

BOOK REVIEWS

India Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises Report 2011, Editors : P.M. Mathew, S.Sridhar and Ram Venuprasad, Publisher : Institute of Small Enterprises and Development, Pages : 275, Price : Rs 950.

The India Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises Report 2011 is an authentic source of presentation of growth and development of the MSMEs in India in its entirety. This report provides an independent and scholarly view of the state of MSMEs on an annual basis, which is widely quoted in most circles that have serious stake in the MSME issues. As it collects information from authentic sources and field reports, it helps in identifying the knowledge and practice gaps that require further research and study.

For the last few years, this report has become the best reference material on the annual trends and progress of the Indian micro, small and medium enterprises sector and is a must for every researcher who access the performance of a particular enterprise vis-à-vis the sector as a whole. The richness of the report lies in its diversity of perspectives, sectorial contents and breadth of issues covered as well as the depth of analyses. It is a rare blending of statistical rigour with policy and action relevance inputs for the MSMEs in toto.

The report started with the 'Global Scene and the Outlook' and ended with 'Key concerns and the way forward' for the future of the MSMEs. There are other ten relevant chapters, each redefining an important aspect. Some notable points from each chapter are illustrated below reflecting the richness of the report.

For example in Chapter II, entitled 'The Enterprise Ecosystem and MSMEs', the report has stated that unlike in other economies of the world, public policy in the industrial sector in India has significantly helped the broad based development of its several sectors and sub-sectors, mostly facilitated by a strong statistical system which captures the trend and progress of the various sub-sectors.

In Chapter III on 'The Legal and Institutional Framework', the report recommended an improved statistical system, as it is crucial to explore the role of actors other than the government who are contributing significantly in the area of MSME.

In Chapter IV on 'The Report Card', the editors have aptly pointed out that in the agenda of employment promotion in the country, the projections and strategies are significantly focused on 'SSIs' with inadequate attention to the dynamics of the unorganised sector as a whole. Indeed, a more holistic approach is vital for sharpening strategies for the bottom of the pyramid.

In Chapter V on 'Human Resources and Entrepreneurship', the report highlighted the conventional approaches to human resource development which have treated entrepreneurs and workers as two distinct categories. However, the report has suggested that the public policy should be designed to maintain a balance between the two and preserve the entrepreneurial resources as a critical resource and which cannot be created so easily. Such an approach is essential to provide a fresh look at policies operated specifically for the growth and development of micro enterprises.

In Chapter VI on 'Finance: Recent Developments and Policy,' the editors have stressed that it is time to move away from adequacy to other aspects of credit requirements, such as uses of credit and appropriateness of financial requirements. Moreover, the report discussed the differences between microfinance and venture capital, and suggested that there are more issues which are needed to be deliberated and these deliberations will not only enhance flow of credit but also help in garnering more business for financial institutions.

In Chapter VII on 'Innovation and MSMEs: Green and Clean,' the editors have highlighted that the alternative energy sources implies a significant business case and it remains to be properly harnessed. Given the specific development of this sector in the country, India has tremendous opportunities in waiting.

In Chapter VIII on 'Communication and Advocacy,' the editors stressed that effective advocacy need to be based on a solid footing of data, information and analysis on the small enterprise economy. Moreover, as communication emerges as an outcome of data information and analysis, India still has to travel a lot on these lines.

In Chapter IX on 'Trade and Outward Orientation,' the editors focused on the need for rapid changes in the MSME sector from the view point of their survival. They have advised to cultivate a culture of innovation, in which both the corporate sector and the government have important roles to play.

The tenth and the final chapter on 'Responsible Business; Perspectives and Experiences' reminded that the concept should not be treated as a passing fad rather it should provide an opportunity for having a closer look at the way business is done. Besides, for the planners and the policy makers, it gives an opportunity to look back on the qualitative

aspects of enterprise development rather than focusing only on achievement of quantitative targets.

The report is a comprehensive reference for those who want to review the performance of the MSMEs as well as interested to know the status of various policy decisions taken by the Government of India and other agencies in facilitating the growth and development of MSMEs in backward regions of India. The editors should be highly appreciated as the report handles difficult and contentious issues in a most comprehensive manner and highlights the MSMEs in a most fascinating manner. Finally, a small remark that though some spelling mistakes spoil the charm of quick reading of the report but they do not drag attention from the broad contents and database as vividly presented in the report.

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Agro-Afforestation Management on Wastelands (Village Level Study), Hridai R. Yadav, 2011. Published by Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd, A/15-16, Commercial Block, Mohan Garden, New Delhi -110 059 (India), pp. 349, Rs. 900 (Hardback).

The book under review is an outcome of a research study analysing various natural and human factors responsible for the wastelands development covering five villages (*viz.*, Loniapur, Parsanwa, Benipur, Mahmoodpur and Bhaganpur villages) of Amethi Block in Sultanpur district. The author has attempted to analyse the problems and factors responsible for development of wastelands at village and block levels. He examined the issues related with planning, management and reclamation of wastelands through agro-afforestation system. He has also assessed the cost-benefit ratios, socio-economic crisis and suggested suitable strategies to restore the ecological imbalances.