

Weekly Livelihoods Update

07 August 2018

- ✚ **Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme:** In 2009, the Government of India directed all the state governments and union territories to prepare the State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) as a strategy for addressing climate change. These SAPCCs are now available on the website of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). Out of the 32 SAPCCs available online, 23 of them explicitly mention the Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (WBCIS) as a strategy to address the impact of climate change on agriculture. [For further reading visit: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/31/special-articles/weather-based-crop-insurance-scheme.html>]
- ✚ **Uncertainty in Climate Science:** Dust storms, thunderstorms and lightning struck different parts of India (particularly Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Delhi) throughout May 2018. Though these events are not unusual in the peak summer months, their destructiveness caught authorities, the public, and climate scientists by surprise. Cumulatively, more than a hundred people died in the immediate aftermath (BBC 2018; Jamwal 2018), in addition to the extensive damage caused to property, crops, livestock and infrastructure. [For further reading visit: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/31/commentary/uncertainty-climate-science.html>]
- ✚ **Child Height in India:** The average height of a population's children is increasingly recognised as an important measure of human development. This is because the distribution of height in a population is shaped by the health and well-being that children experience at young ages. Early life is an important time: what happens to babies and children matters for their achievement, health, and survival throughout their lives. So, when child height in a population is shorter than would be healthy and achievable, such a height deficit reflects a substantial measure of forgone well-being, both for the welfare of the present day and for the duration of the future time that stunted children will live and will influence the economy and society as adults. [For further reading visit: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/31/special-articles/child-height-india.html>]
- ✚ **The widening skill divide:** India's demographic dividend will not last long if we as a nation do not keep pace with next-generation technology skills or Digital Skills. It is a choice India has to make now, whether as a nation it wants to lead the digital revolution or be a follower. We are looking at a future where physical and digital lines blur to enable an all-pervasive connected experience. This engaged worldview will not only require reskilling of human resources to front the digital revolution but

also bring to the fore human-machine collaboration, where robots and drones will need reskilling as well as upskilling. Jobs will certainly be created, but in new areas. Deep learning, unlearning and adapting to a new normal will hold the key to the success of individuals and nations. [For further reading visit: <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/nation/story/20180813-the-widening-skill-divide-1303343-2018-08-03>]

✚ **Today's education must sync with tomorrow's jobs:** Over 350 million children attend some educational institution. What drives them to school is the hope that educations will open doors to a better life. While huge efforts are being made in the field of education -- several government, state and private educational initiatives, the Right to Education Act, the National Skill Development Mission, and increasing allocations for education and so on -- 70 per cent of our educated youth remain unemployable, while the skills deficit rises to almost 90 per cent in professional courses. [For further reading visit: <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/nation/story/20180813-today-s-education-must-sync-with-tomorrow-s-jobs-1303344-2018-08-03>]

✚ **LIC'S TAKEOVER OF IDBI BANK:** The coerced takeover of the publicly owned IDBI Bank by LIC, the country's largest insurer, will neither protect the interests of the beleaguered bank nor further the interests of the insurer or its policyholders. The Union government's recent decision to allow the publicly owned LIC to take a 51 per cent stake in IDBI Bank without giving the insurer the privilege of enjoying the managerial control that majority ownership normally confers signals a travesty of the rules of conduct that capitalism swears by. [For further reading visit: <https://www.frontline.in/economy/article24441697.ece>]

✚ **Filing income tax returns:** We are nearing July 31, an important date for all taxpayers as it is the last day for filing FY2017/18 income tax returns (ITR). The tax-filing experience has gradually improved over the years - from a complicated and tedious process to an easy and user-friendly one - as India has mostly done away with paper-based filing. The country has embraced electronic filing, or e-filing, which involves digital verification either through a 10-digit alpha-numeric electronic verification code (EVC) or through a one-time password based on Aadhaar. These measures have been taken to make the process quite simple and, hence, improve tax compliance. Of course, individuals aged 80 or above can file returns manually and the same applies to an individual/HUF whose income is up to Rs 5 lakh and who does not claim any refund. But for the rest of us, it has to be done digitally, keeping in mind the recent changes. [For further reading visit: <https://www.businesstoday.in/magazine/money-today/cover-story/when-tax-day-strikes/story/280558.html>]