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years

## Down To Earth

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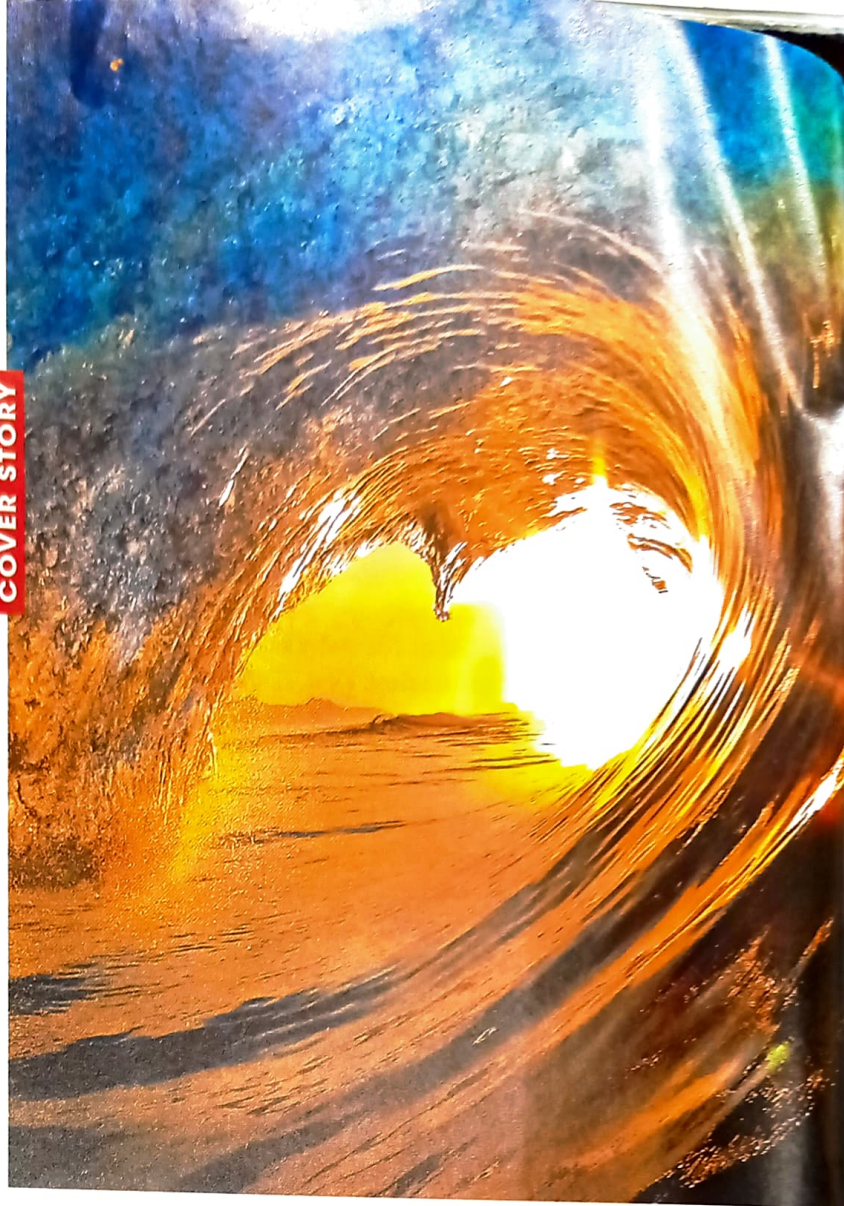
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26 The world has not explored its ocean ecosystems enough to truly gauge the impacts of climate change

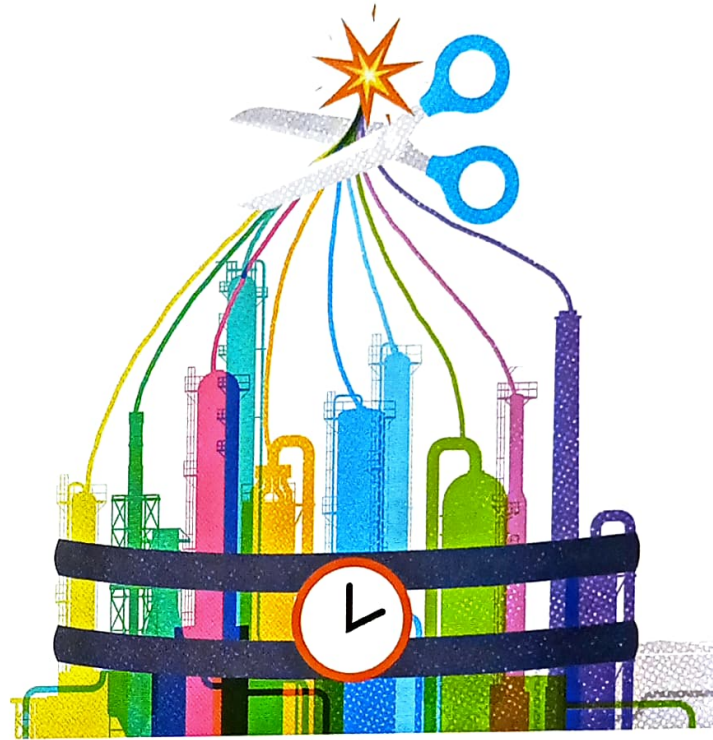
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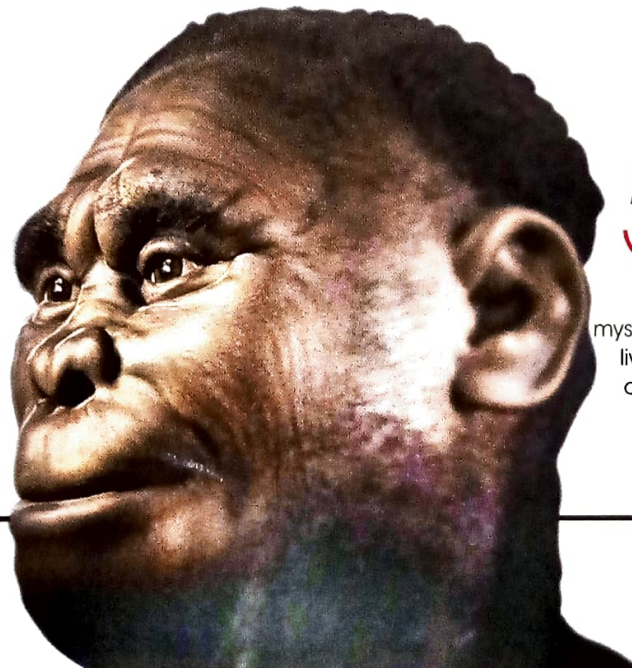
Shortfalls in regulation of chemical industry an invitation to myriad disasters



The nutritious rind of the watermelon lends itself to a variety of traditional and modern recipes

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There may be mysterious species living unnoticed among us, says anthropologist Gregory Forth

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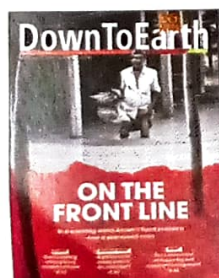
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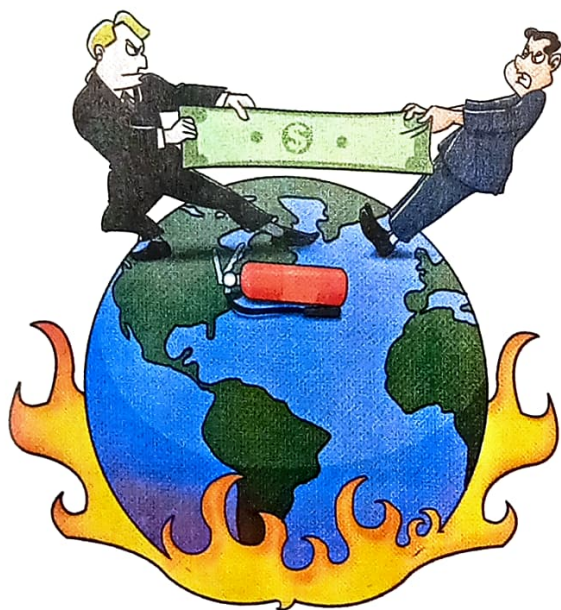
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Plant clinics are sprouting across Africa, Asia and Latin America



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Budget expenditure trends suggest India is far from its goal to double farm income



The unfruitful negotiations at Bonn has induced despair among developing countries

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Journalist Sejal Mehta explores creatures that live in zones where the sea meets the shores



## Introduction

5 This edition of the Review of Rural Affairs brings together five papers that highlight the issues of livelihood insecurity and fragility in general and poverty, inequality, and employment insecurity in particular among the rural populations, especially farmers and labourers. Observed through the lenses of occupations and castes, the persisting trends of heightened vulnerability of the poorest groups, which the papers bring to the fore, are reflective of the broader economic phenomena encompassing the country, that of agrarian distress and the informalisation and contractualisation of the formal workforce.

## An Empirical Investigation of Real Farm Incomes across Indian States between 1987–88 and 2011–12

7 Using the unit-level data from various rounds of the Employment and Unemployment Survey of the National Sample Survey Office, the first consistent time series of average real farm income per cultivator for 18 major Indian states for 1987–88, 1993–94, 1999–2000, 2004–05, 2007–08, 2009–10, and 2011–12 is presented. Using this data, two sets of issues are studied. First, how did real farm income evolve across these 18 Indian states? Second, did the market-oriented reforms of agricultural marketing systems increase these incomes? It is found that market-oriented reforms did not increase real farm incomes.  
— *Deepankar Basu, Kartik Misra*

## Farm Size and Farmers' Income, Consumption, and Poverty in India: Statewise Estimates of Direct Income Support to Farmer Households

15 Using unit-level data from the 70th National Sample Survey round Situation Assessment Survey of Agricultural Households, the paper seeks to determine, for major states, the minimum farm size of cultivated land at which the average monthly income of farmer households from cultivation exceeds their average monthly consumption expenditure and the minimum farm size at which the average monthly income from all sources exceeds their poverty-line-equivalent income. It then estimates the income support for those households that are not able to meet their average monthly consumption expenditure and those below the poverty line. — *H R Sharma, S H Malik*

## Income and Inequality across Rural–Urban, Occupational, and Caste Divides

23 The evolution of income in India in 2014–19 is analysed, and it is found that the lower end of the income distribution has experienced significant losses—the bottom ventile shows not only a decline in the income share of ~41% but also a negative real average income growth of -5.5% per annum. Further investigating the composition of this part of the distribution using rural and urban splits, it is found that even as the income shares at the bottom of the urban distribution have increased over time, those at the bottom of the rural distribution have decreased. — *Anand Sahasranaman, Nishanth Kumar*

## Caste Inequalities in Access to Regular Non-farm Jobs and the Likely Implication of the Industrial Relations Code

31 This paper attempts to highlight the extent of employment insecurity and informality among the formal regular workers in the formal non-farm sector and examines the differential data outcomes across various caste groups. It also highlights the likely implications of the various provisions of the newly enacted Industrial Relations Code, 2020 on the access to the most secured jobs across different caste groups. — *Deepika Jajoria, Manoj Jatav*

## Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Rural Non-farm Self-employed in India: Does Skill Make a Difference?

39 Examining the importance of skills, especially through vocational training, for the rural non-farm sector, this paper studies the impact of these skills in overcoming the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The difference-in-differences technique has been used to assess the differential impact of COVID-19 on the earnings of skilled and unskilled self-employed activities. Although every section of the rural non-farm activities has been adversely affected due to the pandemic, the impact is more severe on unskilled individuals as compared to skilled individuals. — *Indrajit Bairagya*

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**Authoritarian Populism and the Making of an Economic Crisis**10 The Rajapaksa clan pushed Sri Lanka towards a grave economic crisis as well as illiberal democracy. — *Shweta Singh***Revaluing Unpaid Work**14 This article analyses the recognition of women's unpaid domestic and care work through the promises of unconditional cash transfers. — *Prabha Kotiswaran***Measuring Participation of Rural Men and Women in Indian Agriculture**20 The Time Use Survey 2019 was used to analyse the participation and contribution of men and women engaged in agriculture and allied sectors. — *Anil Kumar, Ananta Sarkar, Neetish Kumar, Tanuja S, P S Pandey***Politics of Disinformation**25 The essentially political character of the disinformation problem cannot be resolved through regulation and technological fixes alone. — *Ruchi Gupta***Denationalised Elites and Global Ranking of Higher Education Institutions**28 Denationalised elites' search for global ranking of higher educational institutions is devoid of moral and intellectual concerns for a national-popular collective will. — *Arun Kumar Patnaik, K Laxminarayana***Religious Polarisation Outweighs Ethnic Mobilisation**31 The Assam assembly elections continued the trend towards the deepening of religious polarisation. — *Vikas Tripathi, Dhruva Pratim Sharma***The Law of the Executive**43 The Supreme Court order on sedition is significant as it addresses the gap between the design of a law and its working by factoring in the instances of misuse as a ground for constitutional review. — *Anushka Singh***OTT Platforms and the New Dalit Characters in Indian Cinema**48 Dalit representation in Indian cinema has arrived with nuanced attributes, distinct from the earlier cinematic portrayal that mostly depicted them as victims of caste atrocities. — *Harish S Wankhede***Right to the City**55 This paper provides a historical analysis of the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014 and the subsequent amendment in 2016. — *Reeju Ray***Fiscal Situation of India in the Time of COVID-19**62 Using data from a cross-section of countries, this paper estimates the relationship between fiscal spending and the spread of COVID-19, economic stringency, and macroeconomic factors. — *Anuragh Balajee, Shekhar Tomar & Gautham Udupa***Export Performance of South Asia**69 South Asia's global market access from 1991 to 2017 is examined through empirical research using trade indexes and gravity econometric estimation. — *Mohd Hussain Kunroo, Imran Ahmad***Macroeconomic Indicators and Sectoral Stock Price Behaviours**78 This paper attempts to identify the significant macroeconomic factors affecting prominent sectoral stock indices. — *Titto Varghese, T R Gurumoorthy***Property and the Enduring State of Famines in Colonial India**85 A response to "Famines in India" (*EPW*, 26 June 2021) interrogates the character of the colonial state and its complicit role in engendering famine-like conditions. — *Vishal Singh Deo***Postscript**88 *Sreedeeep Bhattacharya* and *Sneha Roy Choudhury* on trends in Bengali poetry; *Rajlakshmi Kanjilal* on the intersectionality of animal and human rights in *Jallikattu*; *Rahul Singh* on their elegant toes; and *Last Lines* by *Ponnappa*.



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**Politics of Knowledge**

10 The parallel coexistence of central and provincial spheres in education has a visible functional role but also a less visible political and an even less visible sociocultural role. Several decisions announced since the beginning of 2022 enable us to observe these disparate and simultaneous roles.  
— Krishna Kumar

**Decolonising Decentralised Governance**

12 This article describes three cases from Maharashtra where bureaucratic overreach has impeded emerging forest management by forest dwellers holding community forest resource rights. It reflects on the need for changing the prevalent colonial mindset in the bureaucracy to facilitate genuine decentralised democratic governance. — Anuja Anil Date, Sharachchandra Lele

**Dynamics of Being Rajbanshi**

16 The transition from tribe to caste has remained a contested phenomenon in India. This complex transition is addressed in this article in the context of the Rajbanshi identity, highlighting the various intricacies involved. The frame of retribalisation questions the simplistic tribe-to-caste narrative and reiterates the Rajbanshi's consistent efforts to embrace generic roots left in the past to bargain with the wider society. — Gautam Chandra Roy

**Delimitation of Jammu and Kashmir**

32 The union government went on with the process of delimitation in Jammu and Kashmir with an unflinching focus, disregarding the immense opposition to this exercise by most political parties on the ground. It is essential to enumerate the basic aspects of this delimitation and analyse how these can have profound political consequences in the union territory of J&K.  
— Muhammad Mutahhar Amin

**Income Inequity in the Utilisation of Inpatient Services**

39 The data on equivalised household income and inpatient service utilisation from the National Sample Survey Office are employed to analyse the extent of inequity in the utilisation of inpatient services before (2004) and after (2014) the implementation of the PFHI in 2008. This is done by estimating concentration indices and the horizontal inequity indices.  
— Vanita Singh, Amit Garg

**Political Reservations and Service Delivery in Village Government**

48 The impact of reservations for the Scheduled Castes as village heads is examined on school and governance outcomes. In general, sc reservation is not associated with improved outcomes. The findings can be attributed to negative perceptions, discrimination, and domination faced by the scs.  
— Priyanka Pandey, Sandeep Pandey

**Every Family Its Own Historian?**

57 Family historians select the most desirable facts, figures, myths, and legends to present a strange blend of facts and fancies. This paper explores how the Syrian Christians mobilise, conceive, and position their histories within the social matrix of Kerala and their ideological uses for identity politics.  
— Nidhin Donald



**To Loot or Not to Loot?**

10 The experiment of public-private partnerships in Turkey in the last 20 years showcases George Akerloff and Paul Romer's theory of looting.  
— T Sabri Öncü

**Socio-economic Status and Macroeconomic Beliefs**

13 Using a household-level panel data set on Indian households, it is shown that households' macroeconomic beliefs—their expectations regarding country-level macroeconomic developments—depend on their socio-economic status.  
— Sargam Gupta, Vidya Kamate

**An Analysis of Rural Shocks in India during the Pandemic**

18 Utilising the third round of World Bank survey data collected during September 2020, the employment shocks in rural India are analysed based on the gender, age, caste, and income quartiles of individuals.  
— Nabamita Dutta, Saibal Kar

**On Ensuring Protection of Women in NRI Marriages**

22 This study examines the legal remedial measures for women trapped in non-resident Indian marriages under private and public international law as well as the Indian legal and institutional framework. — Bharat H Desai, Mayank Sharma, Santosh Upadhyay & Moumita Mandal

**Spatialising Urban Vulnerability**

35 To address hunger, the Government of Delhi had issued temporary ration e-coupons in the first COVID-19 lockdown of 2020. This article uses a data set of nearly 17 lakh households that applied for e-coupons to measure and spatialise food insecurity in the city. — Gautam Bhan, Hridbijoy Chakraborty & Parushya

**Formal Financial Outreach in Rural India**

99 Using a survey data set, this paper challenges the conventional view by concluding that relatively resource-rich rural households from distant locations availed multiple loans from formal lenders rather than the households located closer to them as often believed. — Debdatta Pal

**Disparities in Social Development in Maharashtra**

107 This paper follows the methodology adopted by the Council for Social Development to construct a six-dimensional social development index for an analysis of development in the districts of Maharashtra. — Garima Malu

**Occupation, Earning, and Gender**

115 This study analyses the employment distribution of working-age women by occupations across their activities in usual principal status in the Periodic Labour Force Survey for 2017–18 by taking into account the household-specific factors and workers' personal characteristics by using a multinomial logit model.  
— Panchanan Das, Madhurima Saha

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126 Amol Ranjan on how tennis has become a battleground of nationalism versus professionalism; Mohammad Kamran Ahsan on how Fahmida Riaz decried the dominant narrative that portrays Muslim women as being without agency; Meghna Roy on how *Thinking of Him* tells interlinked tales of distress oscillating between the past and the present; and Last Lines by Ponnappa.

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**Of Judicial Courage in Testing Times**

10 An independent judiciary requires not only systems and norms designed to prevent interference but also individuals prepared to uphold such independence at great cost. — *Alok Prasanna Kumar*

**Novel Health Approaches in the COVID-19 Pandemic**

13 Novel public health experiments from Maharashtra demonstrate significant potentials to advance people-centred health system changes. — *Abhay Shukla*

**The Agnipath Scheme**

17 Far from being driven by a vision for the reform of the armed forces, the Agnipath scheme is an outcome of compulsions born out of severe financial and strategic shortcomings. — *Ghazala Wahab*

**Fixing Appropriate Reserve Prices for 5G Radio Spectrum**

21 This article analyses the spectrum-winning bid prices in simultaneous multiple round ascending auction held across the world for 700 MHz. — *V Sridhar*

**COVID-19 and Multiple Inequalities**

24 In this article, the potential pathways to the resistance raised by the fisherfolk in Poonthura are explored, thereby placing their responses as historically and politically embedded ones. — *Sabu K Ulahannan, Prashanth Nuggehalli Srinivas, Sreenidhi Sreekumar, Johnson Jament & Malu Mohan*

**Maria Aurora Couto (1937–2022): An Obituary**

28 Maria Aurora Couto brought out the facets of her cosmopolitan outlook and her abiding faith in the synthetic traditions of Goan/Indian culture. — *Manish Thakur*

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38 In an attempt to incorporate the doctrine of universalisation of social security, the gig workers are brought into the ambit of the labour laws for the first time with the provision of some welfare measures under the Code on Social Security, 2020. — *Deepika M G, Madhusoodhan M*

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45 The electronic spot market has introduced technological innovations to agricultural commodity market trading through the electronic National Agriculture Market. To assess the role of the electronic spot market in price discovery, this paper explores the price efficiency test between select commodities' spot and futures markets. — *Kushankur Dey, Debasish Maitra*

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53 The self-financed quantitative expansion of engineering education in Kerala should not be seen as a logical expansion consistent with demand and supply. Rather it should be primarily seen as qualitative, contributing to a change in the meaning of what engineering education is and has historically been. — *Manu V Mathew*

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60 This paper examines the job-seeking behaviour, various traits of labour employability, and the nature of mobility to achieve employment aspirations of the North East migrant workers in Bengaluru. — *Reimeingam Marchang*

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13 The payment delays by the distribution licensees to power generators can be best addressed through smart prepaid meter installations, a part of the recently announced distribution sector scheme of the Ministry of Power.  
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19 Just as "national rejuvenation" betrays the revolutionary conceptions at the founding of the Communist Party of China, the whole official narrative during the nationwide celebration in China is premised more on hype than reality.  
— *Hemant Adlakha*

**The Socio-economic Status of the Baiga Tribe**

23 The category of primitive tribal group was created to include those groups that were considered the poorest of the poor. This article investigates the different aspects of the socio-economic life of the Baiga tribe of central India.  
— *Devendra Prasad Pandey*

**Sources of India's Post-reform Economic Growth**

36 This paper analyses the sources of India's economic growth in terms of industry origins, inputs, and productivity during 1994–2018, comparing the pre- and post-global financial crisis periods. Manufacturing was one of the main contributing sectors to aggregate the growth of the total factor productivity and the gross value added in the post-GFC period.  
— *KL Krishna, Bishwanath Goldar, Abdul A Erumban, Pilu Chandra Das & Suresh Chand Aggarwal*

**Trade Credit and Bank Credit**

44 The study develops an empirical model to test the substitution of trade credit for bank credit using the annual financial data of 1,028 Indian manufacturing firms from 2011 to 2019. It further examines the impact of macroeconomic policy interventions on using these two financing sources.  
— *Ramesh Bhat, Samveg Patel*

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52 The performance of women legislators is analysed by looking at the nature of questions posed by them over a span of 20 years (1999–2019) in the lower house of the Indian Parliament. This paper is a quantitative analysis of women's political performance during the Question Hour session, which is considered as an important plenary space where legislators act on their own, free from the party regulation. — *Sadia Hussain*

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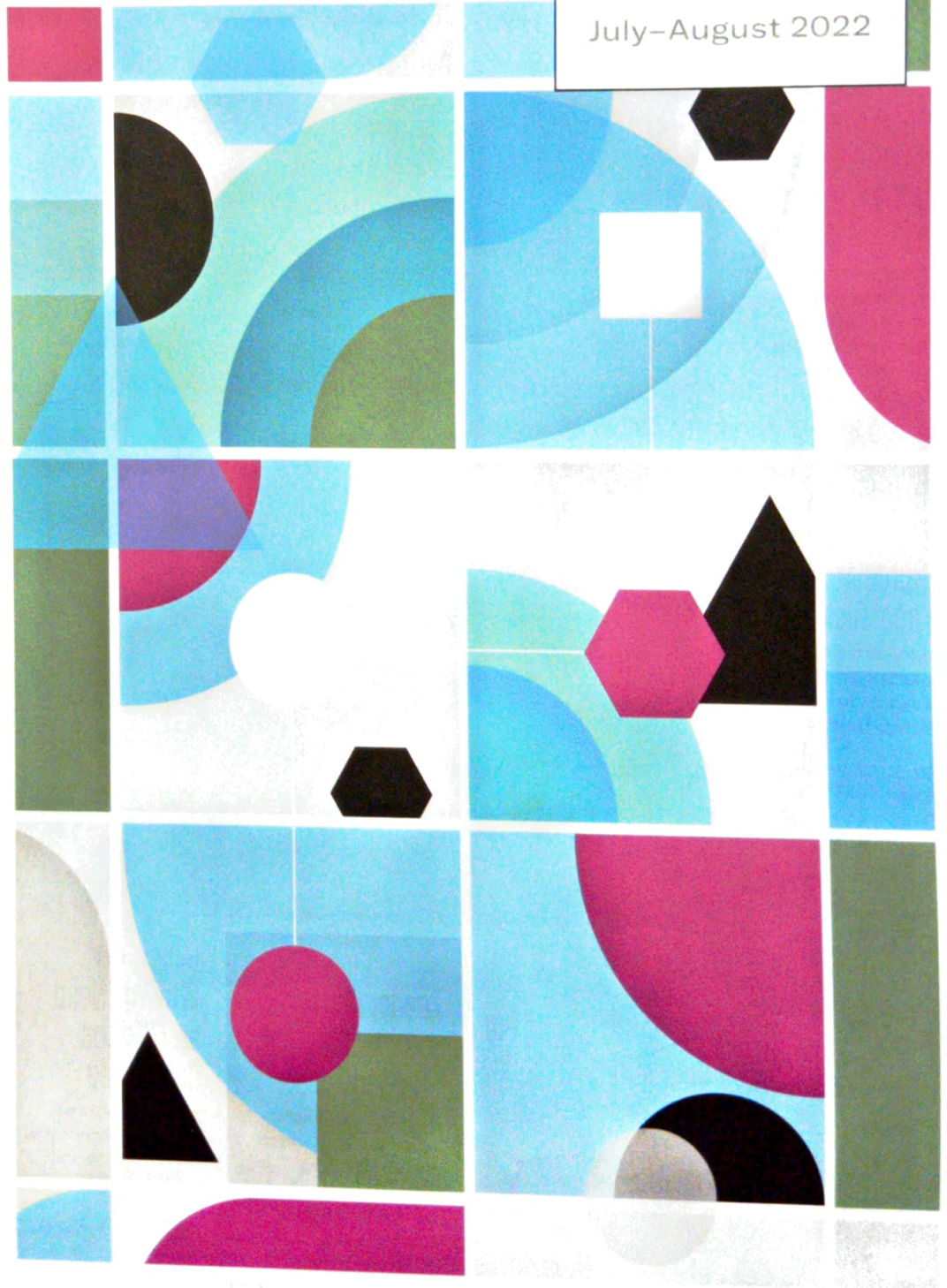
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