

BOOK REVIEW

Essays in Economics and Other Cheerful Themes by S.Subramanian, SAGE Publications, New Delhi, 2014, ISBN: 978-81-1373-7(HB), pp.205, ₹ 850.

The book under review is based on the collection of academic writings over a number of years by the author, a social scientist, with an interest to boost students and society in the economy and polity. The author, at large, concentrates on existing conceptual and empirical issues for development at the global level in general and for the nation in particular with philosophical bases and accessible terms. It is nothing, but something of a professional economist's ramble through territory that is both familiar and important to him, but undertaken in a spirit of some leisureliness which the author hopes will attract a readership beyond that, society, of fellow professionals.

The author organised this book into Three Parts namely, the first 'Of Home and the World', the second 'Between Economics and Philosophy' and the third 'Miscellaneous Mistakes'. The first part contains nine essays accommodated in the three different segments viz., a) Global Deprivation and Disparity', b) Domestic Deprivation and Disparity, and c) Polity and Society. As stated, it contains a collection of formal essays that could be said to fall within the domain of concern of a development economist. These essays casually address the themes, directly or by hinting of global and national justice; the obligations of a state to its citizens; the rights and well-being of the state's citizen; poverty, inequality and discrimination; social exclusion and the arbitrary exercise of power by nations and people in possession of such power.

The second part of this book is analytically demanding than the first part. This consists of four essays on themes at the intersection of economics, philosophy and political science. The author's first essay analyses on brief consideration of the relative merits of

the proportion and the number of people in poverty as the appropriate headcount indicator of deprivation. The second essay is a review of Amartya Sen's important book entitled 'The idea of Justice', and the author has thrown light on the issues of development policy that are not informed by the normative values. His third essay seeks to rescue the credo of egalitarianism from a criticism directed at it by the moral philosopher Derek Parfit.

The third part rightly captioned as 'Miscellaneous Mistakes' also has four essays that include a) A Curmudgeon's Complaints, b) Jai Ho, Jeeves!, c) Language and Representation or, More Modestly, Mathematical Economics and Poverty and d) Writing Economics in Exactly 300 words. These are more philosophical than having ethnic developmental context. In general, the author provided a review of literature on economics and development in the globe as a whole and the country in particular.

Obviously, this volume is very useful for research scholars, especially those engaged in economic research arena and developmental professionals, social workers, non-governmental organisations, and other social scientists.

Dr.R.Murugesan