

Weekly Livelihoods Update

25 July 2018

- ✚ **The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016:** The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, which has met with fierce resistance in the north-eastern states, especially Assam, is likely to be shelved by the union government and not introduced in this session of Parliament (Bhattacharya 2018). The bill declares Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and Christians fleeing religious persecution from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan as not being “illegal migrants” for the purposes of the Citizenship Act, 1955, and also reduces the time required for such persons from these countries to obtain citizenship by naturalisation from 11 years to six years. The agitation, though, had nothing to do with the exclusion of Muslims from the provisions of this bill. Rather, it had to do with the grant of any exemption or benefit in favour of anyone from Bangladesh who might benefit from its provisions (Bhattacharya 2018). [For further reading visit: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/29/law-and-society/national-register-citizens-and-supreme.html>]
- ✚ **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):** With an apparent aim to formulate the New Industrial Policy (NIP) based on consultative approach, the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) has recently floated a discussion paper, “Industrial Policy 2017,” and has sought suggestions on key thematic areas of industrial development. Apart from some significant objectives such as adequate job creation, attracting \$100 billion foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows annually in the next two decades, promotion of foreign technology transfer has been outlined as one of the foremost priorities of the proposed policy. The NIP shall subsume the National Manufacturing Policy and is expected to specifically review the FDI policy regime to facilitate greater technology transfer. [For further reading visit: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/29/commentary/pursuing-fdi-technology.html>]
- ✚ **Sugar Industry:** India’s sugar industry is not just a source of income and sweetener for millions, it is a key ingredient in the country’s politics. An Rs.80,000-crore labour-intensive industry that is spread across the country, sugar cultivation and its value chain are a main source of employment in large tracts of rural India. In several regions, voting patterns depend on the treatment given to

the sugar sector. [For further reading visit: <https://www.frontline.in/the-nation/agriculture/article24321068.ece>]

✚ **Grain Boom:** India is set for a record 2017-18 (October/September year) rice production of 110 million tonnes and a record corn production of 27 million tonnes, according to a recent report by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The report forecast a dip in wheat production in the 2018-19 (April/March) marketing year at 95 million tonnes, following a record harvest of 98.5 million tonnes in the previous year, on account of a fall in the area under cultivation. According to the report, despite sufficient domestic supplies, 2018-19 wheat imports are likely to touch 1.5 million tonnes to “augment quality wheat requirement”. [For further reading visit: <https://www.frontline.in/other/data-card/article24328524.ece>]

✚ **Dalit Women’s Collective:** IN rally after rally, Narendra Modi claims to champion the Dalit cause. But on the ground, his government works against the community. On June 21, the All India Dalit Mahila Adhikar Manch (AIDMAM), a Dalit women’s collective attached to the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR), presented a report at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHCR) in Geneva against caste-based violence. For the first time, a Dalit women’s group had a table at a side event at the UNHRC to highlight before the international community the impunity caste violence enjoys in India. By participating in the U.N., Dalit women made a strong call to international human rights organisations to break the silence on caste-related issues and sought support and solidarity from allies towards building a global campaign to end caste-based violence and discrimination. They hoped the event would provide Dalit women with new footholds to actively engage in and build pressure within the U.N. system. [For further reading visit: <https://www.frontline.in/the-nation/human-rights/article24319248.ece>]

✚ **GST rate cut:** Consumer electronics, kitchen appliances, leather items, footwear get cheaper. In its 28th meeting, the GST Council gave its approval to slash tax rates on over 100 items that were in the highest 28 per cent tax bracket under the Goods and Services Tax. GST rates on articles including consumer durables like smaller television sets, refrigerators, washing machines, paints and varnishes, lithium ion batteries, and more were brought down from 28 per cent to 18 per cent. The tax council also rationalised rates on several other items too. [For further reading visit: <https://www.businesstoday.in/current/policy/gst-rate-cut-consumer-electronics-kitchen-appliances-leather-items-footwear-get-cheaper/story/280512.html>]