

MA Economics Essay Question

1. In November 2016, in order to curb black money and corruption the government had imposed demonetization by banning all 500 and 1000 rupee notes. In 2018, according to a report by the Central bank, 99 percent of the banned notes were returned to the Central bank. What is your view on demonetization as measured against its stated objective?

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2. The Indian economy is currently experiencing a slowdown in GDP growth. One of the policy solutions suggested to the Indian government is to increase spending on MGNREGA. Using some principles of Economics, explain why such a policy would or would not work. What constraints does the government face in implementing this suggestion?

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3. The M.A in Economics at Azim Premji University is a uniquely designed programme to develop the next generation of Economists with the theoretical knowledge, and technical skills to perform high-quality analysis, while at the same time being grounded in the institutional, developmental and ecological context of contemporary India.

Given this background, discuss one issue that you have thought about with respect to India's development, and explain why you think having a better economic analysis would help in understanding it.

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4. It was observed this year during the months of June, July, and August that the demand for MGNREGA work in villages went up substantially compared to the same time last year. What do you think were the likely reasons for this increase? How would you go about designing a study to test your hypothesis?

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5. Over the years, there have been many calls to replace the in-kind distribution of grains via the Public Distribution System with a cash transfer programme. Do you think this step should be taken? Justify your answer either way. In addition, outline a study that can help you answer the question, which works better, cash or in-kind transfers.

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6. Recently there has been a revival of interest in what has happened to India's poverty rate in the past decade. The poverty rate is usually measured using the Head Count Ratio (HCR) or the percentage of households below a poverty line. Explain the pros and cons of using the HCR to measure poverty (mention one pro and one con and explain). What other approaches to poverty measurement are available to us? Take one example and explain if it overcomes some shortcomings of the HCR approach?

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7. A recent study argued that since the early 2000s, the world economy had experienced "unconditional convergence" between rich and poor countries. Drawing on the Solow model of economic growth, explain what is meant by the term unconditional convergence. Also explain the difference between unconditional and conditional convergence.
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