

Shorter Notices

Waleed Haider Malik (ed). *Judiciary-led Reforms in Singapore: Framework, Strategies, and Lessons*. Washington, DC: The World Bank. 2007. 115 pages. Paperback. Price not given.

Recently, Singapore's judiciary has become known for its efficiency, technological sophistication, and accessibility in the world. In the 1990s, its judicial system was considered as inefficient due to delays, lack of access, high costs, weak administrative capacity, and other such problems. A world class judicial system has been achieved through judiciary led reforms, which include a combination of organisational, procedural, administrative, cultural, and legal measures.

The book 'Judiciary-Led Reforms in Singapore' describes the recent development in Singapore's judicial system including the conceptual framework and strategies for judicial reforms. The book is divided into six chapters. The first chapter introduces the focus of the book; second chapter explores socio-economics conditions in Singapore while the third chapter brings to light the profile of the judicial system currently prevailing in the country. In chapters four and five, the author describes the conceptual framework and strategic reforms implemented by the government for judicial reforms. In this context, the process used for judiciary-led reforms has been highlighted and salient aspects of the strategy, vision, leadership, and action plans have been identified.

In concluding the chapter, the author has postulated that in Singapore's reforms experience, strategic thinking and business planning are central to institutional success. Institutional reforms must be tailored for and targeted at the house that the institution serves. Knowledge and technological innovation are critical components of these reforms. Judicial reforms are also complemented by a stable economy and an efficient political system. The author has also said that after implementing the modern reforms, the court system has become more efficient, more responsive to user needs, and more respected. All these measures have enhanced the country's economic and social development. While accounting for the particular economic and political conditions, Singapore's reform process has much to offer nations looking to improve their court system.

This well written book will undoubtedly help those interested in working in the domain of institutional reforms especially in context of the judiciary. (*Nasir Iqbal*)

Saeed Parto and Brent Herbert-Copley (eds). *Industrial Innovation and Environmental Regulation: Developing Workable Solutions*. New York: United Nations University Press. 2007. 305 pages. Paperback. Rs 2093.00.

This volume combines theoretical and conceptual analysis with empirical case studies of particular firms and industries in both industrialised and developing countries.

It approaches the issue from a different standpoint and examines the way in which environmental regulations interact with the characteristics of particular industrial sectors and firms in different socio-economic systems to influence the development of

environmental technologies. It largely focus on understanding how environmental regulations fit into an overall innovation system, complete with context-specific institutional landscapes and less on the design of optimal environmental policy measures. It try to integrate and explore the scope for environmental and innovation policy-making processes. The volume put forward the need for comprehensive investigation of the regulation-environmental innovation nexus through understanding the formal and informal institutions that govern and transform industrial activity over time.

Environmental and innovation policies are not adequately integrated in most countries. But it is broadly accepted that there is constant interaction between innovation, environmental protection, and further innovation. Given that numerous countries have at least a formal environmental policy and an innovation policy, therefore the next logical step is to attempt to assimilate the objectives of the two policies. Hence providing support for R&D in the development of environmental technologies will explicitly ensure the application of innovation policy toward environmental protection.

The book is comprised of eleven chapters with ten case studies from numerous countries. The concluding Chapter (Eleven) provides a synthesis of the case studies put forward some broad insights into the interplay between environmental regulation, innovation as a process and a policy objective, and the implications for integrated policy-making geared toward better protection of the environment and improved economic performance.

This thought-provoking book will be of interest to those working in the areas of environment, growth, and innovation. (*Hafiz Hanzla Jalil*)

The World Bank. *Pakistan Promoting Rural Growth and Poverty Reduction.* Sustainable Development Unit. 2007. 164 pages. Paperback. Price not given.

Despite impressive achievements—in agricultural growth, rural incomes, rural poverty, and social welfare indicators—there is little reason for satisfaction, as around 35 million people in the rural areas remain poor, representing about 80 percent of Pakistan's poor. Unequal distribution of land and access to water for the rural poor in Pakistan limit the scope for agricultural growth. This report on rural growth and poverty reduction argues that agricultural growth is necessary but not sufficient to alleviate rural poverty in Pakistan. However, ensuring efficient use of water and building partnerships with the private sector can help fulfill agriculture's potential for diversification and growth.

The study puts emphasis on an effective poverty reduction strategy, however, must also address the rural non-farm economy and the needs of the rural non-farm poor. The report says that social mobilisation can empower the poor, enabling them to have a greater role in the development process, not only to improve delivery of public services, but also to increase their market power by building the voice and scale in the farm and non-farm sectors.

The report highlights two critical elements underpin the necessary transformation of the rural sector. *First*, is the efficiency of public institutions and the need to make them more accountable and flexible. *Second*, is the capacity to organise the “people sector” so that farmers, communities, and villages can gain voice and reach the scale needed to attract the private sector and financial services and to strengthen the demand side of development by making government more accountable.

Lack of participation and influence of rural poor households are the major reason for the limited impact of rural development efforts in Pakistan, the report articulates. This limits effective demand for public services and reduces the efficiency in development programmes. Although inclusive economic growth should be the main mechanism for reducing poverty, increased social protection efforts are needed to protect the most vulnerable.

Moreover, too often a top-down approach is implemented—one that sees the rural poor simply as beneficiaries of public programmes supplied by the government. Instead, the report suggests, the development paradigm should be changed to one that puts the household and its community at the origin of development initiatives. Empowering the rural poor to take on this role, however, requires social mobilisation.

The report concludes that social mobilisation, along with economic empowerment, should be at the heart of the rural livelihood development strategy, as the benefits of broad economic growth trickle down very slowly when the poor have little access to key physical, social, and financial endowments. To overcome highly unequal distribution of these endowments and achieve rapid pro-poor growth, poor people need new opportunities to organise, and to generate business, and also to link with mainstream development activities. (*Faheem Jehangir Khan*)

John Briscoe and Usman Qamar. *Pakistan's Water Economy: Running Dry*. The World Bank. 2005. 121 pages. Paperback. Price not given.

Water management and supplies are the central development challenges facing Pakistan today. This report argues for dramatic changes in policy and approach to enable Pakistan to build and maintain new infrastructure, besides securing the water required for the future generations.

The report highlights a set of challenges which have to be addressed—how to maintain what has been built, what major new system-wide infrastructure needs to be built, what infrastructure needs to be built for populations who have not been served and for environmental protection, and how to build institutions that will manage the resource effectively in the looming era of scarcity.

Focusing on two basic issues the country's major water-related challenges, and ways of addressing them the report calls for reinvigorated public water policies and institutions to sustain water development and management in the future. *First* is rehabilitation and maintenance. Many elements of the vast hydraulic system are now reaching the end of their design lives, and have to be rebuilt. There is an enormous backlog of deferred maintenance. *Second* is the urgent need for construction of major new storage on the river Indus. *Third*, there are needs for large investments in meeting the needs of those who do not have water and sanitation services in cities, towns and villages. *Fourth*, Pakistan has been accumulating an “environmental debt” by not investing in municipal and industrial wastewater. It is clear that this has to change, and that it is going to take large amounts of investments. *Fifth* and finally, Pakistan has to invest simultaneously in infrastructure and in develop the institutions required for the sustainable management of increasingly-scarce water.

The report highlights three essential tasks the government faces. *First*, is to set priorities for the short and medium term. *Second*, to define the principles which will

govern what proportions of the initial and recurrent costs are paid by taxpayers and by users. *Third*, government has to ensure that the limited financial resources are used very efficiently. This is obviously not happening in the “business-as-usual” model at present. It is going to mean exploring a whole set of mechanisms for introducing competition, for paying for output not inputs, and for increasing accountability.

Arguing that water development and management is one of the central development challenges facing Pakistan, this report examines the evolution of the management of Pakistan’s waters. Drawing heavily on documents by eminent practitioners and policy analysts, it suggests what changes should be considered in how to manage the transition from past practices in a principled and pragmatic manner.
(*Faheem Jehangir Khan*)