



# livelihoods

*today and tomorrow*

**June 2018**

## **Monthly Livelihoods Update**

*“A month that was !”*

**Macroeconomics**

**Government Initiatives/Policies/Schemes**

**Livelihoods**

**Partnerships**

**Social Issues and Others**

**Updates from Weeklies**

# Summary of Daily Livelihoods Update

## 1. Macroeconomics

### Trends

- According to Credit rating agency Fitch, India's economic growth will accelerate to 7.3 % in the current financial year and 7.5% in the next fiscal.
- According to a Harvard Study, India tops the list of the fastest growing economies in the world for the coming decade and is projected to grow at 7.9 per cent annually. The researchers also find India ranks the best on the criteria termed the Complexity Opportunity Index (COI).
- CII expects India's economy to grow at 7.3-7.7 per cent in 2018-19 on the back of "sustained structural reforms", recovery in global markets and a normal monsoon.
- India moves one notch up to 44th rank in IMD's competitiveness rankings.
- Preliminary statistics suggest that India will achieve a primary fiscal deficit under 0.2% of GDP for the 2017-2018 fiscal year that ended in March.
- According to the data by Ministry of Commerce:
  - ◇ India's exports rose by 5.17 per cent year-on-year to USD 25.9 billion in April
  - ◇ Sectors like engineering, pharmaceutical and chemical showed positive growth
  - ◇ Imports during the month were valued at USD 39.6 billion
  - ◇ Trade deficit was marginally higher at USD 13.7 billion during April 2018.
- According to the AfrAsia Bank Global Wealth Migration Review, India 6th wealthiest country with total wealth of 8,230 billion US dollars.
- The Second Quarterly Crisidex Survey shows MSEs had a better January-March 2018 (compared with October-December 2017) driven by gains in the manufacturing sector.
- According to CMIE, rural wages have faltered to a 3 - year low of 3.09% in January 2018. Reasons are not completely clear behind the wages stagnation. According to the analysts, GST and Demonetisation made huge impact on labour intensive industries and sectors such as Textile, gems & jewellery, Manufacturing and Real estate.
- Wholesale price inflation rises 3.18% in April on higher food, fuel inflation.
  - ◇ Wholesale inflation rose 7.85% in fuel and power and 3.11% in manufactured items compared with 4.7% and 3.03%, respectively.
  - ◇ Inflation in potatoes was 67.94% from 43.25% in March while that in fruit was 19.47% compared with 9.26% in the trailing month.
  - ◇ However, inflation in onion and milk declined in the first month of the new fiscal.
- Consumer Price Index Numbers on Base 2012=100 for Rural, Urban and Combined for the Month of April 2018.
- According to "The Indian Organic Market: A new paradigm in agriculture" a joint report by ASSOCHAM-EY, India's organic consumption share is less than 1%.
- According to a Goldman Sachs report, Crude oil prices may rise further in the coming months,

following which India's current account deficit will be around 2.4 per cent in 2018-19.

- Petrol, diesel prices reached to highest rates since 2013. Petrol price reached to Rs.76.24 /- per litre and diesel price reached to Rs.67.57/- per one litre. The present government had raised excise duty nine times on petrol and diesel during November 2014 to January 2016.
- According to the Global Burden of Disease study by Lancet, India ranks 145th among 195 countries in terms of quality and accessibility of healthcare.
- According to a report India Solar Inverter Market (2018-2024): Solar Inverter Market is projected to grow at a CAGR over 25% during 2018-2024.
- According to a joint report by IBM and Kalaari Capital, 850 mn internet users and 90% Smartphone penetration in next three to four years is a key to India's \$1 trillion digital economy.
- According to Law and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, the Indian IT industry is expected grow at 8 % to \$167 billion and hire over 100,000 people in 2018.
- India's mobile wallet industry saw a sharp fall in usage in March due to RBI's regulations of KYC from customers.

### **Global Scenario and Growth Prospects**

- **US-Iran Sanctions:** US President Donald Trump's decision to pull out of the Iran nuclear deal, this weakens the rupee to make everything, including fuel and food, costlier and limits the government's ability to spend on social sector.
  - ◊ US sanctions on Iran may help boost Indian commodity exports.
  - ◊ India's exports of Agri-commodities such as tea, basmati rice, soya bean meal and sugar to increase mainly due to rupee-riyal payment mechanism.
  - ◊ Iran is expected to shift sourcing of sugar and soya meal from Brazil and Argentina to India.
  - ◊ Tea industry executives, said exports of Indian orthodox tea will increase as to that of Sri Lanka because the latter has to deal in dollar with Iran.
- **According to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, there has been a drop in the number of new H-1B beneficiaries from India.** According to the USCIS report, in 2016 technology professionals from India are 74% in total number of H-1B visas issued by U.S and in 2017 the percentage increased from 74% to 75.6%. In all there are 2,76, 423 Indians on H-1B visas in 2017.
- According to a report from the United Nations' specialized agency, IFAD
  - ◊ India received the highest remittance (\$69 billion) in the world in 2017.
  - ◊ Cash-to-cash transactions remain by far the most common form of transfer.
- Walmart's \$16 billion deal for Flipkart a sign US companies are looking to India for deals
  - ◊ With US- CHINA relations at fragile state American companies are taking a closer look at India for opportunities.
  - ◊ According to Mukesh Aghi, CEO of US-India Strategic Partnership Forum the deal is likely to strengthen the agriculture supply chain and create new skilled jobs.
  - ◊ Morgan Stanley projects India's e-commerce market to become a \$200 billion market by 2027.

- According to UN ESCAP report, India's tax regime second most complex in Asia-Pacific region despite GST .
- According to *James Huan* (Taitra Chair), India would be a major beneficiary of Taiwan's southbound policy as the latter is expected to invest in IT, petrochemical and food processing industries.
- Over 1,300 Chinese enterprises had overseas investments in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries valued at \$26 billion in 2016. This would reshape patterns of agricultural trade and increase China's influence in global markets.
- China removes import duties on 28 medicines, including cancer drugs from May 1st. This is a move which would help India to export these pharmaceuticals to the neighbouring country.
- China launches first India-dedicated investment fund.
- Airport council International projects India as second fastest growing country for air passenger traffic in the world.
- World tea production has been rising for years. It is projected that, black tea production rise by 2.2 % and green tea production rise by 7.5% per year. The increased production is result of productivity instead of expansion of production area.
- FAO and EBRD observed products registered with a Geographical Indication label account for an annual trade value of more than \$50bn worldwide. Food origin labelling of such kind can be economically beneficial to rural areas.
- Green Good Deeds' Movement Launched Gets Global Recognition. BRICS Ministerial on Environment Includes Green Good Deeds in its Official Agenda.
- According to report by UN titled, '**Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**', achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) could be difficult without gender equality and women's empowerment.

## 2. Government Initiatives/Policies/Schemes

### Agriculture

- India mulls National Agriculture Trade Policy similar to that of the country's three-year foreign trade policies, to boost farm income and reduce the restrictions on export.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved its Umbrella Scheme, "Green Revolution – Krishonnati Yojana" in agriculture sector beyond 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan for the period from 2017-18 to 2019-20 with the Central Share of Rs. 33,269.976 crores.
- The draft Agricultural Produce and Livestock Contract Farming Services (promotion and facilitation) Act 2018 has been unveiled by the government:
  - ◇ It is a model law on contract farming and services not only in agriculture crops but also in livestock, dairy and poultry products.
  - ◇ It seeks to keep the contract farming/services contracts outside the ambit of respective APMC act of the states.
  - ◇ It aims to promote FPOs and FPCs to mobilise small and marginal farmers to benefit from scales of economy in production and post-production activities.

- Farmers' bodies to go on nationwide protest in June to highlight the plight of farmers and voice concerns about government's agricultural policies.
- No change in the GST law and taxation relating to farmers since July 2017:
  - ◊ Support services to agriculture, forestry, fishing or animal husbandry are exempt from GST.
  - ◊ Agriculturists are also exempted from taking GST Registration.
- Government to link 200 more mandis to eNAM this fiscal. However, the priority would be given to improve the quality and encourage inter-mandi online trading.
- Frozen Semen station (the first state-of-the-art semen production centre of the country) to be set up at Maranga, Purnea under the Rashtriya Gokul Mission with 100% contribution from the Central Government.
- According to Agriculture Minister, Budget provision of Rs 7,522.48 crore for establishing Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund has potential to benefit 40 lakh fishermen, especially women, SHGs and weaker section.
- Cabinet approves development of Trunk Infrastructure Components for Integrated Multi Modal Logistics Hub known as "Freight Village" at Nangal Chaudhary in Haryana:
  - ◊ The project has enormous economic value in terms of direct and indirect benefits and multiplier effects on the economy. Besides this, estimated to generate over four thousand direct and six thousand indirect employment in logistics and supply chain.
- Odisha Chief Minister launched state-wide campaign on "Cooperative at Your Doorstep". A MOU was signed between state government and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). This helps to provides crop loans to farmers from cooperative banks at 12% per annum. Telangana Chief Minister KCR has launched the historic and game-changing Rythu Bandhu (Farmer's Investment Support) scheme.

## Health/Sanitation

- Swachh Bharat Mission launches GOBAR-DHAN (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources – DHAN) to promote wealth and energy from cattle and organic waste.
- 71 Union Ministries/Departments have allocated 16.5 thousand crore rupees for implementation of SBM during the current fiscal year.
- In a major boost to the expansion of healthcare infrastructure in the country, the Cabinet has approved the continuation of Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) beyond 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan to 2019-20. It aims at setting up of 20 AIIMS across the country and upgrades 73 medical colleges.
- India's Universal Immunization Program is amongst the world's largest public health programmes that targets 2.7 crore newborns every year with vaccines that are free of cost.
- Government is making the health care sector ready for National Health Protection Scheme (NPHS). The NPHS will be one of the largest government-funded healthcare programmes globally and expected to cover 10 crore families with medical insurance of Rs 5 lakh per household per year.
- **DEPwD to organise 'Cochlear Implant Awareness Programme'**. The event named Swar Swagtam under ADIP Scheme of the Department.

- Govt has proposed rates for over 1,350 treatment packages, ranging from Rs.1000 to over Rs.1.50 lakh to implement Ayushman Bharat Scheme.
- Bihar is staring at a challenging task of building over 77 lakh toilets in 17 months to become ODF by 2<sup>nd</sup> October in 2019 under SBM.
- Punjab government announced, the launch of “Tandarust Punjab” a mission to healthiest state with healthiest people in the country. It is one step forward to Central Government program “Fit India” movement which focus primarily on “yoga”.

## **Rural/Infrastructure Development**

- EAM Sushma Swaraj chairs interactive session on Act East Policy.
  - ◇ The meeting deliberated on North Eastern region’s intra-regional and sub-regional surface and air linkages.
  - ◇ Continued development of relevant infrastructure both within the state and at international borders with a view to enhancing trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people ties.
- The AP government has come up with an ambitious M-Parks (MSME Parks) Policy:
  - ◇ M-Park is expected to have an investment of Rs 225 crore to create 1,500 jobs in each of the 175 Assembly constituencies.
  - ◇ The overall target is to create around 200 parks by 2023 with 30,000 MSMEs with an employment potential for three lakh people and an investment of Rs 45,000 crore.
  - ◇ The parks will provide necessary BD support to MSMEs like improving quality, marketing, exports, access to warehouse facilities and skill development.
- MNRE issues National Wind-solar Hybrid Policy.
- Environment Minister Launches Mobile App of GSDP.
- Cabinet approved National Policy on Biofuels – 2018. Expected benefits of the policy to include reduce import dependency, cleaner environment, health benefits, MSW management, infrastructural investment in rural areas, additional income to farmers, employment generation.
- Government launches pilot scheme to procure 2500MW from stressed power companies and would sign 3 year pacts with successful bidders and power supply agreements with the state run power Discoms.
- After government technically (at least 10% of households in a village) achieved 100% village electrification target, next focus is to ensure power in every household under the scheme Saubhagya by this year end.
- Power Grid sets Capex Target of 25,000 Crore for 2018-19.
- Government laid the foundation stone of the underground cabling project to be implemented under IPDS scheme in the Kumbh area of Haridwar.
- Railways may put Rs 1k crore into 11 new Rail Neer bottling units.
- India’s Broadband BharatNet to have a new target to provide internet connection to every village home as the government is deliberating that the connectivity should not stop at GP level. The government may emulate the ‘Saubhagya’ model of electricity distribution in rural areas for this.

- According to the Institution for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA), currently, half of the world's 10 largest solar parks are under construction in India. Presently India is beating China in building largest solar power plants. Still China has the largest solar project Tengger Desert Solar Park 1547 megawatt (MW). But, presently, India is constructing world largest solar project 2,225 MW at Bhadla, Rajasthan. It may be completed by early 2019.
- Steel Ministry to set up 20 commercial vehicle scrapping centres across India to produce steel from scrap. This is an effort to produce secondary steel and reduce dependence on steel imports.
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs to expand Van Dhan Vikas Kendras in Tribal Districts across the country. The initiative aims to promote MFPs-centric livelihood development of tribal gatherers and artisans.
- According to Suresh Prabhu, Early operationalisation of 56 new airports under UDAN scheme.
- Committed to augmentation of Airport capacity through NABH, Nirman initiative: Suresh Prabhu.
- Shri Suresh Prabhu reviewed Skill Development in Aviation Sector and the progress being made on developing National Air Cargo Policy.
- India plans to convert 78 lighthouses in scenic coastal areas into tourism hubs.
- CLSS Vertical of PMAY (u) has shown progressive performance with over 1,65,000 beneficiaries benefitting from this Scheme during 2015-18.
- Cabinet approved restructuring of Multi-sectoral Development Programme as Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram. The restructured programme would:
  - ◊ Better socio-economic infrastructure facilities to the minorities and lead to lessening of the gap between the national average and the minority communities with regard to backwardness parameters.
- National Water Informatics Centre (NWIC) has recently been created and would be a repository of nation-wide water resources data.
- GIS technology to strengthen Namami Gange Programme. Survey of India to facilitate the Ganga rejuvenation task through GIS.
- Cabinet approved USOF scheme:
  - ◊ To provide mobile connectivity in LWE areas (up to 4,072 towers will be set up in 96 districts of 10 states affected)
  - ◊ To provide provision of mobile services in Meghalaya under CTDP for NER.
- Mizoram housing scheme has been launched under NEDP across the state. Beneficiaries would get Rs 50,000 each under the scheme.
- NABARD has vowed to double the rural and infrastructure development fund to Meghalaya from the present Rs 100 crore to Rs 200 crore.
- The government plans to develop villages of 115 identified districts (with poor standards of health, education, livelihood and infrastructure) on a mission mode.
- Arunachal Pradesh state gets first commercial airline on Monday. Arunachal Pradesh gave green signal to the first commercial aircraft of the Alliance Airlines.

- Coimbatore bags two national awards for rural development (Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar-2018 under both the village panchayat and panchayat union categories)

### **Miscellaneous Schemes/Initiatives/Policies**

- Cabinet approves Corpus for Micro Irrigation Fund with NABARD under PMKSY.
- In 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission meeting eminent scientists from agriculture universities and agriculture economists to integrate service sector and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) to double farm income. The commission visited Assam tea plantations and interacted with tea plantations growers. Assam tea plantation produces 53% of country's tea leaf and provides livelihoods to more than 10 lakh workers and one lakh small tea growers.
- Government is considering to set up a **“special bank”** to finance women's SHGs. The search for alternative ways to help SHGs comes in the light of:
  - ◇ Massive growth in women's groups and bank credit
  - ◇ The NPAs with SHGs stand at a low 2.4%
- According to Prime Minister, Banks have given Rs. 6 lakh crore Mudra loans to 12 crore beneficiaries. Out of which, 74 per cent (9 crore) borrowers are women and 55 per cent belong to the SC/ST and OBC category.
- Finance ministry ties up with 40 entities under PMMY for extending loans to small entrepreneurs.
- According to Union Petroleum and Skill Development Minister, NSDM aims to train over 40 crore people by 2022.
- A meeting of stakeholders on Samarth Scheme was held to familiarize the stakeholders about the scheme and its guidelines.
- ITBP offers pre-recruitment training for Arunachal Pradesh youths.
- IBC ordinance may restrict relief proposed for MSMEs .
- 30 States and Union Territories participate in State Start-up Ranking Framework 2018 launched by DIPP.
- MoHRD launches 'SamagraSiksha' scheme for holistic development of school education.
- UGC has approved Online Courses Regulations, 2018 as landmark reform in the field of Higher Education. To offer degree, certificate and diploma in online mode.
- More than 31.56 cr accounts opened so far under PMJDY. About 59 per cent of Jan Dhan Accounts have been opened in the rural areas whereas 53 percent of accounts belong to women. Around 2 crore 22 lakh accounts opened under PMJDY in Maharashtra.
- PM has stressed on the importance of increasing digital transactions across the postal and rail networks, especially using the BHIM App at platform PRAGATI.
- Platform SWAYAM launched by Ministry of Human Resource Development for professional development of 1.5 million higher education faculty.
- A Web portal ([www.praapti.in](http://www.praapti.in)) and an App namely PRAAPTI to develop transparency in power purchase transactions between Generator and Discoms has been officially launched.
- 20<sup>th</sup> National Technology Day Celebrated. Government is focussing on:

- ◇ Finance and resources to entrepreneurs, gender equality in technology.
- ◇ Establishing CoE to train young technologists in robotics, AI, digital manufacture, big data analytics, quantum communication and IoT.
- ◇ Demonstration and Deployment of successful technology solutions for clean energy options.
- Parliamentary panel to look into black money recovery, performance of public sector banks, among other matters: import of uranium for nuclear plants, mining activities and environment, upgrading of India Post offices and the drought situation in the country.
- Government has approved setting up of an exclusive "Brahmaputra Study Centre" at Gauhati University for which fund of Rs. 28 crore will be provided.
- Atal Pension Yojana subscribers base crosses 1 crore mark on completion of 3 years of launch of the Scheme.
- The government is looking to revamp its flagship life insurance scheme PMJJBY, with an option to stagger the Rs 330 premium quarterly to make it more affordable.
- The Social Justice Ministry has invited comments from 22 ministries, commissions and government think tanks for National Commission for Denotified Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Tribes (DNT/ NT/ SNT), it's a move to:
  - ◇ To grant Constitutional protection to these communities under a separate third schedule after SC and ST.
  - ◇ A separate schedule would pave the way for bringing them under the cover of reservation in jobs and education and the protection of Prevention of Atrocities Act.
- Union Tribal Affairs Minister launched exhibition cum sale event 'the Pankha' (Hand-Fans) through TRIFED and TRIBES India.
- National WAQF conference reviewed the progress of WAQF related schemes and their implementation.
- NDMA reviews preparedness of 17 heat wave prone States in view of recent thunderstorm. "Beat the Heat India" campaign and Heat Action Plans considered to be an important agenda.
- NDMA conducted workshop on May 2nd and 3rd in collaboration with UNICEF, UNDP and UNISDR. The workshop was aimed to develop consensus on disasters, thresholds and develop standardised templates for data collection, updation and validation, create a uniform and credible national-level disaster database to ensure accuracy and quality. Issues such as interoperability and security of the data will also be discussed. The measures will aid scientific analyses and suitable policy interventions to reduce disaster risks.
- The government is drafting the upcoming NEP with increased focus on exports as it looks to harness the local capacity in electronic goods, including smart phones built for the domestic market.
- Government Tenders worth Rs 13,000 crore withdrawn or cancelled to promote Make in India products under the Public Procurement Order. The finance and commerce ministries and the department of electronics are in discussions to give a 'Make in India' push to hi-tech products.
- ESC has prepared a strategy paper for augmenting software exports to US\$ 178 billion by 2022.

### 3. Livelihoods

#### Agriculture:

- USDA raises India's 2018-19 wheat output estimate to 95 mil mt
  - ◇ The output is lower than the last year's harvest of 98.5 mil mt due to reduced planting
  - ◇ Farmers have been encouraged to larger quantities to the government procurement program.
- MPEDA conducts open pond culture of Asian sea bass for the first time in the country.
- Potato prices likely to double:
  - ◇ According to traders of Potato, farmers across the major producing states collectively reduced acreage last year by 5-7 percent. This has led to a 10-20 per cent drop in potato output.
  - ◇ Crop quality has gone down too as the farmers have used last year's leftover seeds.
- Wheat procurement surpasses government's target by 6.25% to over 34 million tonnes (MT) in the marketing year.
  - ◇ 21.45 MT has been purchased from two states Punjab and Haryana.
  - ◇ More wheat is expected to be procured in UP as the state government has made extra efforts to ensure MSP of Rs.1735 per quintal to farmers.
- According to a report by FAO:
  - ◇ Global tea consumption and production will keep rising over the next decade.
  - ◇ World Black tea production is projected to increase by an annual growth rate of 2.2 per cent to reach 4.42 million tonnes by 2027.
  - ◇ Green Tea will grow at a faster rate than black tea. The world green tea output will increase at a rate of 7.5 per cent annually to reach 3.65 million tonnes.
  - ◇ Tea consumption has grown particularly rapidly in China, India and other emerging economies. The report says demand for tea has accelerated because of the ongoing retail revolution and growing investment into tea education.
  - ◇ The buoyant tea market will create new rural income opportunities and improve food security in tea-producing countries, it said.
- An Analysis by RBI observed:
  - ◇ Rural India's wages fell significantly since 2014 and agricultural workers have been hit particularly hard.
  - ◇ the relative underperformance of MGNREGS is found to be one of the main factors behind the slow growth in rural wages.
- DoA, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare releases 3rd Advance Estimates of production of major crops for 2017-18. (Food grains production to be highest in the current year estimated at 279.51 million tonnes).
- Tightening of checks on pesticide residue by Saudi Arabia has hit Indian small cardamom exports, which in turn has pushed down the spice's price in the local market.
- The Government has proposed to lower GST on ethanol (from 18% to 5%) citing the problems in

the sugar industry due to the crash in prices.

- Walmart go back! Trader, farmer groups decry deal. The traders protesting because it will impact Make in India, concerned about predatory pricing and steep discounting by e-commerce firms.
- Prevailing drought conditions and non-availability of fodder is taking heavy toll on the livestock and farmers (who are eking out their livelihood with great difficulty) in Kurnool district of AP. The farmers are shifting the cattle to slaughter houses in Karnataka and Telangana.
- Neera-making firms now switch to making oil in Kerala.
- Farmers from across 14 districts in Tamil Nadu have requested the Union and state government not to erect HVDC transmission towers on agricultural fields and insisted to lay underground cables along roads to carry electricity.
- Demand for cotton seeds in Punjab down 20-30% from year ago;
  - ◇ As seed companies reporting low demand for BT cotton seeds.
  - ◇ Seed companies say the farmers are shifting to other crops (paddy, maize)
  - ◇ Experts said if sowing doesn't pick up pace, it could affect the revival of cotton in Punjab Cotton (largely BT).
  - ◇ High input costs and drop in earnings in cotton have hit farmers hard.
  - ◇ The Punjab government is aiming to bring 4 lakh hectares under cotton.
- Alphonso farmers and fishing communities in Maharashtra raise concerns over the environmental and ecological impact of the Nanar oil refinery and auxiliary projects.
- In Maharashtra, bankers decided to lend Rs 85,464 crore to the farm sector. CM urged banks to emphasize on Agro-processing sector as well.
- In Madhya Pradesh, from Malwa region garlic farmers came on the roads against sharply decreased of garlic prices in the market. At present, garlic price is Rs.1 per kg. Malwa region is the largest garlic production region in the state.

### **Climate/Environment/Weather**

- According to a World Bank report, India is among the countries most vulnerable to climate change.
  - ◇ The report states that one of the most significant ways that climate change will impact India is through water resources.
  - ◇ The world is relating climatic changes in India to an economy that is largely dependent on agriculture. Climate change could cut India's agricultural incomes, and non-irrigated areas.
- Cyclone Sagar: IMD issues advisory to 5 states, 1 union territory over Gulf of Aden. Fishermen are advised not to venture into Gulf of Aden and adjoining areas of west central and southwest Arabian Sea.
- WHO asked the Southeast region countries to take drastic measures to combat air pollution. The Southeast region including India accounts 40% in global deaths per year due to household air pollution. According to WHO report, 90% pollution related deaths occur in low and middle income countries including India. Around 3 billion people (more than 40% of the world population) do not have clean cooking fuels at their homes, which is the main source of household air pollution.

- HLC chaired by Union Home Minister approves Central assistance of Rs. 1,161.17 crores to states (affected by disasters since many years) four states and one UT.
- Government plans Rs. 9k cr sops to push eco-friendly cars. Rs. 1,000cr to be spent on charging points.
- Dust Storms in India shattered homes and lives of people. The maximum devastation occurred in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.
  - ◇ In rural areas, there were reports of crop being damaged due to hailstorm. Farmers lost cattle and poultry. Over 160 heads of cattle were lost in UP and in Rajasthan 250 animals perished.
  - ◇ The impact was also on Telangana, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Punjab. IMD said the trigger for the storm was a cyclonic circulation over Haryana and also responsible were a western disturbance over north Pakistan and adjoining Jammu and Kashmir, and easterly winds from the Bay of Bengal. Rajasthan declares it as a Natural Disaster.
- According to World Energy Outlook and a recent study, community managed solar micro grids have the potential to provide reliable and affordable energy access to remote villages in India.
- Project ICRG has been launched and being implemented in 35 blocks (to cover 3,076 villages over 522 panchayats) in Bihar. It aims to mitigate the adverse impact of climate change and make structures, primarily water bodies under the MGNREGS climate resilient.
- According to Gujarat Ecology Commission, A proposed wind farm in the Gulf of Khambhat raises concerns for the ecologically sensitive area (jeopardising both ecological as well as livelihood securities along this region) that supports hundreds plant and animal species.
- The Atreyi, the Teesta and three other North Bengal rivers have been severely affected by human encroachments and waste dumping, affecting marine life and livelihoods of local fishermen.
- The Punjab government along with WWF-India would be conducting the first organised census of Indus Dolphins, one of the world's rarest mammals. The move is aimed at conservation of the species.
- Himachal Pradesh state a home to rivers like Ravi, Beas and Chenab, now has been facing sever water crisis. The state is one of the leading tourism centre in the country. Water crisis is not only in towns like Shimla, it is across the state. The water crisis forced tourists to cut their stay in tourist places because of sever water crisis in Himachal Pradesh.
- According to report on the status of migration in the Uttarakhand over the last ten years, over 700 Uttarakhand villages deserted in 10 years and more than 3.83 lakh people have left their villages with half of them going out in search of livelihood.
- As the mercury continues to rise in Uttarakhand, the forest fires are occurring one after the other in the state. At least 296 incidents of forest fires were reported till 24<sup>th</sup> May from different parts of Uttarakhand.
- Tripura floods render around 600 families homeless.
- The Kondapalli toy carver's traditions and livelihoods are under serious threat due to the deforestation and exploitation of the Tella Poniki tree (a rare tree).
  - ◇ This means the cravers must look for supplies of the white wood which is expensive
  - ◇ The Kondapalli carvers are also battling the threat of digital toys.

**Entrepreneurship/Industries/Employment**

- **According to a recent Global Staffing Report:**

- ◇ BFSI, e-comm, retail, infra sectors to add over 1 million jobs by 2018.
- ◇ The Indian staffing market size is estimated to be valued at EUR 3.6 million.
- ◇ According to ISF (an apex body of flexi staffing Industry) report, the organised retail sector will create 12,62,120 jobs, construction and real estate will create 1,37,280 jobs, BFSI will create 52,500 jobs while automobile sector to add 43,060 jobs by 2021.

- **According to a study by IRENA:**

the renewable energy industry employs 10.3 million (surpassing the 10 million figure for the first time).

- ◇ India in top 6 to create most green energy jobs
- ◇ The renewable energy industry created more than 500,000 new jobs globally in 2017 people globally and is expected to create up to 28 million jobs by 2050.

- According to ILO, Over 300,000 workers to be employed in solar, wind energy sectors in India to meet the 2022 target. The report also predicts that:

- ◇ The transition to a green economy will also lead to the loss of six million jobs in industries that are heavily reliant on carbon-based production.
- ◇ Two sectors, namely petroleum extraction and refining, are set to see job losses of one million or more.

- Jobs top priority as UGC sets target 2022 for all institutes. Every higher education institute to ensure at least 50% of those graduating get access to a job, self-employment or get to pursue higher education.

- CSC, SIDBI ink pact for financial support to village level entrepreneurs.

- According to EPFO's payroll data:

- ◇ Over 39 lakh jobs were created in 7 months till March.
- ◇ Approximately 6.13 lakh new jobs were created in March in 2018.
- ◇ The segments where job creation was substantial were electric, mechanical or general engineering products followed by building and construction industry, trading & commercial establishments and textiles.
- ◇ The data clearly indicates that over half of the jobs created in organised sector in the country were in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat during the seven-month period.

- EPFO has asked its field offices to credit 8.55 per cent rate of interest for 2017-18 into the PF accounts of around 5 crore subscribers.

- According to a survey by Willis Towers Watson, companies in India expect the use of automation (including AI) in the workplace is expected to double (from 14 percent to 27 percent) in next 3 years, higher than the global and APAC average:

- ◇ The study noted that more than half the companies believe that automation will augment human performance and create new work, not replace it. The maximum impact of this shift to automation will be seen in the services industry.

- Delays in wage payment have been a constant throughout MGNREGS implementation. Government data show the percentage of wages unpaid increased from 63.5% in February 2018 to 85.5% in March 2018 to 99% in April 2018. A recent study by Azim Premji University has found that 78% of payments were not made on time, and as many as 45% payments did not include compensation for delayed payment as per guidelines.
- A large number of skill trainings in rubber have been organised in different parts of the country under an arrangement between RSDC and NBCFDC.
- According to Walmart India CEO, India's retail sector is vital for the economy and employment generation and it is time to elevate the position of the sector to an "industry". Walmart is also keen to work with the country's small businesses as well as farmers. According to Walmart India CEO, India's retail sector is vital for the economy and employment generation and it is time to elevate the position of the sector to an "industry". Walmart is also keen to work with the country's small businesses as well as farmers.
- According to a survey conducted by IDC sponsored by Cisco, the digital transformation in the tech sector is increasing the demand for professionals with specific skills in areas like Cyber security, cloud and data analytics will add more than 5 million positions worldwide by 2027.
- NIC launches fourth data centre in Bhubaneswar. It is planning to hire another 800 people (already has 4500 people) across various levels of the organisation with 350 dedicated specifically for Cyber security.
- According to a Times Job Survey which was conducted for 1,100 professionals, only 20 per cent (8 in 10) employees are satisfied with their jobs. Lack of career growth opportunities key to job dissatisfaction.
- Transgenders offered Jobs in Jharkhand
  - ◊ The Tata steel company to provide employment after imparting basic training in technical courses free of cost. The company took this progressive and welcoming decision after conducting a survey on the livelihoods of transgenders in Jamshedpur town.
  - ◊ An annual package of Rs. 250,000 to Rs. 300,000 would be provided to selected candidates.
- According to a report by a staffing firm TeamLease Services, India has the potential to create one crore sales jobs in the next three years by just doing 10 regulatory reforms.
- Indian companies in traditional sectors like agriculture, petroleum, pharma, transportation and legal are aggressively hiring technology talent.
- Shri Ram Nath Kovind, inaugurated the 4th Global Exhibition on Services and launched a portal on 12 Champion Sectors in Services in Mumbai on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018
- Government to launch Atal New India Challenge to support innovators.
- Customs and Postal Department hold First ever Joint Conference to deliberate on streamlining imports and exports by post. This is to cater to the SMEs and to boost the Make in India program.
- Three people were arrested for duping job seekers across the country using fake websites with employment notifications amounting to a fraud of Rs 3 crore. 20,000 job aspirants from Telangana were duped.
- Jamia Millia Islamia launches eateries on campus under skill training programme for

underprivileged and school drop-outs to help them earn their livelihoods.

- Gramonnati, an NGO in Pondicherry led by former Cisco senior executives is crowd funding an initiative to create rural entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurs will be trained to be like CEOs of small IT/tech hubs in their villages.
- Madhya Pradesh govt decides to regularise 2,37,000 contractual teachers.
- Gujarat's MBAs, LLBs, Engineering, grads slug it out for driver's job at High Court.

## 4. Partnerships

- India & Netherlands discuss ways to strengthen partnership in agriculture and allied sectors.
- Nokia to develop 500 smart villages in India
  - ◇ The project is named as Smartpur. The villages are to be Digitally integrated and sustainable in line with the government's vision of Digital India.
  - ◇ The project will work under the five key areas of development -- health, education, livelihood, governance and finance -- to build a holistic, digitally integrated village.
  - ◇ Phase one of the project has seen pilots rolled out in Haryana and Tamil Nadu with DEF as the implementation partner to develop 10 such villages in each state in a hub-and-spoke model.
  - ◇ In phase two, the project will be scaled-up to up to another 80 villages across various states. Subsequently, it will be extended to another 400 villages over a period of five years.
- Impact PPA Partners with Indian Government:
  - ◇ To create 50 Million Jobs for female workers in India's more rural states.
  - ◇ To re-energize India's cottage industry.
  - ◇ The company will be working with MSME to carry out the government's BHKGS initiative (translated as Indian Green Cotton Textile Village Development Organization)
  - ◇ The project estimates that the female workers could generate 8,000–10,000 rupees a month right out of their homes.
- IMG Reliance and the British Council have signed an agreement to bring global 'Crafting Futures' programme to India to support the country's female textile artisans:
  - ◇ The project, named 'A Telegram from Tripura' explore new fashion systems and approaches with the artisans in the North-eastern region.
  - ◇ The aim is to grow their livelihoods and economic opportunities.
  - ◇ The work will showcase the skills of the artisans and demonstrate how design innovation can promote a fairer, more inclusive fashion industry.
- In the India South Africa Business Summit 2018 held on 29-30 April in Johannesburg, Minister of Commerce and Industry Suresh Prabhu observed that India and Africa have huge potential for trade and emphasized on Agro Processing Sector.
- The government has entered into an agreement with the World Bank for a flexible financing arrangement to accelerate research towards early development of biopharmaceuticals. The aim is to make India a hub for design and development of novel, affordable and effective biopharmaceutical products.

- In a move that could open the doors for skilled professionals in Canada’s technology sector, the province of British Columbia is looking at India in a big way to rope in talent under its provincial nominee programme.
- Indian government signed with World Bank for \$ 200 million to implement nutrition program across the country in 315 districts under National Nutrition Mission (NNM). The NNM aims to provide nutrition food to the children upto the age of six year, pregnant women, lactating mothers and adolescent girls. Around 10 crore people will be benefited through this program.
- India signs 200 million US Dollar Loan Deal with World Bank for National Nutrition Mission (POSHAN Abhiyaan) for 315 districts across all states/UTs. The loan would help the GoI in achieving its goal of reducing stunting in children 0-6 years of age from 38.4% to 25% by the year 2022.
- NITI Aayog to collaborate with IBM to develop a crop yield prediction model using Artificial Intelligence to provide real time advisory to farmers in inspirational districts (10 districts in the first phase).
- Indian PM visit to Nepal considered to be strategically Important as:
  - ◇ To improve the bilateral ties.
  - ◇ Expansion on cooperation from India to Nepal in agriculture, agriculture research and development, education and organic farming.
  - ◇ The Raxaul (Bihar)-Kathmandu rail link is also on the agenda.
  - ◇ The foundation stone for the construction of the 900 MW Arun III project.
  - ◇ Discussions on boosting Inland Water Way transport, Nepal's request to add four additional air routes via India.
  - ◇ Discussions on construction of 46,00mw Pancheshwor Multipurpose Project.
- Peru and India signed an agreement in the field of Renewable Energy at Lima.
- Sweden wants to co-create products with India to build long-term relationship for the global market. As many as 200,000 jobs are directly created by Swedish companies and 16,00,000 jobs are indirectly created in India.
- Cabinet apprised of MoU between India and France on Technical Cooperation in the field of railways.
- Cabinet approved MoU on Cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine between India and Colombia.
- Cabinet approved MoU on Cooperation in the field of Medicinal Plants between India and Equatorial Guinea.
- Cabinet approved MoU between the India and Swaziland on cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine
- Cabinet approved MoU between India and Morocco in the legal field.
- AFD launches Programme to fund Smart City projects: 100 million Euro made available to Finance 30 – 80 selected Projects.
- Middle East, Africa seek India’s help to light up their villages.

- Peru seeks production of generic medicines by Indian companies in their country and early conclusion of Free Trade Agreement.
- Agriculture ministry is in talks with Russia to speed up nod for export of dairy and meat units
- Legal instruments, partnerships needed for conserving wildlife corridors and landscapes : WWF
- India signs Loan Agreement with the World Bank for USD 21.7 Million for Strengthening the Public Financial Management in Rajasthan Project. The duration of the project is 5 years.
- C&A Foundation collaborates with MP Govt to improve livelihoods of organic cotton farmers.
- Israel bullish on Agritourism, 3000 agriculturalists from India visit Agritech Israel 2018.
- AIF's New York gala raises USD 1.84 mn for children's education in India.
- The Ministry of WCD and Department of Women and Child Development, Government of UP signed an MoU for management of Home of Widows of Sunrakh Bangar, Vrindavan.
- Amazon is offering workshops for some of the most talented and least tech savvy artisans in Bhuj. It is training internet café owners to help the artisans use Amazon's app and also seeking to provide logistical support to sell the products created by them.
- Punjab seeks World Bank aid for infrastructure development (with a special focus on drinking water, sewage, improving the agriculture methods). This will also help in raising the per capita income of the state.

## 5. Miscellaneous/Social Issues

- According to a study by The Lancet Global Health:
  - ◇ An estimated 239,000 girls younger than the age of five die in India every year because many parents prefer boys over girls.
  - ◇ The figure does not include girls who are aborted simply for their gender, the researchers say.
  - ◇ More than 90% of districts had excess female mortality, but the four largest states in northern India accounted for two-thirds of India's total number.
  - ◇ The need for more proactive engagement with the issue of postnatal sex discrimination and a focus on the northern districts
- According to a survey: WINGS 2018 (a study on the perception of girl's safety in public spaces, conducted by Save the Children,
  - ◇ One in three adolescent girls in India is concerned about sexual harassment in public places.
  - ◇ One in five girls fears physical assault (even rape).
  - ◇ More than two-thirds of adolescent girls from urban and rural areas said they would confide in their mother if they face harassment in a public space.
  - ◇ Two out of five said that if their parents found out about an incident of harassment in a public space, they would restrict their movement outside of home.
- According to the WHO global air pollution database, 14 out of the 15 most-polluted cities in the world in terms of Particulate Matter or (PM) 2.5 concentrations are in India, which includes pollutants and cause greater risk to human health. The National Green Tribunal has asked the states to respond on the report and have given 21<sup>st</sup> May as the next date of hearing.

- Government Proposes to Include Multiple Sclerosis in Ayushman Bharat on World Multiple Sclerosis Day.
- Fast food is showing booming sales in India, QSRs are reporting record breaking despite GST and Demonetisation.
- According to a 'Maternity Management in Corporate India' report, companies struggle to fill talent gap in event of women employees' maternity continuum.
- A survey by Employment Services Company Team Lease found that improved maternity benefits (12 to 26 Weeks) could be counterproductive.
- Ministry of Women and Child Development which has set up 182 One Stop Centres(OSCs) till date have approved 100 additional in 9 states
- Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) is established by the GoI in order to protect the old age income security of subscribers.
- Government Committed to get Access to Indian Pharma in Key Markets: Suresh Prabhu at iPhEX
- According to a report by World Bank, India is doing extremely well on electrification. The report says that nearly 85 per cent of the country's population has access to electricity.
- Delhi Government caps margins on medicines and consumables. According to the proposal, hospitals and nursing home in the state cannot mark-up non-schedule medicine and consumables prices more than 50% from the purchase price, regardless of their MRP.
- Jharkhand Government is delighted with the success of the developmental activities being undertaken on two major fronts-linking women with livelihood mission projects and promoting Skill India programme.
- According to Finance Commission, Haryana's socio-economic development will depend on the reduction in inter-district disparities and improving sex ratio. Transition to Peri-Urban Agriculture may prove as a game changer in doubling farmer's income.
- HPCL begins home-delivery of diesel ('HP Fuel Connect') in Mumbai and has plans to expand it to other parts of the country. PESO has given approval only on a trial basis.
  - TRIFED goes digital for Inventory Management and Sales. ❖

# Updates from Weeklies

## Livelihoods/Employment

- **Anger of the Jobless Youth:** Idle mind has the possibility of becoming devil's workshop where religion, politics, crime, poverty may combine to form toxic brews and demographic dividend can become double edged sword and even a burden. Some of the observations on present scenario of youth in India and across the world are:
  - ◆ According to OECD and India's Economic Survey, over 30% of India's youth is neither employed nor in school and is not in any kind of apprenticeship
  - ◆ Outdated and financially strained education system, an economic system skewed in favour of rich and disruptive technologies are some challenges faced
  - ◆ Agriculture which employs 38% of India's youth is in grave crisis
  - ◆ Out of nearly 1 million engineers that graduate every year in India, as few as 7 to 12% are fit to be employed.
  - ◆ Youth Development Index finds that odds of a young women not having a job or education are twice that of a young man
  - ◆ ILO observes that prolonged joblessness renders the young cynical and angrier and warns of a scarred generation
  - ◆ All these concerns emphasize the importance of effective utilisation of demographic dividend. (For detailed analysis, read [Down To Earth, 1-15 May, 2018 issue](#))
- **Payroll Data:** On 25 April 2018, the EPFO, ESIC, and PFRDA released data on formal employment based on "payroll" reporting. The debate on payroll data needs to be seen in the larger context of the Indian economy not generating enough employment despite growing at more than 7% for the last decade and a half. It has already created a situation where a large majority of rural and urban youth are on the streets protesting the lack of employment opportunities, for instance, agrarian communities such as the Jats, Marathas, and Patels. For most of these youth, the reality is quite different from the claims of employment creation by the government based on payroll data. (Visit <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/21/editorials/making-sense-'payroll'-data.html> for detailed analysis).
- **Life on the Fringes-Village life near a Protected Area:** Some of the observations are:
  - ◆ Complex livelihood portfolio involving collection of minor forest produce as well as agricultural activities
  - ◆ Conflict with forest laws and forest officials
  - ◆ Human Animal Conflict (Read about one such village Dangamala on the fringe of Bhitarkanika in Odisha on [http://www.epw.in/system/files/pdf/2018\\_53/18/PE\\_LIII\\_18\\_050518\\_Subhashree\\_Banerjee.pdf](http://www.epw.in/system/files/pdf/2018_53/18/PE_LIII_18_050518_Subhashree_Banerjee.pdf) and see how it is impacted).
- **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups(PVTGs):** The country's PVTGs have been slowly reduced to virtual serfdom. The government framed policies in 2012-13 based on recommendations of the NAC. As many as 75 tribal groups with a total population of about 2.7 million were classified as PVTG. This small number of people is scattered over a large number of locations in over a dozen states of the country. The people of the PVTG still live in forests and practice primitive forms of agriculture. However, in the main, the pressure of population growth of other communities has reduced area under dense forests and rendered the mode of living of the PVTG increasingly unviable. India's Bureaucracy needs to do more for these Forest Dwellers but only time will tell whether governments are interested to and can employ appropriate administrative implements to further the interest of the people of the PVTG. (Visit <https://www.thewire.in/rights/indias-bureaucracy-needs-to-do-more-for-forest-dwellers> for further reading).

## Economy

- **RBI Will Keep Inflation Rates on Hold till Mid-2019:** An increase in the global oil price, overestimated government expenditure and devaluation of the rupee could cause the RBI to hike interest rates. (Visit <https://thewire.in/economy/reuters-poll-rbi-will-keep-inflation-rates-on-hold-till-mid-2019> for further reading).
- **According** to United States after an analysis at India's payments for the four recent years i.e. from 2010-11 to 2013-14, India is supporting its rice and wheat farmers with payments (Market Price Support (MPS)) that are far higher than the amounts allowed by the WTO. The statement by the US identified that, India's apparent MPS for wheat appears to have been over 60% of the value of production in each of the last four years for which India has notified data. Its apparent MPS for rice appears to have been over 70%. Anything over 10% would break WTO rules. (Visit <https://thewire.in/trade/india-giving-wheat-and-rice-farmers-vast-support-us-tells-wto> for further reading).

## **Agriculture**

- **Minimum Support Prices vs Price Deficiency Payments:** There is an ongoing debate on whether MSP for various agricultural commodities can be replaced by a system of price deficiency payments to farmers.
  - ◆ The main objective of the intended policy shift is the improvement in farmers' incomes as well as a reduction in farm subsidies.
  - ◆ The case for price deficiency payments to farmers is made out on the ground that the existing MSP policy, which is being followed in India since 1965 for various agricultural commodities, is highly inadequate and ineffective from a farmer's perspective and also inefficient from an economic point of view.
  - ◆ The MSP in India covering as many as 23 crops, it should be limited to a few specific commodities.
  - ◆ An analysis of this system suggests that price deficiency payments might be a better option for both farmers and the government. However, it should be properly designed so that it can improve farm incomes, national food security, fiscal prudence and sustainability of agriculture. Moreover, necessary safeguards and corrective measures have to be initiated, as and when required, to minimise the risks involved.
  - ◆ Besides, updating and digitisation of Aadhaar-linked land records and bank accounts along with legalisation of land leasing would be essential for any price deficiency payment programme to be adequately effective. (Visit <http://www.epw.in/journal/2018/20/special-articles/price-deficiency-payments-and-minimum-support-prices.html> for further reading).
- **A Crop Revolution:** The women-led climate-resilient farming model created by Swayam Shikshan Prayog in drought-hit Marathwada has yielded encouraging results and is worthy of emulation across the country. Using the CRA guidelines, the SSP model promotes sustainable farming techniques, diversified livelihoods through agriculture-allied businesses, increasing the consumption and marketing of nutritious, locally grown foods and water management systems. The innovative aspect of this model is to bring to the centre stage women as farmers and get them to lead the way. The SSP hopes that the model can be emulated across drought-prone regions in the country. (Visit <http://www.frontline.in/the-nation/a-crop-revolution/article10108364.ece?homepage=true> for further reading).
- **Global Sugar Exports:** The Global Sugar Alliance convened a meeting in New York to discuss compliance with WTO norms by countries in the sugar Industry. The Global Sugar Alliance representing top exporting nations, including Brazil, Australia and Thailand launched an investigation this year into whether the EU, India and Pakistan are in violation of WTO rules (on direct subsidies), with plans to conclude by July. (Visit <https://thewire.in/trade/global-sugar-exporters-to-review-govt-support-in-india-pakistan-and-the-eu> for further reading)
- Farmers in Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur are protested once again as Bhavantar Scheme Proves Ineffective, that garlic in the wholesale market is selling at as low as Re 1 per kg. The problem of low wholesale prices for garlic

had begun emerging in March. (Visit <https://thewire.in/agriculture/garlic-prices-hit-rock-bottom-in-mp-as-bhavantar-scheme-proves-ineffective> for further reading).

- Farmer organisations (around 2 lakh farmers) in Maharashtra have called a 'jail bharo' andolan (agitation) on May 14, the birth anniversary of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, across the state, demanding a complete waiver of loan and electricity bills, scrapping of the Mumbai-Nagpur Expressway and refinery at Nanar in Ratnagiri, among others. (Visit <https://www.thewire.in/labour/labour-news-maharashtra-farmers-protest> for further reading).

### Schemes/Policies/Initiatives

#### Mudra Loan Scheme:

- ◆ Mudra loans worth Rs 2,53,677.10 crore to 4.81 crore beneficiaries were given in 2017-18, which translates into average loan size of Rs 52,700, an amount just too small to finance any scalable business model with employment generation potential, say experts.
- ◆ Lending rose from Rs 1,32,954 crore in 2015-16 to Rs 2,46,437 crore in 2017-18 – an increase of over 85% .
- ◆ The number of larger-sized loans – of more than Rs 5 lakh – that can create real jobs are just a tiny percentage, or 1.3%, of total loans disbursed under the scheme, reveals an RTI query .
- ◆ The balance loans were in sizes of less than Rs 50,000 and of between Rs 50,000 and Rs 5 lakh.
- ◆ Specifically, Banks and MFIs account for roughly 65% and 35% of lending under the Mudra scheme. But there is a catch – most self-employed people may not have full-time work and may be actually underemployed, according to economists.
- ◆ Although there is no official data on how many jobs have been created through the scheme, number of loan beneficiaries is often taken as jobs generated.
- ◆ Two issues have also bogged down the Mudra scheme in the last two years. Firstly, the loans given out are considered risky as they have been given by banks without any collateral. In case of default, banks cannot do much to recover loans. (visit <https://thewire.in/labour/modi-mudra-loan-scheme-job-creation-reality> for further reading).
- Cauvery **Management Scheme:** SC Gives approval to Draft Cauvery Management Scheme. The scheme would deal with release of water to four states in different circumstances like normal and deficient water years in the Cauvery river basin. (Visit <https://www.thewire.in/law/sc-gives-approval-to-draft-cauvery-management-scheme> for further reading).
- **Ujjwala Yojana:** The Central Government's Flagship programme PMUY to provide LPG connections has been in operation for two years. The announcement of PMUY and the recent increase of its target, marks a significant shift in the government's approach to providing access to clean cooking fuels. However, little is known about the progress of the scheme. Has it led to sustained use of clean fuels among poor households? Analysis of this is also important because the programme involves a public investment of over ₹12,000 crore and it is necessary to ensure that this investment realises its social objectives.
  - ◆ The aim is to distribute five crore connections to poor women "free of cost" by March 2019. As of early April 2018 more than 3.5 crore connections were provided under the scheme.
  - ◆ Encouraged by the rapid release of connections, the central government revised the target and scope of the scheme to eight crore connections by March 2020.
  - ◆ Experts suggest that a connection focused approach without adequate provisions to ensure affordability, availability, and accountability will not result in a corresponding increase in consistent use of LPG among poor households. PMUY should achieve the desired objective of not only disbursing connections but making the LPG sector a real contributor to overcoming this deep-rooted challenge

affecting energy access, health, and gender disparity.

- ◆ Regular monitoring of PMUY and publishing of information has also been recommended by the corresponding Parliamentary Standing Committee (SCPNG 2018). (Visit <http://www.epw.in/journal/2018/20/notes/what-has-pradhan-mantri-ujjwala-yojana-achieved-so-far.html> for further reading)
- **Shipping Policy:** The biggest-ever change in India's shipping policy, undertaken by the government, is expected to endow huge benefits to a small clutch of international and domestic shipping companies.
  - ◆ On May 21, the Ministry of Shipping issued a notification that relaxed restrictions on the movement of foreign ships engaged in transporting containers laden with goods for export or import as well as empty containers between and among Indian ports along the country's coastline.
  - ◆ This is the latest move in a policy tussle going for many years and appears to tilt the balance in the shipping industry and the ports sector in the country hugely in favour of major multinational shipping lines and private port operators to the detriment of Indian shipping companies and government-run ports.
  - ◆ Significantly, the decision is likely to result in major gains for companies in the Adani group which own and operate several private ports in India, which import coal and agricultural products and which have significant interests up and down the logistics value-chain.
  - ◆ The policy change is expected to result in a major shift in the balance of cargo – away from Indian shipping companies to foreign ships, and from government-run ports to private ports. ( Visit <https://thewire.in/economy/how-a-change-in-shipping-policy-will-cripple-indias-largest-government-owned-port> for further reading).
- **Reviewing the Labour Code on Industrial Relations Bill, 2015:** The Labour Code on Industrial Relations Bill, 2015, is one of the three labour codes the government is working on to consolidate all the important labour legislation. It is important to analyse the text of the 2015 bill when the ruling party's own affiliate, Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, protests against the proposed bill. In 2018, by amending the rules of Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act of 1946, the BJP government has introduced a concept of "fixed-term employment workman." As the name suggests, it envisages a workman ("worker") who is contracted for a fixed period. The law as it stands today, reduces labour relations to a pure contractual exercise where a worker stands to lose their rights even at the time of signing of the contract. (Visit <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/21/commentary/reviewing-labour-code-industrial-relations-bill-2015.html> for further reading).
- **Education Policy-NITI Aayog:** A review of NITI Ayog's three year action agenda's says on education in India and lacunae in it followed by some course corrections are discussed in this article. (Visit [http://www.epw.in/system/files/pdf/2018\\_53/18/CM\\_LIII\\_18\\_050518\\_Protiva\\_Kundu.pdf](http://www.epw.in/system/files/pdf/2018_53/18/CM_LIII_18_050518_Protiva_Kundu.pdf) for detailed commentary).

## Social Issues

- **Education:** Young minds in India are being destroyed by a faulty pattern of education, parental ambitions, the aggression of hyper-competitiveness and a flawed idea of 'success'. The idea of success in India strips the joy of learning only to replace with the neurotic urge to be a topper. (Visit <https://thewire.in/education/the-true-face-of-indias-education-system> for further reading)
- **Healthcare- Private Hospitals-Capping Profits:** An expert panel recommended capping profit margins of Delhi private hospitals on drugs and devices. Delhi government is likely to come up with a policy on this issue.
  - ◆ At present, Clinical Establishments Regulation and Registration Act exist since 2010 to regulate profiteering by private hospitals. Close to 7 states adopted this act and the implementation is not on expected lines.
  - ◆ Uniform regulation has been difficult as health is a state subject.

- ◆ Other ideas to make healthcare affordable can be cross subsidisation and Standard services at standard costs, transparency (e.g.: e-platform where all prices are listed to compare) about diagnostic rates to enable informed choice by consumer. (Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhPjUSTWBbc> for detailed debate).
- Feeding **Hungry Children:** In the wake of a proposal towards centralised, packaged production and distribution of supplementary nutrition under ICDS, alternate narrative is:
  - ◆ Ensuring supplementary nutrition through local foods would:
    - Retain diversity in food
    - Create demand for local crops
    - Ensure greater acceptability among mothers and families
    - Do away with the contractors and leakages
  - ◆ NITI Aayog recommends involving mothers in the preparation of meals
  - ◆ Other modes can be delivering supplementary nutrition through SHGs
  - ◆ Local supply, production and distribution would ensure community monitoring and control. (Visit [http://www.epw.in/system/files/pdf/2018\\_53/18/ED\\_LIII\\_18\\_050518\\_Feeding\\_Hungry\\_Children.pdf](http://www.epw.in/system/files/pdf/2018_53/18/ED_LIII_18_050518_Feeding_Hungry_Children.pdf) for detailed analysis)
- An audit report by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on the social and economic sectors (for the year ending 2016) of the Haryana government has revealed huge gaps in the implementation of the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Yojana, one of the major flagship programmes of the Union government.
  - ◆ The report stated that, the target of improving the sex ratio at birth, increasing girls' enrolment in secondary education and hundred per cent re-enrolment of dropout girls could not be achieved in three districts which it focussed on :
  - ◆ The CAG found evidence of diversion of funds from the scheme, which is wholly financed by the Central government. (Visit [www.frontline.in/cover-story/stillborn-scheme/article10107275.ece](http://www.frontline.in/cover-story/stillborn-scheme/article10107275.ece) for further reading)
- **How Haryana saved its girls:** Three-and-a-half years since the BBBP campaign was first launched, Haryana's sex ratio at birth (SRB), which was down to a miserable 834 (that is 834 girls for every 1,000 boys) and was the lowest among all states in 2011, jumped to an impressive 914 in 2017. Seventeen districts reported SRBs above 900. Only four, Jind, Rewari, Rohtak and Narnaul, had SRBs around 890. The BBBP has saved the lives of an estimated 11,600 girl children in Haryana. (Visit <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/society/story/20180528-haryana-girls-female-foeticide-khattar-government-1236234-2018-05-17> for further reading)
- **Power:** The country's electricity generation capacity and production of energy sources continue to post healthy growth. According to the Energy Statistics 2018, India's installed electricity generation capacity as of March 31, 2017 totalled 3,26,833 megawatts (MW), growing 7 per cent from 3,05,162 MW as on March 31, 2016. The installed capacity of conventional sources such as hydro and coal continued to grow, as did the capacity of other renewable sources. Coal continued to dominate the sector, accounting for nearly 59 per cent of the country's combined installed capacity. Crude petroleum and natural gas both shrank from the previous year's figures. (Visit <http://www.frontline.in/science-and-technology/powering-thenation/article10108407.ece?homepage=true> for further reading).
- **Challenges and Opportunities in Fly Ash Utilisation:** The Indian government has been pushing for a target of 1.5 billion tonnes of coal production annually by 2020, most of which will be used in the electricity sector. Blending fly ash in cement is the most environmentally sustainable and financially attractive method of its utilisation. The key technical, regulatory, pricing, logistical, and behavioural issues need to be urgently addressed to reach complete fly ash utilisation. All the heavy metals found in fly ash—nickel, cadmium, arsenic, chromium, lead,

etc—are toxic in nature. Fly ash is a unique problem in this context—it is a social and economic bad, its impacts are asymmetric across economic groups, and yet it offers an opportunity for capitalists to exploit it economically in a socially desirable way. (Visit <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/21/special-articles/making-ash-disappear.html> for detailed analysis).

- **Privacy and interlinked world:** Our hyperlinked world endangers our privacy and dignity as a few know everything the rest are doing. This creates imbalance in the positions of different human beings and encourage exploitation. As data becomes new currency and fuel for next wave of growth, it can be manipulated, used unfairly and much more. (Visit <https://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/rule-of-the-know-alls/300111> for further understanding) ❖