

Ever since the first issue in 1966, EPW has been India's premier journal for comment on current affairs and research in the social sciences. It succeeded *Economic Weekly* (1949-1965), which was launched and shepherded by SACHIN CHAUDHURI, who was also the founder-editor of EPW. As editor for thirty-five years (1969-2004) KRISHNA RAJ gave EPW the reputation it now enjoys.

EDITOR
C RAMMANOHAR REDDY

DEPUTY EDITOR
BERNARD D'MELLO

WEB EDITOR
SUBHASH RAI

SENIOR ASSISTANT EDITORS
**LINA MATHIAS
ANIKET ALAM
SRINIVASAN RAMANI
ASHIMA SOOD
BHARATI BHARGAVA**

EDITORIAL STAFF
**PRABHA PILLAI
JYOTI SHETTY**

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS
**P S LEELA
TANYA SETHI**

EDITORIAL CONSULTANT
GAUTAM NAVLAKHA

PRODUCTION
**U RAGHUNATHAN
S LESLINE CORERA
SUNEETHI NAIR**

CIRCULATION
GAURANG PRADHAN MANAGER
B S SHARMA

ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER
KAMAL G FANIBANDA

GENERAL MANAGER & PUBLISHER
K VIJAYAKUMAR

EDITORIAL
edit@epw.in

CIRCULATION
circulation@epw.in

ADVERTISING
advt@epw.in

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL WEEKLY

320-321, A TO Z INDUSTRIAL ESTATE
GANPATRAO KADAM MARG, LOWER PAREL
MUMBAI 400 013
PHONE: (022) 4063 8282
FAX: (022) 2493 4515

EPW RESEARCH FOUNDATION

EPW Research Foundation, established in 1993, conducts research on financial and macro-economic issues in India.

DIRECTOR
K KANAGASABAPATHY
C 212, AKURLI INDUSTRIAL ESTATE
KANDIVALI (EAST), MUMBAI 400 101
PHONES: (022) 2887 3038/41
FAX: (022) 2887 3038
epwrf@vsnl.com

Printed by K Vijayakumar at Modern Arts and Industries, 151, A-Z Industrial Estate, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai-400 013 and published by him on behalf of Sameeksha Trust from 320-321, A-Z Industrial Estate, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai-400 013.
Editor: C Rammanohar Reddy.

Scientific Enquiry vs Ideology

In the comment, "Replacing Science with Mystery" (EPW, 12 June 2010) that George Thomas wrote on Laurent Pordié's article, "The Politics of Therapeutic Evaluation in Asian Medicine" (EPW, 1 May 2010), an orthopaedic surgeon, also interested in medical ethics, takes up an anthropological paper addressing issues of power in the health field to share his view and experience on this topic. This is a very welcome initiative, which however shows the need to further encourage dialogue between specialists of different disciplines. Thomas brought back an old debate but does not seem to master its complexity. His argument is embedded in an ideological frame, which characterises numerous MDS in our country who see a binary opposition and impermeable borders between Indian medicine and allopathy. This is unfortunate because the remarkable paper written by Pordié brings a balanced and refreshing analysis of the politics of therapeutic efficacy, which would have rather deserved a constructive comment.

For Thomas, "The Politics of Therapeutic Evaluation in Asian Medicine" promised to offer a new method of therapeutic evaluation, and the author searched for it in vain in the paper. He should have been warned that social sciences offer social criticism and unfortunately not ready-made solutions and even less technical propositions. As the title actually suggests, the paper addresses issues of power involved in the evaluation of Asian medicine, such as the hegemony of medical epistemologies over others and the political reorientation of international ethnopharmacology. The paper follows by showing that the proof of efficacy in traditional medicine entails the production of particular types of commodities, which claim universality while remaining strong markers of cultural identity. This process, shows Pordié, involves three important shifts: Indian medicine is rendered more onerous, is increasingly urbanised and solely accessible to the higher social fringes. Biomedical standards create a normative frame which "delimit the space of possibility" (Pordié: 63) for Indian medicine.

Pordié offers an insightful analysis of the socio-political consequences brought about by this encounter.

Thomas writes that Pordié hopes "to ensure access to medical care for the poorest populations through traditional medicines". This is an absolute mistake. When reading anthropological work, it is important to clearly discern the various layers of discourses involved in the author's analysis. Pordié clearly presents this as the World Health Organisation's (WHO) objectives and Thomas conflates the WHO objectives with the author's arguments, which are concerned with the politics involved in the WHO project. This is highly problematic. The same applies to issues pertaining to accessibility and therapeutic efficacy. The WHO agenda aims to ensure wide accessibility to traditional medicine, but insists on doing so through the strict validation of their efficacy. The confusion is not that of the author of the paper but that of Thomas. The commentator also thinks that Pordié "is concerned about the possible exploitation of people by modern medicine". Again, this is not what the paper tells us, quite on the contrary. It rather shows that Indian medicine, once validated by biomedicine (through clinical trials) becomes out of reach to the poor, through the three shifts I have presented. Now, I would see no harm in thinking that biomedicine *also* exploits the poor. I am a medical practitioner as Thomas, and I am well aware of the rampant corruption in our hospitals especially as they concern the poor.

While Pordié's paper would not generate any controversy in anthropological circles, I understand, however, that it may irritate practitioners (from both sides) who take a social critique at face value, and not as a heuristic device.

Dilip Reddy

HYDERABAD

Is Speculation a Problem?

This refers to Richa Kumar's article on commodity futures markets in India "Mandi Traders and the *Dabba*" (EPW, 31 July 2010).

The author mentions that the large MNCs exert an undue influence in setting futures prices, yet, the article itself mentions local

oligopolies of big traders doing the same. Naturally, the loss of a market-influencing monopoly would be rued by these very traders who were the respondents of the author's ethnographic interviews.

It is for the precise purpose of removing the disproportionate advantage of one/few market players that the market needs to be widely participated in. Hence, the activities of speculators in futures market need to be welcomed, albeit under sound regulatory principles which the national commodity exchanges and the regulator have long put in place. Speculators bring in the much needed liquidity to the futures market which lead to efficiency in the process of price discovery and make the process of risk management, cheaper. Speculation, moreover, cannot and should not be confused with absence of delivery, as has been made in the article, as hedgers can also opt for cash settlement.

Another point made by the author is that price movements in futures markets are often out of sync with domestic market fundamentals. In globally integrated markets with free and rapid flow of information, international factors play as important a role in influencing prices as domestic factors. The specific example the author gives – a crash in soybean price – is a correction (rightly pointed out by a trader) in price, not very dissimilar to such corrections one observes in other markets – from equity to real estate – as these markets adjust to fundamentals. Hence, there is nothing to be unduly worried about the soybean market, or be critical of futures market on this count. Criticism of speculators on this market also appears unwarranted as for every “unusual price” in the market, there is a buyer and a seller willing to transact and clear the market at this price knowing fully the risks of not being in tune with market fundamentals.

The author also appears to mistake the risk-mitigating function of the futures market to a non-existent objective of profit-guarantee. Futures markets, functioning through self-regulatory organisations (SROS) like commodity exchanges and the Forward Markets Commission (FMC), the market regulator, help stakeholders to lock in prices; they do not guarantee higher profits to market players. The actual price may indeed move adversely to the

locked-in prices for the hedger. Yet, to the extent that a price has been fixed (and delivery opted for, as may be the case, guaranteeing availability), futures markets provide an *assured* price rather than the *best* price. The article unfortunately adds to the misconception rather than clearing the air on this issue.

Be so as it may, the point of the author that the traders are worried about futures markets needs to be taken cognisance of. We also hold that unless the trader, an important stakeholder in the agriculture ecosystem, sees tangible benefits from this market, one cannot expect the market to deepen significantly. With this realisation, the national commodity exchanges have teamed up with FMC and many other agencies (viz, academic institutions) to conduct awareness campaigns on an extensive scale to educate the public about the benefits of futures markets and to remove any misgivings or apprehensions they may have. We have seen these efforts yielding results in terms of increasing references to futures-traded prices in their spot market transactions and a steady and consistent rise in the participation of physical market players on the futures platform.

V Shunmugam, Chief Economist and
Debojyoti Dey, Economist

MUMBAI

Repression and Waste

I thank Kashmir Singh “False Proposition” (EPW, 21 August 2010) for taking the trouble to respond to my short article. However, I am disappointed by its contents. He writes that my argument (in “False Proposition on the Strength of the Police Force”, EPW, 17 July 2010) is based on “inadequate research and irrelevant assumptions”. I would be the first one to agree with him had he proceeded to illustrate his contention. Instead, he leaves me confused because he actually repeats what I have said and endorses that “paramilitary forces have been often deployed to fight insurgents (as in J&K) ...for decades”. I pointed to the difference between short-term and prolonged deployment, where the balance of power between civilian and security forces changes in the latter. He is also unaware of the irony when he cites J&K, which is a case of failure of military

suppression and wastage of personnel and public funds, when more than 20 years of military offensive against the Kashmiri people has not won them over to acceptance of forced union with India. He also finds fault with me by stating that the “author admits that he is not clear” about whether the union home secretary meant civil or armed police when he spoke of vacancies and additional requirement, a total of eight lakhs (and not 3.5 lakhs that Kashmir Singh refers to) over the next five years.

My caution can hardly be an argument against me. The reason for my hesitation was because civil police recruitment is not the constitutional responsibility of the union government, which only raises paramilitary forces under the mistaken title of “police”, but of the states. It is also my experience that each time the security forces suffer casualties at the hands of insurgents/rebels, there is a clamour for augmenting their strength. Not once has the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) contested this “assumption”. Indeed, it puts out statements referring to the UN benchmark so as to suggest that there is a deliberate mixing up of the issue of civil police shortage with augmentation of armed police. Therefore, if I am wrong in being unclear as to what the union home secretary meant, all that was needed to be done was to provide a break-up of state-wise recruitment of the eight lakhs personnel over five years which will make evident how many are being recruited by each state and under which category. This information is, regrettably, not available in the public domain.

I am also astonished at the remark that in 34 districts the ratio of “armed police to the population is much higher is neither here nor there”. Really? Why is it of no concern that there is a very high deployment of armed personnel which has an impact on the lives of civilians in these areas? For example, why is it of no concern that in addition to state armed police, all the five battalions of the Border Security Force (BSF) posted in Chhattisgarh are deployed in a single district of Kanker, which has a population of 6.5 lakhs?

It may be the difference in our vantage point from which we approach issues that accounts for our differences.

Gautam Navlakha

NEW DELHI

Subscription Rates

Print Edition – For India

Rates for One Year (in Rs)

Category	Print (Plus free web access to issues of previous two years)	Print + Digital Archives (According to Number of Concurrent Users)			
		Up to 5	6 to 10	More than 10	Single User
Institutions	3,000	5,000	6,000	7,500	
Individuals	1,500				1,800
Teachers/Researchers	1,200				1,400
Students	750				900

Rates for Three Years (in Rs)

Category	Print (Plus free web access to issues of previous two years)	Print + Digital Archives Single User
Individuals	4,200	5,100
Teachers/Researchers	3,300	4,000

Concessional rates are restricted to students, teachers and researchers in India. To subscribe at concessional rates, please submit proof of eligibility from an institution. In addition to the above, there is a subscription for **six months** for individuals priced at **Rs 800** for the print edition and print and digital archives at **Rs 1,100**.

Print Edition: All subscribers to the print edition can download from the web, without making any extra payment, articles published in the previous two calendar years.

Print plus Digital Archives: Subscriber receives the print copy and has access to the entire archives on the EPW web site.

Print Edition — For SAARC and Rest of the World (Air Mail)

Airmail Subscription for One Year (in US \$)

Category	Print (Plus free web access to issues of previous two years)	Print + Digital Archives (According to Number of Concurrent Users)			
		Up to 5	6 to 10	More than 10	Single User
Institutions					
SAARC	130			150	
Rest of the World	250	300	400	500	
Individuals					
SAARC	100				110
Rest of the World	170				200

Web Edition/Digital Archives

The full content of the EPW and the entire archives are also available to those who do not wish to subscribe to the print edition.

Category	India (in Rs)		SAARC (in US \$)		Rest of the World (in US \$)	
	Number of Concurrent Users		Number of Concurrent Users		Number of Concurrent Users	
Institutions	Up to Five	2,500			Up to Five	200
	Six to 10	4,000			Six to 10	320
	More than 10	6,000	More than 10	50	More than 10	410
Individuals	Single User	1,000	Single User	20	Single User	40

Types of Web Access to the Digital Archives

Individual subscribers can access the site by a username and a password, while institutional subscribers get access by specifying IP ranges.

To know more about online access to the archives and how to access the archives send us an email at circulation@epw.in and we will be pleased to explain the process.

How to Subscribe:

Payment can be made by either sending a demand draft/cheque in favour of **Economic and Political Weekly** or by making online payment with a credit card/net banking on our secure site at www.epw.in. (For Inland subscriptions if making payment by cheque, please add Rs 35 to cheques drawn on banks outside Mumbai, when collection is not at par).

Address for communication:
Economic & Political Weekly
 320-321, A to Z Industrial Estate
 Ganpatrao Kadam Marg,
 Lower Parel, Mumbai 400 013, India

Notes for Contributors

Contributors are requested to follow EPW's style sheet while preparing their articles. The style sheet is posted on EPW's web site at <http://epw.in/epw/user/styletocontributors.jsp>. It will help immensely for faster processing and error-free editing if writers follow the recommended style sheet, especially with regard to citation and preparation of the bibliography.

Special Articles

EPW welcomes original research papers in any of the social sciences.

- Articles must be no more than 8,000 words, including notes and references. Longer articles will not be processed.
- Contributions should be sent preferably by email.
- Articles longer than 4,000 words should be sent in hard and soft copy format.
- Contributions from outside India need not be sent in hard copy format.
- Special articles should be accompanied by an abstract of a maximum of 150-200 words.
- Papers should not have been simultaneously submitted for publication to another journal or newspaper. If the paper has appeared earlier in a different version, we would appreciate a copy of this along with the submitted paper.
- Graphs and charts need to be prepared in MS Office (Word/Excel) and are preferable to material prepared in jpeg or other formats.
- Receipt of articles will be immediately acknowledged by email/post.
- Every effort is taken to complete early processing of the papers we receive. We receive more than 50 articles every week and adequate time has to be

provided for internal reading and external refereeing. It can therefore take up to four months for a final decision on whether the paper is accepted for publication.

- Articles accepted for publication can take up to six to eight months from date of acceptance to appear in the EPW. Papers with immediate relevance for policy would be considered for early publication. Please note that this is a matter of editorial judgment.

Commentary

EPW invites short contributions to the 'Commentary' section on topical social, economic and political developments. These should ideally be between 1,000 and 2,500 words.

Book Reviews

EPW sends out books for review. It does not normally accept unsolicited reviews. However, all reviews that are received are read with interest and where a book has not been sent out for review, the unsolicited review is on occasion considered for publication.

Notes

Students, MPhil and PhD scholars are encouraged to send their comments and initial products of their research for the Notes section. Articles should be no more than 3,000-4,000 words (all inclusive).

Discussion

EPW encourages researchers to comment on articles published in EPW. Submissions should be 1,000 to 1,750 words.

Letters

Readers of EPW are encouraged to comment (300 words) on published articles. All letters should have the writer's full name and postal address.

General Guidelines

- Writers are requested to provide full details for correspondence: postal address, day-time phone numbers and email address. (The email address of writers in the Special Article, Commentary and Discussion sections will be published at the end of the article.)
- EPW requests writers not to send revised versions based on stylistic changes/additions, deletions of references, minor changes, etc, as this poses challenges in processing. Revised versions will not be processed. When there are major developments in the field of study after the first submission, authors can send a revised version.

Copyright

- EPW posts all published articles on its web site and may reproduce them on CDs.
- EPW also posts all published articles on select databases.
- Copyright of all articles published in the Journal belongs to the author or to the organisation where the author is employed as determined by the author's terms of employment.

Permission for Reproduction

- No published article or part thereof should be reproduced in any form without prior permission of the author(s).
- A soft/hard copy of the author(s)'s approval should be sent to EPW.

Address for communication:
Economic & Political Weekly
 320-321, A to Z Industrial Estate
 Ganpatrao Kadam Marg,
 Lower Parel, Mumbai 400 013, India
 Email: edit@epw.in, epw.mumbai@gmail.com