind. What is interesting however is that even in terms of growth, the rate of increase in per capita GSDP in Kerala over the period 2004-05 to 2011-12 has been almost the same as in Gujarat and higher than the national average. The "Kerala Model" in short delivers both growth and welfare, unlike the alternative that simply emphasizes growth to the exclusion of welfare.

There is a view however that the Kerala Model has not delivered on employment, which raises two questions: in what sense is there an unemployment problem in Kerala, and what should be done about it? While the unemployment estimates for Kerala are high, the state is remarkably free from the destitution one generally associates with unemployment. This is not to say that poverty in the state has disappeared; indeed far from it. As is well-known the official poverty estimates in the country are notoriously flawed, so that no consolation should be derived from the low poverty ratio of Kerala (though this low ratio has been an excuse for denying the state its legitimate share of central resources); but there is no gainsaying that the Kerala does not have the same sort of destitution that one comes across in other states.

This phenomenon requires an explanation. Unemployment and employment must not be seen in starkly contrasting terms. Those who are unemployed also do certain kinds of work, and also enjoy a certain standard of living, which he called as the level of "default income". Unemployment consists in the fact that at a wage-rate higher than equal to the default income, a higher labour demand brings forth a corresponding increase in labour supply. Kerala may have a high rate of unemployment in the sense that this can happen until a fairly high level of labour demand (compared to the prevailing level) is reached. At the same time Kerala's level of default income is high, which explains how unemployment can co-exist with the absence of destitution.

Given Kerala's unique topography, it is both unrealistic and undesirable to entice big ticket investment projects to be located in the state as a means of overcoming unemployment. Emphasis therefore has been placed, rightly, on developing Kerala as a "knowledge economy". But, as many are pointing out now, the scope for expanding employment through knowledge economy activities is limited. We therefore have to think in terms of certain additional activities. Since Kerala's domestic economy's growth has certain limitations arising

from the fact that there are constraints upon the growth of agriculture in the state, these activities must be oriented towards "exporting" their products to the rest of the country and the world. Tourism has been much emphasized in this respect, provided it is "responsible tourism". Additionally, however Kerala has the potential to develop as a "care economy", providing "care", especially healthcare, not just to its domestic population but to the rest of the country as well (which is already happening to an extent with Kerala nurses working all over the country). In traditional medical practices Kerala has already made a name for itself, attracting many patients from all over. There is no reason why a similar effort should not be made in modern medicine as well. There is no reason in other words why Kerala should not develop vis-à-vis the rest of the country the way Cuba has developed vis-à-vis the rest of Latin America

Dr Sindhu Krishna, Associate Professor, Department of Economics. The Cochin College moderated the discussion. Dr. A. Asokan, Associate Professor (Rtd), Nehru College, Kangangad was the discussant of the programme. Professor K J. Joseph, Director, GIFT and President KEA , welcomed the Programme. GIFT Faculty, KEA Executive members and many distinguished academicians and students in Kerala and from outside Kerala participated in the webinar. Prof Hari Kumar, Dean CUSAT and Vice President KEA, proposed the vote of thanks

GIFT organised a Discussion on Direct Selling Rules 2021 on 17th July 2021; Resource Person Dr Thomas Joseph Thoomkuzhy, Associate professor, GIFT

GIFT organised GST consultation for Kerala Feeds Ltd for addressing their specific issues related to GST on 17th July 2021; Resource Person, Dr N Ramalingam, Associate Professor, GIFT

Webinar on Tax Performance of 15 Indian States -1990-91 to 2018-19: What Do the Trends Reveal? , the lecture delivered by Shri R Mohan IRS & Honorary Fellow, 22nd July.

Abstract:When the tax performance of 15 major States in India, proxied by Own Tax Revenue (OTR)- Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) ratio, is analysed, it is seen that there is convergence of tax effort among the States. Over the period, the OTR-GSDP ratio of high and middle income States has fallen and that of the low income States has risen. The convergence of OTR-GSDP ratio is statistically significant. This needs to be seen in the

background of the fact that per capita GSDP has been diverging. It is found that the relationship between tax effort and per capita income has been negative and statistically significant for relatively richer States, while it is positive and statistically significant for relatively lower income States. This is counter intuitive. It is pertinent to note that the three decadal period witnessed substantial changes in the tax structure of the States.

Prof T M Thomas Isaac, former Finance Minister, Government of Kerala was the discussant of the programme. The paper is authored by Shri R Mohan and Dr D Shyjan. Professor K J. Joseph, Director, GIFT welcomed the gathering.

Sixth Lecture on Public Lecture Series on Kerala Economy in Transition, "Kerala Alternative and the Shadow of Global Accumulation of Capital", Prof K N Harilal, 23 July, 2021, jointly organised by GIFT and KEA

Abstract: The unique development experience of Kerala has immense value in the context of the attempts to imagine post capitalist societies. A rethink on the lessons of socialist revolutions, old and current ones, would underline the importance of the Kerala alternative. The talk would highlight some leading aspects of the Kerala alternative that prompts us to see it as an emancipatory project. People of Kerala could resist, by virtue of incessant collective action, the hegemony of monopoly capital besides breaking the stranglehold of 'Jathi Janmi Naduvazhytham'. In spite of all odds they ensured that the will of the people hold. The Kerala alternative was built not in isolation but engaging with the rest of the world, neither did it compromise on basic freedoms of the citizens. The resilience of the Kerala alternative is to be seen in the underlying social contract, which is much broad based than generally understood. Its support base cuts across political parties and their fronts as well as social, religious and spiritual alignments.

The post pandemic world is likely to be more hostile to the developing nations/ regions pursuing alternative policies. The nation states, not to speak of subnational arrangements, are likely to be under pressure to surrender more and more spheres of autonomous policy making. The interests of global monopoly capital is likely to get precedence over all other interests and values, such as that of environment, public health, labour, peasants, local capital, socially and economically marginalised groups, women, local cultures, etc.

The challenges, although tough, need not dishearten Keralites, who would want to defend their alternative. It is here the unique features of the regional alternative come to the fore. For

facilitating collective action, and for realizing agency, Kerala people and their collectives have generally been participating in all possible spaces of power and governance. But, they have also been vigilant about incorporation. In fact, the practise of 'participation and struggle' has been an important source of strengths of the Kerala model. The defining feature of the regional alternative is the willingness of the people to come together and work for the common good. It doesn't presuppose complete control of the State apparatus or a benevolent world order, or restrictions on individual initiatives.

The difficult times ahead should prompt Keralites to fall back upon and strengthen the basic virtues of the Kerala alternative, "collective action for common good" as well as "participation and struggle". The lecture would prioritize some important areas of such broad based action that are likely to emerge and strengthen the region's model of development.

Dr Jisha K K , Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Govt Victoria College, Palghat moderated the discussion. Shri Santhosh T Varghese, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Maharajas College, Ernakulam was the discussant. Professor K J. Joseph, Director, GIFT and President KEA welcomed the Programme. GIFT Faculty, KEA Executive members and many distinguished academicians and students in Kerala and from outside Kerala participated in the webinar. Prof Sheeja SR, Department of Economics, Kariyavattom Campus, University of Kerala proposed the vote of thanks.

Indialics Public Lecture Series 9:

The Quest for Sustainable Development for All: 21st Century Challenges, Prof Susan Cozzens (Georgia Institute of Technology, USA), 16 June, 2021. Other speakers included Prof Rasigan Maharajh (Stellenbosch University, South Africa), Prof Dinesh Abrol, TRCSS, Jawaharlal Nehru University) Prof Lakwinder Singh Gill, Punjabi University and K J Joseph, Director GIFT.

2. Teaching and training programmes

a. PGDGST program

Third batch of the Post Graduate Diploma in Goods and Service Tax (PGDGST) examinations were conducted on 06-06-2021, 13-06-2021 and 20-06-2021. Three days

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examinations were conducted online mode. Admission for the fourth batch of PGDGST is in progress. Orientation Programme- Know your PGD-GST for a Better Career, was organised on 12-06-2021, 17-06-2021, 10-07-2021 and 17-07-2021 by the Course Co ordinators. 398 students were selected for the PGDGST course for the year 2021 as on July 31. The training program comprising 120 hours of teaching started through online mode started in the month of July 2021. Forty-five hours of training classes are scheduled. Training classes was inaugurated by Prof K J Joseph, Director, GIFT on 25 July 2021. Two classes were conducted on 25 and 31 July 2021.

Course Co ordinators: Dr N Ramalingam and Smt. L Anitha Kumary

For more details: <https://www.gift.res.in/index.php/course/detail/14/PGD-GST>

b. PhD programme

1) Core course for PhD programme (2021 Batch) started from June 1, 2021.

The Following courses are running simultaneously with two lectures of 90 Minutes each on every working day.

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CC101: Foundations of Public Finance

CC102: Topics in Public Finance

CC103: A course in Indian economy with Special Reference to Kerala

CC104: Research Methodology.

First Batch PhD students are now at Chapter writing Stage

Second Batch PhD students are currently going through the course work and are in the process of preparing their Proposal.

c. RCBP programme

Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation (GIFT) announced a 100 hours online Research Capacity Building Program (RCBP) for the academic year 2021-22. This one-semester

duration program intends to facilitate an interactive learning platform for research capacity building of Research Scholars. The program's curriculum has been designed under two parts: (i) Research Methodology and (ii) Data Analytics using R software. While the former is designed to equip participants with integrated learning of methodological tools that scholars may need during the life cycle of their doctoral research and beyond, the latter is to make the participants proficient in statistical computing methods using R software.

More than 50 applications have been received for the program. The RCBP committee chaired by Dr Renjith P S verified the eligibility criteria of the applicants and 42 candidates were selected for the program. The Director Prof. K J Joseph inaugurated on 15 June, 2021 by welcoming the participants. The course was officially commenced from 17 June, 2021. The main course instructor for PART A is Dr Vijayamohanan Pillai, Honorary Fellow GIFT with the active involvement of other faculty of GIFT and external experts like Professor Mala Ramanathan. Seven interactive lectures have been conducted during June 2021 under various themes, which include Historical Perspective of Research, Research Paradigms and Theory, Theoretical Framework vs. Conceptual Framework, Review of Literature, Qualitative Research vs. Quantitative research, and Sampling Methods. In addition, the RCBP team has created an exclusive zoom link and Google classroom for smooth online communication.

During the month of July, lectures dealt with descriptive statistics, sampling distribution, inferential statistics, hypothesis testing, repeated sample, nonparametric tests, ANOVA, multivariate analysis and academic writing. The practical applications of the concepts were introduced using Gretle software. The participants have carried out statistical and econometric assignments using the software.

3.New Reports and Publications

1.Kerala Tax Reporter (KTR)

April and June issues of KTR published Online and offline.

<https://www.gift.res.in/ktr>

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2. Innovation and Development

A Routledge journal from GIFT, Volume 11, No. 1 published, No 2&3 (10th Anniversary Issue) Scheduled for September Editor in Chief, K J Joseph.

For details, please visit <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/riad20/current>

3. Weekly update on the Indian Economy

This is an attempt by the Young Scholar' Forum in GIFT, led by Smt. Shency Mathew to update on important developments in the national economy. Latest issue: 24-30, July 2021.

For details, please visit https://www.gift.res.in/index.php/publish/publish_list/14/Weekly-Updates-on-Indian-Economy