

# CESS Prime Time

(Planning Dept., Govt. of Telangana & ICSSR-Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)



## From the Director's Desk...



**Prof. E. Revathi**

The quarter October–December 2025 has been marked by a series of substantive academic engagements and policy-oriented initiatives at CESS. A pre-conference symposium on FDI in India, with a focus on Telangana, highlighted the State's IT sector as a key driver of foreign capital inflows and underscored its growing diversification across sectors, while also pointing to limitations arising from the lack of disaggregated data for deeper analysis.

The International Seminar organised towards the end of October on 'Social Science Research (SSR) in India: Issues and Challenges' provided a platform for critical reflection on strengthening the national research ecosystem through collaboration, methodological innovation, and institutional self-assessment. Deliberations covered quality, financing, inclusion, diversity, regional languages, and youth aspirations in pursuing SSR. A paper presented by the CESS team highlighted the diversity and rapid expansion

of higher education institutions, particularly in the private sector, and the increasing focus on STEM disciplines in South India.

The Waheeduddin Khan Memorial Lecture by Jeemol Unni and the BPR Vithal Memorial Lecture by Montek Singh Ahluwalia offered valuable insights on women's entrepreneurship in the digital era and the challenges of policymaking in a rapidly evolving global context respectively.

CESS team also participated in the GDN end-term workshop, reviewing progress of the study on SSR across India, Vietnam, Fiji, Laos, and presented preliminary survey findings. At the 26<sup>th</sup> biennial AASSREC (Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils) conference organised by the ICSSR, our presentation on "Doing Research in India" highlighted institutional constraints and pathways for strengthening research systems. The report on *Higher Education in Telangana: Facts and Figures* was released in the second week of December. The report provided a comprehensive overview of higher education, bringing out issues of expansion, quality, and equity. CESS also contributed to the State's policy discourse through its involvement in the annual Socioeconomic Outlook Report and participation in the Telangana Rising @ 2047 Global Summit.

CESS remains committed to advancing rigorous research and informed policy engagement.

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## Publications

### Book Chapters

Chandrasekhar, K., & Eedaiah, G. "Growth Potential of Polyhouse Farming in Telangana: An Economic Analysis", (2025) in *Growth Potentialities in Telangana State - Prospects and Challenges*, (Eds). Indrakant, S. & Naresh, G., Paramount Publishing House, New Delhi, October 2025, pp. 157-170. ISBN: 978-93-49022-40-9

### Reports

Venkatanarayana, M., & E. Revathi, (2025). *Higher Education in Telangana Facts and Figures*, October 2025, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad.

### Journals

Chakradhar, J., Ganguly, A., Choudhury, R. N., & Jadhav, P. (2025). Trade Policy Uncertainty and Agricultural Exports: The Mitigating Roles of RTA and Liberal Democracies. *Transnational Corporations Review*, 17(44), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1925209925000531>

Chandrasekhar, K. (2025). Ensuring Equitable and Inclusive School Education in Telangana: A Study under the Samagra Shiksha Scheme, *Ajanta Prakashan*, 14(4), December 2025. ISSN-2277-5730 (UGC-CARE Listed Journal)

Harinath, S., & Laxman Rao, S. (2025). Sociology of Dalit Women: A Micro-level Study of Self-help Groups in India, *Discover Global Society*, Springer Nature Link. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44282-025-00303-4>

Krishna Rao, Ch. (2025). Tribes and Technology : A Sociological Study of Digital India Program in *Ajanta Prakashan*, 14(4), December 2025, ISSN-2277-5730 (UGC-CARE Listed Journal).

Srinivasa Reddy, M. (2025). Gender Budgeting in India: A Critical Review, (Jointly with T Koti Reddy and V Ritika Rao), *Frontier Weekly*, 58(22), November 2025.

### Working Papers/ Monographs

Brahmanandam, N., *Household Energy Transition to Clean Fuel in Rural India: Role of LPG Subsidy*, Working Paper No. 152, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad.

Anjaneyulu, P., *Self Employment among Scheduled Castes in Telangana: Empirical Evidence and the Way Forward*, Working Paper No. 153, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad.

### Articles in Newspapers

Amar Yumnam (7 October 2025). Dengue In Manipur: Public Suffering And Privatised Governance, *Imphal Times*, <https://www.imphaltimes.com/guest-column/dengue-in-manipur-public-suffering-and-privatised-governance/>

Venkatanarayana, M. (8 October 2025). State Needs to Address Employability Levels of Graduates, *Opinion, Hans India*, <https://www.thehansindia.com/hans/opinion/news-analysis/state-needs-to-address-employability-levels-of-graduates-1012667>

Chakradhar, J., (10 October 2025). Why India Buys More Than It Sells. *Deccan Herald*, <https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/why-india-buys-more-than-it-sells-3758958>.

Amar Yumnam (13 October 2025). History, Future and Governance: Continuing Ignominy of Manipur, *Imphal Times*, <https://www.imphaltimes.com/guest-column/history-future-and-governance-continuing-ignominy-of-manipur/>

Vijay, K. (21 October 2025). Tribal Justice must Unite, not Divide, Telangana's Adivasi Communities, *Opinion, Telangana Today*, <https://telanganatoday.com/opinion-tribal-justice-must-unite-not-divide-telanganas-ativasi-communities>

Amar Yumnam (28 October 2025). Government and Emotions: Manipur Tragedy, *Imphal Times*, <https://www.imphaltimes.com/guest-column/government-and-emotions-manipur-tragedy/>

Chakradhar, J., & Thomas, M. (29 October 2025). BRICS' Quiet Challenge to the Dollar, *Telangana Today*, <https://telanganatoday.com/opinion-brics-quiet-challenge-to-the-dollar>

Amar Yumnam (3 November 2025). Manipur: Is Anything Right Anywhere, *Imphal Times*, <https://www.imphaltimes.com/guest-column/manipur-is-anything-right-anywhere/>

Amar Yumnam (22 November 2025), Civilization, Federalism and Manipur: Rethinking Paramount, *Imphal Times*, <https://www.imphaltimes.com/guest->

column/civilization-federalism-and-manipur-rethinking-paramount/

Chakradhar, J., & Thomas, M. (30 November 2025). The Great Mineral Rush- Can India Break Free from Its Critical Mineral Dependence? *Telangana Today*. <https://telanganatoday.com/rewind-the-great-mineral-rush-can-india-break-free-from-its-critical-mineral-dependence>.

Amar Yumnam (1 December 2025). Manipur Will Not Cry, *Imphal Times*, <https://www.imphaltimes.com/guest-column/manipur-will-not-cry/>

Venkatanarayana, M. (3 December 2025). Has Product Subsidy become a Burden to Telangana Economy?, *Opinion, Hans India*, <https://epaper.thehansindia.com/HomeShareArticle?OrgId=31211f37bdf&imageview=0>

Amar Yumnam (8 December 2025). Manipur in a Behavioural Crisis, *Imphal Times*, <https://www.imphaltimes.com/guest-column/manipur-in-a-behavioural-crisis/>

Srinivas, J. (11 December 2025). Co-authored an opinion piece with Kadari Devaraju on 'Local Body Elections in Telangana Today,' *Telugu Prabha*. <https://epaper.teluguprabha.net/TelanganaMain?eid=1&edate=11/12/2025&pgid=278265&device=desktop&view=3>

Amar Yumnam (15 December 2025). An Eye For An Eye: No Solution For Manipur, *Imphal Times*, <https://www.imphaltimes.com/guest-column/an-eye-for-an-eye-no-solution-for-manipur/>

Chirayu Sharma & Chakradhar, J. (17 December 2025). AI Market Turbulence: Bubble or a Correction? *Deccan Herald*, <https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/ai-market-turbulence-bubble-or-a-correction-3833505>

Amar Yumnam (22 December 2025). How Not To Destroy Manipur? *Imphal Times* <https://www.imphaltimes.com/guest-column/how-not-to-destroy-manipur/>

Amar Yumnam (24 December 2025). Festival and Society: Governance Collapse in Manipur, *Imphal Times*, <https://www.imphaltimes.com/guest-column/festival-and-society-governance-collapse-in-manipur/>

Amar Yumnam (29 December 2025), Centripetal Versus Centrifugal: Manipur Challenge, *Imphal Times*, <https://www.imphaltimes.com/guest-column/centripetal-versus-centrifugal-manipur-challenge/>

## Review

Ganguly, A., & Chakradhar, J. (2025). Book Review: Richard Baldwin, *The Great Trade Hack: How Trump's Trade War Fails and the World Moves On*. *Foreign Trade Review*. Advance Online Publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00157325251401652>

Aivelu, K., reviewer for *TG Rising Vision 2047*, reviewed three key chapters—*Introduction, \$3 Trillion Economy- Investment Magnet, Spatial Area Planning and Logistics*, 1-2 December 2025.

Sreenivasulu, Y., reviewer for *TG Rising Vision 2047*, reviewed the chapter titled "Governance", 1-2 December 2025.

Suresh Reddy, B., reviewer for *TG Rising Vision 2047*, reviewed the chapter titled "Agriculture", 1-2 December 2025.

Venkatanarayana, M., reviewer for *TG Rising Vision 2047*, reviewed the chapter titled "Area Planning", 1-2 December 2025.

Vijay, K., reviewer for *TG Rising Vision 2047*, reviewed the *Health & Education* chapters, 1-2 December 2025.

## Paper Presentations

### Seminars and Conferences

Amrutha, K., Chandra Sekhar, K., Naidu, P.A., presented a paper titled "Impact of GST on Indian Textile Industry" in Annual Conference of Indian Economic Association (IEA) held at Osmania University Hyderabad, 21 December 2025.

Bharath, N., & Chandrasekhar, K., presented a paper titled "Green Startups as Catalysts for a Green Economy: Prospects and Challenges" in the International Conference on Economic Growth and Sustainable Development - Emerging Trends held at Shri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Institute for Management Development, Mysuru during 27-28 November 2025.

Chandrasekhar, K., presented a paper titled "Ensuring Equitable and Inclusive School Education in Telangana: A Study under the Samagra Shiksha Scheme" in National Seminar on 'India's Road Map to SDG 16: Strengthening Peace, Justice and Inclusive Societies' Organized by

Department of Economics, Government Degree College, Chevella, Telangana, during 10-11 December 2025.

Krishna Rao, Ch., presented a paper on *Tribes and Technology: A Sociological Study of Digital India Program* at a Two-Day National Seminar on “India’s Roadmap to SDG 16: Strengthening Peace, Justice and Inclusive Societies” 10-11 December 2025, Organized by Department of Economics, Government Degree College, Chevella.

Mallikarjuna Naik, V., & Chandrasekhar, K., presented a paper titled “*Fintech-Driven Economic Inclusion in Tribal Region Telangana - Pathways to an Inclusive and Sustainable State Economy*” in Annual Conference of Indian Economic Association at Osmania University Hyderabad during 21-23 December, 2025.

Revathi, E., presented on ‘*Doing Research Assessments Presentation*’ at the Conference Programme on ‘Social Science Research in the Indo-Pacific for Sustainable Futures: AASSREC–ICSSR 26<sup>th</sup> Biennial General Conference’, held in New Delhi, 5 December 2025.

-----was a panellist in the panel discussion on “*Inclusive Prosperity: Expanding Opportunity for Everyone*” at the Telangana Rising Global Summit 2025, organised by the SCDD, Government of Telangana, 9 December 2025.

Srinivasa Reddy, M., presented a paper on “*Agrarian Tenancy and Climate-Induced Livelihood Vulnerability in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana*”, 33<sup>rd</sup> Agricultural Economics Research Association (AERA) Annual Conference, ICAR-National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM), Hyderabad, Telangana, 2 December 2025.

----- presented a paper on “*Opportunities and Challenges of Digital Agriculture: An Indian Perspective*”, National Conference on Revisioning Rural Development for Viksit Bharat @2047-Impact of Multi-dimensional Poverty and Saturation, Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi, 19 November 2025.

### **Lectures Delivered and Invited Talks**

Arifa Sultana, Resource Person at NIRD (online), delivered a session on “*Financial Ratios and Marketing Plan for FPOs, and Discussion of BDP Format*” as part of the Advanced Training Programme on “Institutional Strengthening and Strategic Business Development for Empowering FPOs in Watershed” 6 November 2025.

Chakradhar, J., delivered a special lecture on *Theory and Application of the Gravity Model of Trade* at the School of Economics, University of Hyderabad, 27 October 2025.

Srinivas, J., delivered an invited guest lecture on “*Social Challenges and Scope of Social Research*” as part of the Online Foundation Workshop on Societal Grand Challenges, 18-20 December 2025. Fr. C. Rodrigues Institute of Management Studies (FCRIMS), Navi Mumbai.

Srinivasa Reddy, M., Chaired the Technical Session on “*Climate Resilient Agriculture: Strategies for Adopting to Changing Climate and Ensure Food Security*”, 33<sup>rd</sup> Agricultural Economics Research Association (AERA) Annual Conference, ICAR-National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM), Hyderabad, Telangana, 1 December 2025

### **Completed Studies**

- Socio-economic study of the impact of PVNR Open Cast Mining on, Biodiversity, Heritage and Socio-Religious Importance of Ramappa Temple and Lake (Sponsor: The Singareni Collieries Company Ltd, Kothagudem; Project Team: E. Revathi Overall Project Coordinator, Mamidi Bharath Bhushan Project Coordinator)**

The Singareni Collieries Company Ltd, (SCCL) proposes to initiate two open cast mining units viz., a) PV Narasimha Rao Open Cast mining (PVNR OC) at Venkatapur village situated around 5 kms distance from the Ramappa temple and lake, and b) KTK OC-III Expansion at Basvarajupally village in Ghanpur mandal of Bhupalapally district. These proposed mining units being in close proximity raised concerns about likely adverse impact on heritage importance of Ramappa temple and other religious sites in the area. The likely impacts include perceived threats of defilement of the religious sites and temples which have significant number of pilgrims all-round the year who attend one or more of the several jatras (carnivals) rooted in the belief system and worship of cultural and natural heritage. The region around Ramappa temple and lake comprises several temples and forms part of the state government’s mega plans of developing temple tourism and eco-tourism.

The study focused on evaluating the potential impact, individually and cumulatively, of the two open cast

mining units situated in the existing coal mine region. It examined three areas viz., i) Impact of mining activity on bio-diversity; ii) Socio-economic evaluation of mining versus Heritage in the long run; and iii) Impact of mining activity on socio-religious attachment of the communities towards Ramappa Temple and Lake. Study examined multifaceted consequences of large-scale mining activities on the ecological, cultural and social fabric of the region.

Tools are developed using appropriate /relevant part of the Heritage Impact Assessment format of National Monuments Authority (Ministry of Culture, GOI) for study of heritage aspects of the temple and sites' socio-religious importance, along with household interview schedule.

The study covered 1200 households from 40 villages in 10 km radius of the two coal mining units, while the study area for biodiversity and heritage importance of religious sites is wider.

## **2. Verification of Andhra Pradesh Community Natural Farming Practices: Challenges and Way forward (Sponsor: Government of Andhra Pradesh; Project Team: Y. Sreenivasulu and A. Rajani; Advisory Team: E. Revathi, P. Prudhvikar Reddy and C. Ravi)**

The study examines the implementation and field-level status of the Andhra Pradesh Community-Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) programme, which seeks to transition nearly one million farmers to agro-ecological farming practices and is widely recognised as one of the largest sustainable agriculture initiatives in the world. The main objective of the study was to assess and track Pre-Monsoon Dry Sowing (PMDS) farmers, verify their adoption of Community Natural Farming (CNF) practices, and identify the major challenges affecting CNF implementation. The study drew a simple random sample of 10,895 PMDS farmers from the URVI database maintained by RySS and collected information across 26 districts of Andhra Pradesh. The findings revealed a 92.1 per cent traceability rate in the URVI database, suggesting a relatively robust digital record system. At the same time, the study identified several gaps requiring policy attention. About 13 per cent of the sample was found to be non-PMDS cultivators, a status attributed to factors such as changes in lease arrangements, migration, and other shifts in cultivation practices. While the high

traceability rate reflects the overall effectiveness of the URVI portal, the presence of non-traceable and non-PMDS cases highlights the need for a stronger tracking mechanism to document farmers' transitions and the reasons for their movement out of PMDS status. In addition, the 0.4 per cent untraceable cases (42 farmers), though minimal, indicate the need to upgrade the URVI portal and integrate it with other government databases, particularly those related to vital statistics such as births and deaths. The study concludes that APCNF, particularly through PMDS, has made notable progress in advancing inclusive and climate-resilient agriculture in Andhra Pradesh. However, sustaining and deepening this transformation will require stronger digital governance systems, improved district-level monitoring, expansion of irrigation and extension support, better institutional coordination, and continuous capacity building.

## **Ongoing Studies**

### **1. Internal Police Reform in India: Evidence from Telangana (Sponsor: Indian Police Foundation (IPF), New Delhi; Project Team: Jadhav Chakradhar, Bhaskar, Malla Reddy, Bhaskar Reddy, Narsaiah)**

This study examines internal police reform in India through primary evidence from Telangana, covering diverse citizen-police interfaces and custodial processes. Drawing on structured surveys across Cyberabad and Sangareddy districts, the research analyses experiences in key domains: suspicious and unnatural death inquiries under Section 174 CrPC, treatment of accused and suspects, citizen service delivery, police helplines and emergency response systems, , lost property reporting, missing persons cases, NCR/CSR and civil complaints, and preventive arrests/bound-down proceedings and etc.

The evidence highlights both progress and persistent gaps. Digitalisation of services and high awareness of core emergency helplines (110/112) indicate improved accessibility. Online applications and service delivery systems show strong adoption, particularly for verification services. However, awareness of specialised helplines (women, child, senior citizen) remains limited, suggesting uneven outreach. In procedural justice domains, significant concerns emerge. In accused/suspect cases, issues include detention without clear communication of charges, variability in bail practices,

and limited awareness of legal safeguards. Preventive arrest cases reveal wide use of CrPC provisions, sometimes triggered by minor disputes or political mobilisation, raising questions about proportionality and transparency. In 174 CrPC and missing person cases, families report delays, communication gaps, and inconsistent follow-up. NCR/CSR complaints and civil disputes show variation in complaint recording practices, with some instances where only General Diary entries were made instead of formal registration. Lost property cases, dominated by mobile phone losses, reflect relatively smoother registration experiences but highlight the need for better tracking and timely updates. Across themes, police behaviour and communication quality significantly shape citizen satisfaction. Gender representation among respondents is consistently low in many categories, pointing to structural barriers in access and engagement.

**2. Breaking Glass Ceilings at Workplace: Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in the MSMEs Sector of South India (Sponsor: Special call for Collaborative Research Projects on Vision Viksit Bharat@2047, ICSSR, New Delhi; Project Team: Y. Kesava Reddy, Brajaraja Mishra, Sushanta Kumar Mahapatra, M. Srinivasa Reddy and Neeraj Kumar)**

The project aims at breaking the invisible barriers hindering the success of women entrepreneurs in the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector in South India. The project report writing is in progress.

**3. Estimation of the Consumption of Chemical Fertilizers in Andhra Pradesh during the years 2023-24 and 2024-25. (Sponsor: Rythu Sadhikara Samithi, Government of Andhra Pradesh; Project Team: B Suresh Reddy, Jhadav Chakradhar, Advisory Team: E. Revathi, P. Prudhvikar Reddy and C. Ravi)**

The study presents a comprehensive evaluation of chemical fertilizer use, production practices, and economic performance among farmers practicing Pre-Monsoon Dry Sowing (PMDS) under Community Natural Farming (CNF), in comparison with control farmers following conventional methods. Using a stratified multi-stage sampling design covering 148 Gram Panchayats across five fertilizer intensity strata, the study surveyed 4,417 programme (PMDS) farmers and 2,186 control farmers. The analysis adopts a “with and without” approach to compare

per-hectare fertilizer consumption, costs of cultivation, yields, and net returns across major crops during Kharif and Rabi seasons of 2023–24 and 2024–25. The study further distinguishes farming systems into Seed-to-Seed (S2S), Partial S2S, and Chemical practices, and controls for irrigation status, farm size, and agroclimatic zones. Findings indicate that PMDS farmers substantially reduced chemical fertilizer consumption compared to control farmers, particularly in nitrogenous and complex fertilizers. Fertilizer expenditure as a proportion of total cultivation cost was consistently lower in PMDS plots across crops and zones. Importantly, cost reductions did not compromise productivity; yields in many crops remained comparable to control plots, resulting in improved net incomes and higher returns per rupee spent in several cases. The economic advantage was more pronounced in rainfed and resource-constrained regions, where reduced input dependency lowered financial risk. The study also highlights broader fiscal and environmental implications. Lower chemical use among PMDS farmers translated into measurable savings in fertilizer subsidy outlays and reduced ecological stress from excessive nutrient application. Socio-demographic analysis shows that PMDS adoption spans caste categories, farm sizes, and age groups, with strong participation of marginal and small farmers.

**4. Doing Social Science Research Assessment (DRA) in India. A Global Development Network (GDN) Project (Sponsor: ICSSR, New Delhi; Mentor: Prof. Balveer Arora, Chairman, Centre for Multilevel Federalism, Former Professor of Political Science & Rector, Jawaharlal Nehru University; Project Team: E. Revathi (Principal Investigator), Sujit Kumar Mishra, C.H. Yaganti, P. Aparna, Arifa Sultana, S. Harinath) December 2024 to April 2026.**

The project aims to assess the state of social science research in India by evaluating its production, diffusion, and uptake through a globally standardised methodology.

The key issues and preliminary findings from both secondary data and a primary survey were presented in an international seminar organised at CESS, an end term workshop and in the 26<sup>th</sup> biennial AASSREC Conference held in New Delhi. The field survey covering researchers, administrators, and policymakers from various stakeholder groups within the

social science research ecosystem is currently ongoing. The desk-level data collection and analysis have been completed. The findings are -there is an increased diversity in social science research systems with multiple players; knowledge and financial resources are varied and largely determine quality of research; social science research institutions exhibit stronger research-policy connect vis-à-vis university systems; research eco-system complements funding in raising SSR quality.

## New Projects Launched

1. **Socio-economic impact of GST-Both its Introduction and Reforms, Consumption Patterns and Influence on Middle Class and Neo-middle Class (Sponsor: Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), Ministry of Education, Government of India; Project Team: G.R. Reddy (Supervisor), Gandam Thilothu Rao, Venna Vijay Kumar)**

The project is organized into two primary pillars designed to bridge the gap between academic data and actionable policy: Stakeholder Engagement (The Seminar) and Empirical Analysis (The Comprehensive Report). CESS will host a high-level seminar bringing together a multi-disciplinary group of practitioners, sectoral experts, and policy advocacy organizations. This forum will facilitate a qualitative critique of GST's performance, allowing for a nuanced understanding of challenges that data alone might miss. The core output is an exhaustive report detailing the impact of GST on consumption patterns in Telangana. This study examines the impact of GST since its introduction on consumption patterns and the impact on various cohorts in Telangana. The study further examines the impact of GST 2.0 on women, farmers, youth, middle, and the neo-middle class. The study employs secondary data collection of GST receipts in Telangana from the Commercial Tax Office, and the National Sample Survey Office's Household Consumer Expenditure Survey (HCES) data. The study further maps GST rates across various commodities in the HCES schedule for the pre-GST 2.0 and GST 2.0 periods. The study aims to generate empirical evidence on the socio-economic impact of GST in Telangana. The findings will formulate evidence-based suggestions to strengthen the momentum of GST reforms, ensuring they are both revenue-efficient and socially equitable.

## Division for Graduate Studies

### Ph.D Submitted

1. B. Padmapriya, *Service-Led Structural Transformation in India: An Empirical Study of Determinants, Employment, and Labour Productivity*, Ph.D dissertation supervised by Dr. C.T. Vidya, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, October 2025, submitted to *Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University*, Hyderabad.
2. M. Md. Irfan Basha, *Living and working conditions and social protection of construction workers – A study of Hyderabad City*, Ph.D dissertation supervised by Prof. E. Revathi, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, October 2025, submitted to *Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University*, Hyderabad.
3. Ponnamaneni Padmaja, *Export Competitiveness of Indian Turmeric A Post WTO Analysis*, Ph.D dissertation supervised by Prof. E. Revathi, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, December 2025, submitted to *Telangana University*, Nizamabad.

### Doctoral Committee Meetings (October – December 2025)

During October–December 2025, the CESS–DGS convened Doctoral Committee (D.C.) Meetings to review the academic progress of Ph.D. scholars. In this quarter, **two Pre-Submission Seminars** and **ten Progress Seminars** were presented. Each seminar was evaluated by a duly constituted Doctoral Committee comprising external subject experts from reputed institutions, along with the supervisor, an Internal member, Dean, Academic Coordinator, and the Director.

The scholars presented the progress of their thesis work, followed by **rigorous and interactive discussions**. The committees provided constructive feedback and scholarly suggestions aimed at strengthening the quality, analytical depth, and structure of the research chapters.

A notable feature of the D.C. meetings was the active participation of **external experts from diverse disciplines and leading academic and research institutions**, including the University of Hyderabad, IIT Chennai, BITS Hyderabad, ICRISAT, NIPFP, GIPE, NIRDPR and Founder Members of CESS. Their interdisciplinary perspectives significantly enhanced the academic rigour of the review process.

The research presented during the quarter covered **key themes such as** social support and mental health among the elderly; health behaviour and vaccination practices; economic sustainability of traditional art forms; financial inclusion through artificial intelligence; governance, disaster management, and access to justice; education, labour market transitions, migration, and wage differentials; technology-driven service start-ups; GST implications for micro and small enterprises; and rural women entrepreneurship in Telangana.

The Doctoral Committee Meetings provided an effective academic platform for scholarly discussion, interdisciplinary interaction, and strengthening ongoing doctoral research.

## Events

### 1. Panel Discussion on the Book “Economic Casteism” Authored by Sukhadeo Thorat and Amit Thorat

The Centre organised a Panel Discussion on the book “*Economic Casteism*” authored by Sukhadeo Thorat and Amit Thorat on Thursday, 16 October 2025, at CESS.

The session was chaired by C.H. Hanumantha Rao, Honorary Professor and Founder Member, CESS. E. Revathi, Director, CESS, introduced the book and spoke on the intersectionality of caste and class, emphasizing how both continue to influence economic and social outcomes.

The panel included distinguished scholars: Kalpana Kannabiran, Distinguished Professor, CSD, New Delhi, Nitin Tagade, Associate Professor of Economics, University of Hyderabad, S. Harinath, Research Associate, CESS, Vinod Mishra, Director, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, New Delhi.

In his remarks, Sukhadeo Thorat presented the key findings of the book. He explained that “*Economic Casteism*” provides extensive empirical evidence on caste-based discrimination faced by ex-untouchables in the labour market as formal and non-formal labour, farmers and self-employed. The book also highlights the continuing influence of caste norms in shaping economic decisions within rural markets and their impact on the income levels of ex-untouchable wage labourers, farmers, and businesspeople. By estimating income losses caused by discrimination, the authors demonstrate its role in deepening poverty and emphasize the need for affirmative action across occupations to ensure

equal access to markets and government services.

The study draws on evidence from rural markets—such as hiring, wages, sale and purchase of goods, and access to credit—to show how caste-based exclusion persists in economic and social life. Discriminatory practices extend to public schemes like the Midday Meal Programme and MGNREGA, and even in healthcare facilities. Economic discrimination remains deeply rooted, contributing to low income, limited employment opportunities, and higher poverty levels among the Scheduled Castes.

While tracing the ideological and historical roots of caste-based exclusion, it was noted that prescriptions found in classical texts such as the *Manusmriti* have contributed to longstanding social and economic deprivations — including denial of rights to education, employment, and property. These textual and normative legacies continue to inform social practices that reproduce economic inequality.

While urbanization and technology have reduced visible forms of caste bias, subtle and structural discrimination continues to exist in markets and institutions. “*Economic Casteism*” also introduces a novel theoretical and conceptual framework for studying discrimination in markets and government institutions, serving as a valuable reference for researchers and young scholars.

The panellists explored the book in depth and reflected on its relevance to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar’s constitutional vision of equality and social justice. They discussed how discrimination persists even within the implementation of public welfare schemes, highlighting the importance of addressing these inequities as constitutional violations.

C.H. Hanumantha Rao emphasized that given the caste discrimination, there is a need for further studies on the changes in the forms and processes of discrimination occurring in the society, and its outcomes during the past 10–



Sukhadeo Thorat at the Panel Discussion on the Book  
“*Economic Casteism*”

15 years and the policy measures needed to be undertaken to address the issues. He emphasised the importance of continued research by scholars in this direction.

## 2. Two-Day International Seminar on “Social Science Research in India: Issues and Challenges” on 29-30 October 2025

The Centre organised a two-day international seminar with the core objective of creating a platform for researchers and policymakers to collaboratively diagnose systemic constraints and propose actionable strategies to enhance the impact, quality, and relevance of social science inquiry across India.

The two-day event was organised as part of an international research project titled “Doing Research Assessment”, commissioned by the Global Development Network (GDN) and the ICSSR (Indian Council of Social Science Research). The deliberations of the Seminar focused on critical themes of social science research, such as the institutional interventions for enhancing the quality and impact of social science research, priority areas for research, strengthening academic competencies, funding architecture, and the impact of social science research on policy formulation and implementation in India. Eminent scholars and administrators from all social science disciplines and institutions presented their papers on the following eight themes: (i) Changing landscape of social sciences in India, (ii) Social sciences as pathways: Youth aspirations and challenges, (iii) Diversity and inclusion in social sciences, (iv) Financing social science education and research, (v) Regional languages as sites of knowledge in social sciences, (vi) Quality in social science research:



*Dignitaries at the Two-Day International Seminar on “Social Science Research in India: Issues and Challenges”*

Standards, relevance, and ethics, (vii) Social science research and policy: Strengthening the interface, (viii) Indigenous knowledge and social sciences.

Prof Badri Narayan Tiwari, Vice Chancellor of TISS Mumbai in his Valedictory address focused on ‘*Social Science research in India in Changing Times*’. He called upon the social scientists to keep pace with changing times; to document the changing lives or new spaces of the marginalised among the marginalised and their aspirations; and an ‘inch by inch’ documentation of transformations happening across diverse people in a pluralistic society.

## 3. TEA–CESS Pre Conference Symposium on “Foreign Direct Investment in India – with focus on Telangana”

The Centre in collaboration with Telangana Economic Association (TEA) has conducted a Symposium on “Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India- with A focus on Telangana” on 15 November, 2025. The Symposium was chaired by K. Muthyam Reddy, President Telangana Economic Association. The keynote address was given by Jayesh Ranjan, IAS, Principal Secretary (Industry & Commerce), Debashish Acharya, Dean School of Economics, University of Hyderabad, E. Revathi, Director, CESS and V. Vijay Kumar, RBI Fellow, CESS, made presentations.

Jayesh Ranjan, said that Telangana tops in attracting FDI in Digital Economy and Sixth in total FDI among 12 top states in India. Telangana government has taken several proactive steps such as TG-iPASS, Fast track clearance, land allotment, monetary incentives, skilling the youth, providing conducive ecosystem. He suggested for a cooperative policy between the Centre and States in attracting the FDI.



*Panellists at the TEA–CESS Pre-Conference Symposium on “Foreign Direct Investment in India – with Focus on Telangana”*

Debashish Acharya highlighted the importance of FDI for productivity and spillover benefits, even though there are challenges in statistically testing the influence of FDI on the economy. E. Revathi and Vijay Kumar highlighted the growing influence of FDI. However, they expressed concern over lack of data at the State level, on FDI related variables at sectoral levels. The symposium expressed the need for

the Government of Telangana to collect specific data on FDI in the different sectors, so that more understanding is generated on the role of FDI in Telangana's growth and development. A book published by TEA titled, 'Welfare Schemes in Telangana State: Some Reflections' was released. Ramana Murthy, Vice-President of TEA presented the vote of thanks.

#### 4. 19<sup>th</sup> Dr. Waheeduddin Khan Memorial Lecture by Jeemol Unni on "Entrepreneurship in the Digital Era: Platform Startups and Gender Dynamics"

The Centre organised the Dr Waheeduddin Khan Memorial Lecture on 25 November 2025 at the B.P.R. Vittal Auditorium, CESS, Hyderabad. The programme commenced with a floral tribute to Dr. Waheeduddin Khan, remembering his significant academic contributions and his pivotal role in strengthening CESS.

E. Revathi, Director, CESS, welcomed the gathering and briefly reflected on the significance of the Memorial Lecture series, initiated in 1986 to commemorate Dr. Waheeduddin Khan's legacy.

Fatima Alikhan, Member of the Board of Governors of CESS, Chaired the memorial lecture. In her introductory remarks, she highlighted the relevance of the topic in the current socio-economic context. Jeemol Unni situated her talk in the context of India's current employment landscape, characterised by high unemployment among educated youth and a saturated formal labour market. She underscored the role of small and medium enterprises, innovation, and an "entrepreneurial spirit" in creating new opportunities and supporting economic growth.

She then presented the conceptual foundations of the lecture, beginning with Schumpeter's theory of entrepreneurship, which was further expanded by 2025 Nobel Prize-winning economists, particularly the idea of 'creative destruction', where old technologies are replaced by innovations that drive economic change. She highlighted that digital entrepreneurship differs significantly from traditional entrepreneurship, as digital technologies have widened knowledge networks and expanded customer markets. In her study, she classified tech companies into transactional platforms, non-transactional platforms, and non-platforms. With this background, she posed an important research question: Is the valuation of the companies driven more by economic performance or by future growth potential?

Drawing on empirical data from tech startups in Pune and Ahmedabad, she argued that contemporary entrepreneurship embodies the Schumpeterian model of creative destruction, with digital platforms emerging as powerful micro-entrepreneurial spaces. Her findings suggest that the valuation of platform companies is driven more by future growth potential than by current economic performance, and that transactional platforms receive higher valuation and funding than other tech companies, despite facing losses on operational front.

She further discussed the gender dynamics of startup ecosystems, noting that women-founded platform companies receive lower funding and valuation. She emphasised that these hypotheses require deeper investigation and hold significant potential for future research on digital entrepreneurship and gender.

Following the lecture, the floor was opened for discussion. Faculty members, researchers, and students raised insightful questions, leading to a rich and engaging exchange on digital entrepreneurship, platform work, and gendered labour dynamics.

As part of the programme, CESS presented the **Dr. Waheeduddin Khan Best PhD Thesis Awards – 2025**. The awardees were: (i) O. Pranathi (Political Science) (ii) M. Sri Vidhya (Economics)



*19<sup>th</sup> Dr. Waheeduddin Khan Memorial Lecture by Jeemol Unni*

#### 5. 4<sup>th</sup> B.P.R. Vithal Memorial Lecture by Montek Singh Ahluwalia on "Challenges of Policy Making in a Fast Changing World"

The Centre organised the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual B.P.R. Vithal Memorial Lecture on 1 December 2025. The lecture was given by Montek Singh Ahluwalia, economist and former deputy chairman of the Planning Commission. The lecture was chaired by D. Subba Rao, former Governor of the RBI.

Since, India is entering an economic transition far more complex than the breakthrough movement of 1991, the speaker argued that if India wants to raise long-term growth of GDP from the current rate of 6.5% to 8%, it requires a huge government effort. The country has to adapt to changing global trade and technology, and formulate its governance, fiscal strategy, and state-level regulatory systems accordingly.

Ahluwalia argued that India's reform challenges are now qualitatively different from the early liberalisation phase, which mainly required persuading bureaucrats, while today's problems cut across federal politics, climate pressures, technology disruptions and global geopolitical fragmentation.

He added that India's domestic target of becoming a developed nation by 2047, as outlined in the Viksit Bharat vision, requires consistent real growth of about 8% and cautioned that such a shift cannot be assumed simply because recent quarterly numbers have occasionally touched higher levels. He stressed that the underlying growth rate remains around 6.5%, and while good policies can push it upwards, bad policies can lower it quickly in a volatile world.

Ahluwalia outlined three major global shifts that India must adjust to. The first is the sharp deterioration in the global geopolitical environment. The second shift is the transformation in global trade patterns as economies rethink supply chains, and the third shift is the acceleration of technological change.

He argued that India's biggest development gaps remain health and education, both of which fall largely under State governments and require significant increases in public spending. He said agricultural research, climate-resilient farming, and water conservation will also need higher State-level expenditure. At the same time, modernising industry and strengthening domestic R&D cannot be done without a larger central fiscal commitment, as private investment in research remains very low.

“Many policy discussions today list dozens or hundreds of reforms, but India needs a narrowed set of priorities for the next five years and a national consensus around them. India must choose credibility by aligning its tariff regime with economies that remain committed to open markets,” he said.

He added that India should expect States to grow at different rates, which will lead to more migration. He said this is economically positive and will create political pressures, especially in richer States with slowing population growth that will need to attract labour.

K. L. Krishna, former Chairman of CESS, was felicitated on being conferred the *Padma Shri* by the Government of India earlier in the year.



*Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress, New Delhi, virtually delivered the 4<sup>th</sup> B.P.R. Vithal Memorial Lecture*

#### **6. Release of the Report: “Higher Education in Telangana – Facts and Figures” on 10 December 2025, Authored by M. Venkatanarayana and E. Revathi.**

The Report serves as a baseline assessment of the state's higher education system across five key pillars: access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability. It situates the current landscape within the broader historical context of educational development in Telangana and reviews relevant national policies. The report includes a district-wise mapping of higher education institutions, an overview of the policy framework for vocational education, and a conceptual framework for assessing educational quality. This is complemented by an in-depth analysis of NAAC accreditations and NIRF rankings of higher education institutions in the state, along with a discussion on the need for developmental teaching. In addition, the report provides a comprehensive review of public expenditure on education, with a particular focus on higher education. It examines the prospects for expanding enrolment and achieving improvements in the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), especially in the context of the NEP 2020 target of a 50 percent GER by 2035, and identifies key challenges in

implementing the policy in Telangana. Overall, the report integrates empirical data with analytical insights to present a holistic picture of the higher education sector in the state. While presenting the findings of the Report E. Revathi noted that Telangana has performed remarkably in school and higher education over the past three decades, however increasing privatisation and challenges in ensuring quality education are key concerns to be addressed.

Sukhadeo Thorat while releasing the Report pointed out that the objective of higher education is to impart scientific and quality knowledge. He said inequality and access to quality education are key factors that states must address. He emphasised the need for deeper analysis into the impacts of privatisation on different socio-economic strata.

JBG Tilak, Chair of the session, said that although the quantitative expansion of higher education in the state is remarkable, increasing privatisation is a concern. He raised a concern that Telangana is still one of the states with the lowest literacy rates across states in India. Also, he pointed out that inequalities in higher education between the rich and the poor are widening. Shanta Sinha, panellist in the session, highlighted the growing demand for higher education in the state. She noted that many students pursue their studies while working part-time. She emphasised that the privatisation of education is undemocratic, exclusionary, and unequitable. She noted that Telangana has performed remarkably in school and higher education over the past three decades. However, increasing privatisation and challenges in ensuring quality education are key concerns that the state must address.



*Dignitaries at the release of the Report “Higher Education in Telangana – Facts and Figures”*

CH. Hanumantha Rao, D Narsimha Reddy, G Haragopal; A Venkateswarlu; Faculty members and research scholars participated in the discussions.

### 7. CESS Scholar’s Research Paper wins Second-Best Paper Award

R. Saroja Sree, Research Scholar at the Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), received the Second-Best Paper Award for her research paper titled “Women and Their Access to Technical Advice Related to Agricultural Activities and Its Impact on Agricultural Income in India.” The paper was presented at the International Conference on Women 5.0: Power, Progress & Possibilities, held on 11–12 December 2025 at ICFAI, Hyderabad.



*Dr. Duvvuri Subbarao, Former Governor, RBI; Prof. J. Mahender Reddy, Founder Member, CESS; and Prof. E. Revathi, Director, CESS, at the felicitation honouring Prof. K. L. Krishna, Former Chairman, CESS, on being conferred the Padma Shri Award.*



*Prof. C.H. Hanumantha Rao, Honorary Professor and Founder Member, CESS honouring Prof. K.L. Krishna, Former Chairman, CESS*

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