

# *Weekly Livelihoods Update*

08 January 2019

- ✚ **What Drives Annual Agricultural Growth Rates in India?** – In India, the agricultural growth rate is linked to rainfall, and medium-term growth to technology adoption, policy frameworks, and institutional interventions. But, growth in a year may be poor as much due to the good monsoon or abnormally wet conditions in the previous year as the poor monsoon during that year, or it may be high due as much to the poor monsoon in the previous year as to a good monsoon of the year or to policy reforms. As the rainfall fluctuates annually, medium-term growth rates should be assessed; the annual rainfall in the base year should be close to normal. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2019/1/perspectives/what-drives-annual-agricultural-growth.html>]
- ✚ **Population Challenges in India** – Following the unparalleled decline in fertility, India's population growth has shown signs of deceleration in the recent decades. Despite this, India will overtake China and is slated to be the most populous country in the world within the next decade. Keeping in mind the rising concerns of population scientists over the non-standard demographic transition that the country experienced, it is high time to assess the achievements and the rough paths traversed since independence. Krishnamurthy Srinivasan's book critically studies the demographic changes in India in the context of national and international policies. It brilliantly highlights the lessons learnt from the population policies in the country. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2019/1/book-reviews/population-challenges-india.html>]
- ✚ **Traders' Participation in Commodity Futures Markets in Kerala** – Traders' participation and barriers to participation in the commodity futures markets of rubber and pepper in Kerala are explored in the context of increasing debate over the use and benefits of commodity futures markets in India. Rubber and pepper traders depend highly on the futures markets price signals to trade in the spot markets and relate it to spot market prices. Factors like education, income, trading experiences in futures markets and in other financial markets influence traders' participation in futures market. Lack of networking, risks, difficulty in managing spot and futures markets, lack of adequate technological knowledge and skills are the major constraints faced by the traders in futures markets participation. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2019/1/special-articles/traders%E2%80%99-participation-commodity-futures.html>]
- ✚ **Women's Reservation Bill | The Power of She** – Two evenings after Christmas, I steeled myself for a task I truly abhor call a stranger and have a formal conversation.

Only the thought that hundreds of others from Shakti a non-partisan group I'd recently joined were also steeling themselves across India made me not suddenly develop a headache. The group had only just formed in November but was impressively focused on its one-point agenda get more women elected as MLAs and MPs. [For further reading: <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/up-front/story/20190114-women-s-reservation-bill-the-power-of-she-1423184-2019-01-04>]

✚ **Why India Cannot Achieve The Growth It Wants Without Reducing Income, Gender Inequality** – India lags many of its south Asian neighbours on the human development index (HDI) primarily because of inequalities, said a recent report by the United Nations Development Fund. These inequalities, in turn, hamper India's economic growth. India ranked 130 out of 189 countries on the 2018 HDI index with a score of 0.640 which places it in the “medium” category of development. It fared worse than Sri Lanka (HDI 0.77, rank 76) and China (0.75, 86) but better than Pakistan (0.56 and 150), Nepal (0.57, 149) and Bangladesh (0.68, 136). [For further reading: <https://www.indiaspend.com/why-india-cannot-achieve-the-growth-it-wants-without-reducing-income-gender-inequality/>]

✚ **Global Nutrition Report** – In 2017, fewer than one in five children, six to 24 months of age, in the world ate a minimally accepted diet. More than half of them in the same age group did not get the recommended number of meals, and only two-thirds of the infants from six to eight months ate any solid food at all. In short, the burden of malnutrition, globally, was very high. South Asia was home to 38.9 per cent of the world's stunted children, while India, Nigeria and Pakistan accounted for half of all the stunted children. India was also home to 25.5 million “wasted” (low weight for height) children. India, Nigeria and Indonesia were home to the largest number of children in the “wasted” category. These and other dismal statistics are part of the 2018 Global Nutrition Report, the outcome of a multi-stakeholder initiative started in 2013. [For further reading: <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/public-health/article25771179.ece>]

✚ **Sugarcane growers' struggle** - On November 19, thousands of sugarcane farmers gathered at Freedom Park in Bengaluru under the aegis of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS) demanding that the government guarantee a minimum support price (MSP) for their crop. A day before this, 20 sugarcane-laden trucks barged into the premises of Suvarna Soudha, where the winter session of the Assembly is held, in Belagavi in north Karnataka, and dumped their contents there. [For further reading: <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/agriculture/article25771281.ece>]