

Weekly Livelihoods Update

29 May 2018

- ✚ **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).
- ✚ **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).
- ✚ **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.
 - 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).

- ✚ **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 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. (Visit <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/21/commentary/reviewing-labour-code-industrial-relations-bill-2015.html> for further reading)
- ✚ **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 further reading).