

## **DYNAMICS OF RURAL POVERTY IN BIHAR : THE MALADY AND PANACEA OF THE MALAISE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study examines the incidence of rural poverty in Bihar. It is a renewed and indepth analysis of the poverty problem in its various regional, social and institutional dimensions. To study the malaise of poverty, the relationship between growth and poverty; agricultural growth and poverty; agrarian relations and poverty are analysed. Further, the impact of various poverty alleviation programmes especially with reference to new poverty schemes on poverty has been analysed. Finally main conclusions and policy initiatives to be taken are presented. The study is based on secondary data of National Sample Survey(NSS) to identify the linkages between growth and poverty. The data on sectoral growth pattern are obtained from estimates of Net Domestic Product(NDP) of Central Statistical Organisation(CSO). To assess the impact of anti-poverty programmes, various poverty alleviation studies conducted earlier have been used as an important source material. The study reveals that (a) rural poverty in Bihar is a consequence of poor and lopsided growth of the economy of the State (b) the trickle-down effect of agricultural growth is limited in making significant dent in removing poverty (c) in a predominantly agrarian economy of Bihar, poverty is due to highly iniquitous agrarian relation (d) the poverty alleviation programmes implemented so far have been partially responsible for increasing the incidence of poverty in rural Bihar. To conclude, since poverty has multi-dimensional aspects, the panacea for the problem of poverty is multi-dimensional. Growth must be inclusive. Apart from focusing on agriculture, non-farm and infrastructure sector; stricter governance reforms, catalytic change in the political will power, focusing on development of certain castes and groups need prior attention to make a significant dent on the poverty problem plaguing the State for the last several decades.*