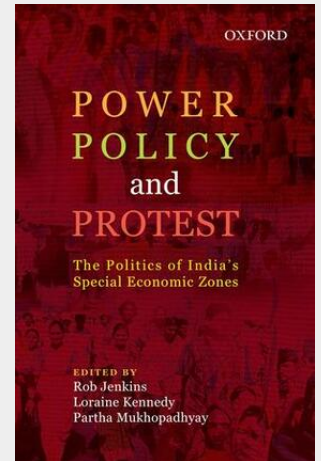


Power, Policy, and Protest

The Politics of India's Special Economic Zones

India's attempt to spur growth, boost exports, and create jobs by establishing Special Economic Zones (SEZs) is a paradox: the policy represents an intensification of the country's increasingly market-oriented development paradigm, but implementation has required active government involvement. More than a decade after importing the SEZ concept from China, India has hundreds of these walled-off, deregulated, low-tax enclaves. But an industrialization strategy pioneered in authoritarian China has faced huge political resistance in democratic India. Protest movements arose in many localities where SEZs were proposed. Resistance varied in terms of the intensity and sustainability of opposition, the grievances articulated, and the tactics employed. A central issue has been the alienation of privately owned land by business interests, abetted by the state. To date, no systematic study of the politics of India's SEZ experiment has been undertaken. This book remedies this gap, examining variations within and between eleven states. Detailed case studies investigate differences in the nature and extent of SEZ-related political mobilization and the means employed by governments to manage dissent. By covering a broad range of regional contexts, industrial sectors, and political conditions, this volume furnishes a comprehensive picture of the politics surrounding one of India's most controversial reform measures.



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