

Weekly Livelihoods Update

25 September 2018

- ✚ **Worker's Demand of Rights:** On 5th September 2017, this rally “Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Rally” was led primarily by the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) and the All India Agricultural Workers Union (AIAWU), all mass organisations of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in Delhi. Nearly one and a half lakh workers from different occupations, industrial, agricultural, and small farmers from 26 states had come together on a joint platform and their demands were fixed: 1. Fixed national minimum wage; 2. Remunerative prices for agricultural produce; 3. Guaranteed procurement; 4. Universal social security. [For further reading: <https://www.frontline.in/the-nation/article24924627.ece?homepage=true>]
- ✚ **Human lives in the Sewers:** It is very alarming stats that says that a safai karmchari dies every five days in India. It is clear that technical solutions can solve this issue but the question lies in is that the actual root? And can the technology fix it? The major problem with the stigma of manual scavenger lies in the social grounds and our own policies where the issue is passed on from municipalities to governments-in states and at the Centre-to elected representatives to rest the cause. They majorly from the Valmiki caste who has the long history of manual scavenging and face discrimination. Even those escape from the scavenging work struggles to hide their identity even to their spouse. Laws passed in 1993 and 2013 specifically bans manual scavenging but why are they not firmly enforced? The provision for compensation of Rs 10 lakh for each family that loses a member to sewer cleaning work is received barely 2 per cent cases. So, realising the discrimination, scale and intensity of the issue is a long road. It would just a small step towards acknowledging their pain if dignified employment could be found for desperate families that must risk death every day to just stay alive. [For further reading: <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/up-front/story/20181001-it-s-not-a-spiritual-experience-to-die-in-a-sewer-mr-pm-1345537-2018-09-22>]
- ✚ **Role of Dams in Kerala's Flood Disaster** - During the July–August 2018 floods in Kerala, basic norms were violated in the management of dams, which, if operated prudently, could have alleviated the magnitude of the disaster. In this context, a strategy for the management of dams to mitigate similar disasters has been outlined. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/38/commentary/role-dams-keralas-flood-disaster.html>]

- ✚ **Challenges of Competition and Regulation in the Telecom Sector** - The telecommunications sector has come a long way from its perceived status as a natural monopoly to a competitive multiplayer industry. As competitive forces, both from within the telecom industry and the surrounding digital ecosystem, continue to redefine the sector's dynamics, it creates new challenges for regulation and competition enforcement. Calling for fresh thinking on the respective roles of the sectoral regulator, the competition authority and the need for greater synergies between them, a model for voluntary cooperation between the authorities is suggested. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/38/market-power-and-competition-policy/challenges-competition-and-regulation.html>]
- ✚ **Climate Justice and Gandhian Morality** - Gandhian principles of morality have in the past been linked in various ways to India's approach to environmental governance and, more recently, to the contemplation of the broader global debate on climate change. The applicability of these principles to conceptions of climate justice is examined by exploring the ways in which the idea of M K Gandhi is articulated in an Indian context. The vocalisation of Gandhi as a symbol of Indian engagement with climate change and sustainable development asks to be located within broader normative perspectives on the content and directionality of a Gandhian approach. Ideas of cosmopolitanism and "realised justice" supply a useful backdrop for a contemporary reading of Gandhi, and draw attention to several questions that this article examines. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/38/special-articles/climate-justice-and-gandhian-morality.html>]
- ✚ **Artisan's RangSutra:** RangSutra founded by Sumita Ghose is into combining traditional crafts like handloom, tie-dye, block printing, hand embroidery, mirror work and applique on contemporary designs, supplied garments and home products from Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Manipur. She was inspired by Urmul Trust's work in Western Rajasthan is set to make her handloom and handicraft-based producer-owned company RangSutra a sustainable livelihood for the stakeholder (i.e. the artisans). In 2007 RangSutra was incorporated as a public company and presently it has 2500 artisans owning 32 per cent of the company are the part of the board, they are working with 3500 artisan in which 70 per cent is women. Initial five years it supplied products to Fabindia. In 2008 it broke even and now it is all set to sell their products to consumers directly through online platforms and exhibition spaces. Their strategy lies organising in different areas in clusters as self-help groups, giving them the required training to maintain quality and ensuring they get regular work so the organisation is sustainable and artisans get stable income. A full-timer earns between Rs. 15000 to Rs.20000 per month in RangSutra.

[For further reading: <https://www.businesstoday.in/exclusive/specials/most-powerful-women-2018/weaving-an-amul/story/281927.html>]

+ Diversified Farming: Sabarmatee who refers herself as a volunteer at Sambhav started an experiment with her father and few likeminded people on one acre of wasteland which is now rejuvenated in a sprawling 90 acre of forest with three rainwater harvesting ponds, over 1,000 species of plants and 493 varieties of rice. There were two aims: practice organic farming to rejuvenate the lands and work on gender issues of agriculture. There are numerous benefits of growing different species of same plant and larger environmental benefits. In agriculture it was evident that women put in more manual labour than men in agriculture. But are considered unskilled and paid less. Using traditional means, women spend 1,000-1,500 hours to grow one hectare of rice. From her research in Odisha villages, she found that System of Rice Intensification (SRI) technology allows women to be in upright position, and reduced the hours required, reducing drudgery and pain giving them more time to rest. The best achievement they have disapproved the popular belief that indigenous varieties and organic farming to reduce production. [For further reading: <https://www.businesstoday.in/exclusive/specials/most-powerful-women-2018/diversified-farming/story/282002.html>]