

# livelihoods

*today and tomorrow*

**July 2018**

## **Monthly Livelihoods Update**

*“A month that was !”*

**Economy and Trends**

**Livelihoods and Employment Enterprise**

**Policies/Schemes and Initiatives**

**Partnerships**

**Social Issues and Others**

**Updates from Weeklies**

# Summary of Daily Livelihoods Update

## Economy/Trends

- Fitch Ratings raised India's economic growth forecast to 7.4 per cent for 2018-19 but cited higher finance costs and rising oil prices as risks.
- According to Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, India has potential to become a \$10 trillion economy by 2030.
- According to McKinsey report, advancing gender parity could contribute \$770 billion to India's GDP by 2025.
- Rate of Exchange of Foreign Currency in Indian Rupee relating to import and export of goods notified and will be in effect from 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2018.
- India second-largest recipient of World Bank's loans. It no longer borrows from IDA arm but makes use of funds from WB's IBRD unit to fund schemes for rural roads, cheap LED lights etc.
- India at bottom of 2018 global environment performance index. According to SoE 2018 in Figures, it has slipped to the 177th position (was ranked at 141 out of 180 countries in 2016).The major reasons which attribute India for such EPI ranking are it is unable to improve its air quality, protect its biodiversity, and cut its greenhouse gas emissions.
- According to RBI's Financial Stability report, Banks' Gross Bad Loans May Rise to Over 12% In FY19.
- Rs 94,016 Crore of total gross GST revenue collected in May2018.The total revenue earned by Central Government and the State Governments after settlement in the month of May, 2018 is Rs.28,797crore for CGST and Rs.34,020 crore for the SGST.
- Total GST refund disposed till 16th June 2018 stands at Rs 41,548 crore. Government clears over 38 thousand crore rupees refund claims of exporters.
- According to HSBC report, GST fails its biggest promise of economy formalisation.
- India hikes customs duty on 30 items imported from US, effective from August 4.
- The All-India CPI-IW for April, 2018 increased by 1 point and pegged at 288.
- Retail inflation for industrial workers falls to 3.97% in April.
- Industrial Production expands by 4.9% in April; improved performance by manufacturing, mining and electricity sectors.
- Milk production in the country increases by 23.69% in 2014-18 as compared to 2010-14.
- After hike in petrol and diesel prices consecutively, LPG price increased by Rs. 2.34 on subsidised cylinder and Rs. 48 on non- subsidised cylinder. According to the new prices; subsidised cylinder (14.2 kg ) is Rs.493.55 Rs. 698.50/- for non - subsidised cylinder (14.2 kg).
- India is the second highest sender of foreign students in the US, next only to China. Around one lakh eighty six thousands students from India are currently studying in various institutions and Universities in the US.
- Accounting for 10 percent of the global pharmaceutical industry in terms of volume, India has become the "pharmacy of the world" (especially in generic drugs) with an estimated \$30 billion in revenue in fiscal year 2017.

- According to a CII report, the Indian gaming Industry is projected to grow at CAGR of 6.61%. The number of mobile gamers in India is expected to grow to 628 million on multiple portable devices by 2020.
- According to The "India Cybersecurity Market By Security Type 2013-2023" report, the cybersecurity market is forecast to grow at a CAGR of over 19% during 2018-2023.
- According to Indian Cybersecurity Market by Security type, by solution, by end user sector, competition forecast and opportunities report, India Cybersecurity Market to Grow at a CAGR of 19% During 2018-2023.
- According to rating agency ICRA, Indian IT companies are expected to clinch a "higher share of digital services" space globally in the coming three years.
- According to "Summer 2018 State of the Internet/ Security: Web Attack report" by Akamai Technologies, India ranked fourth in the list of top 10 target countries and eighth globally (Registering over 2.8 crore attacks) for Web Application Attacks.
- According to RTI replies received by a Mumbai Activists, ADCB netted the highest deposits among banks of old Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes that were abruptly demonetised. However, NABARD said it to be a false claim.
- According to Ministry of steel, Odisha has a potential to produce 100 million tonnes of steel out of 300 million tonnes envisaged in NSP by the year 2030-31.
- According to the latest report of US Geological Survey, India is second largest country having gas hydrate reserves after America.
- The latest SRS report is indicating that there is significant decline in MMR. As per report, MMR (number of maternal deaths per, 1,00,000 live births) has declined from 167 (as per last SSR report) to 130 in the country. It is 22% reduction in MMR. Kerala is in first place with 40 of MMR in reducing MMR in the country.
- According to United Nations Children's Fund and United States Agency for International Development (USAID), 44% of the total children in the country between the age group of seven to 17 years never went to the school. Out of school children category (3.7 million) girl children constitute 73%. The causes are;
  - ◇ Poverty and Spreading violence
  - ◇ Discrimination against girl children and Child marriages
- According to the Water Aid latest report, India is extracting one - fourth of the groundwater in the world. Still, almost 15% all rural residents and seven percent all urban residents are no access to clean water. Severe groundwater depletion is happening in the regions of north and central India, these regions are homeland for most of the poorest communities

### **Livelihoods/Enterprises/Employment**

- After June 10, the Gaon Bandh will enter its second phase, where traders and commission agents will have to go into villages to procure farm produce for cities and towns.
- Purchases made from empanelled Tribal suppliers/artisans by TRIFED shows an increase of 166% in 2017-18 over 2016-17. The increase in procurement has resulted in employment generation opportunities for 712 suppliers which helped create livelihood opportunities to around 70,000 tribal

families during 2017-18.



- According to CEO of Ayushman Bharat:
  - ◇ The scheme would create over 100,000 long-term jobs (skilled and semi-skilled) in next three to four years.
  - ◇ 80 lakh short term (unskilled and semi-skilled) jobs during the roll out of the mission.
- SIDBI and TransUnion CIBIL released 2nd Edition of MSME Pulse Report. According to the report, loans to MSMEs could create Rs 16,000 crore NPAs by March 2019. According to MSME pulse report, the MSME segment in India is growing at a positive rate of 15% year-on-year.
- 5th International MSME Start-up Expo to be held in New Delhi from June 22-24.
- According to AICTE chief, jobs in big recruitment sectors such as IT, BPO and Pharmacy industry are stagnating and there would be no mass hiring industries in India in the near future.
- VP will inaugurate and participate in a two-day National Consultation on 'Making Agriculture Sustainable and Profitable' at Pune.
- IIT-BHU and AISPL signed an MOU to develop cloud ready job skills by providing access to AWS Educate program and to establish a Cloud Research Lab on AI and ML.
- As a result of indefinite nationwide truckers' strike:
  - ◇ Over 50 lakh vehicles remained off the road involving a loss of more than Rs 1,000 crore and the NE region came to "standstill". Maharashtra reported increase in prices of onions and other vegetables.
- MSRTC sacks 1,010 contractual employees for taking part in strike.'
- AP enhanced Anganwadi workers salary from Rs.7500 to Rs.10,000.
- Tech Mahindra sets up its R&D arm in US & Germany.
- According to Union Minister Food Processing Industries, NIFTEM has potential to become Harvard of food processing sector.
- World MSME day being celebrated across the globe today. In India:
  - ◇ The MSME sector contributes 45 per cent of the GDP. There are 6.5 crore MSME units which employ over 11 crore people (60 per cent employment).
  - ◇ The national conclave "Udyog Sangam, 2018" is being organized.
  - ◇ The conclave will have separate session for 800 entrepreneurs who are planning to set up their own business.
  - ◇ The government have launched a job portal for the MSME's sector to boost employment opportunities.
  - ◇ GST has also helped in reducing the administrative challenges of SMEs with respect to filing multiple taxes in multiple states.
- PM in a meeting with 41 industry leaders urged them to come forward and make higher investments across core sectors, especially in agriculture.
- Handicrafts sector has been exempted from minimum salary condition (Rs. 16.25 lakhs per annum) for

grant of employment visa to foreign designers for a period till 2020.

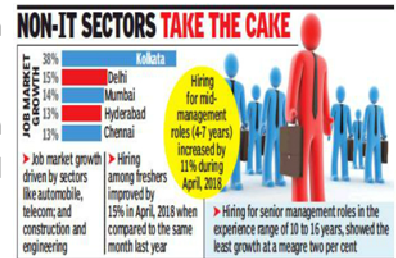
- NMCG approves Community Toilets Projects and Procurement of Dustbins for Kumbh Mela 2019, STP Project for Moradabad, Cultivation of Indigenous Medicinal Plants in UP, Projects for Cleaning of Ghats and Training Ganga Mitra.
- Claro Energy in collaboration with SPI is pioneering in India for initiatives such as 'irrigation as a service' business model, Agro-centric mini-grids and solar trolleys to increase the productivity of small farmers.
- AP Govt to issue notification for 20,000 jobs.
- Kolkata in an aim to extend banking services in rural areas has decided to develop around 2600 deposit mobilising PACS.
- According to Mr.Suresh Prabhu, services trade is growing faster than merchandise and such dynamic changes need to be captured in the GTS.
- Belgium-based Incofin Investment Management, which holds equity in India's top MF companies, is now planning an \$80-million fund exclusively for investing in India. This firm is also planning to spread its investments into food and agricultural sector.
- KVIC, for the third successive time, received an order of Rs 8 crore from Air India for the supply of amenity kits for its international passengers.
- Truckers on strike to protest diesel price hike, dual taxation and hike in third party insurance premium. The strike had impact on West Bengal and Karnataka. .AIMTC to call for a nation-wide strike from July 20 on the similar issues.
- PMO awaits panel report on overlap in jobs numbers.
- Madrid-based developer of large-scale solar power plants, FRV, is in talks to sell its 100-MW power project in India in a deal worth Rs 500-600 crore.
- The Plastic Ban in Maharashtra from 23<sup>rd</sup> June is already affecting the plastic business owners with an expected loss of Rs.15000 crore, puts livelihoods at risk.
- KVIC distributes 2330 Bee-Boxes among 233 beneficiaries in Kashmir beating its own record of distributing 1000 bee- boxes earlier:
  - ◇ KVIC has created a world record of distributing maximum number of bee-boxes in one day on Honey Bee Day:
  - ◇ Indian Army helped in providing training and also provided 10 percent finance for setting up of the apiaries, thereby providing the beneficiaries a platform for earning livelihood.
- NITI Aayog's AIM has selected 3,000 additional schools for the establishment of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs), bringing the total number of ATL schools to 5,441.
- OPIC gives \$5 million loan to Grameen Impact via IndusInd Bank to support domestic SMEs. Grameen Impact will use the financing to give loans to high impact social enterprises in India in sectors including financial services, affordable healthcare and education, renewable energy and sustainable agriculture.
- SEBI sets up panel to recommend ways to make stock market listing attractive for start-ups. This move will open a new way for finance if entrepreneurs find it difficult to obtain capital from traditional sources of finance such as banks and financial institutions.

- According to Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, the biggest success of Make in India programme is in the auto sector. The sector has become a manufacturing base for global car makers.
- HP government identified 113 sites to be developed to make the state an eco-tourism destination, besides developing nature parks and herbal gardens. A new scheme 'Nayae Rahaien, Nayae Manzilain' is envisioned for the state to explore new tourist destinations in the state.
- Haryana Government has increased the age limit for government jobs from 40 years to 42 years.
- SAARC fund to launch social enterprise development programme (SEDP) to fund 80 entities annually across the 8 – member states including India.
- Empirical evidence shows MSMEs yet to recover from the twin economic measures (Demonetisation and GST).
- Muthoot Fincorp Limited announced its partnership with NSDC to train over 10,000 youth over the next three years and make them job ready.
- According Assocham-PwC joint study, The government should drive cross-border collaboration on AI research with countries like Japan, UK, Germany, Singapore, Israel and China to develop solutions that tackle social and economic challenges.
- Commerce Minister releases study report on Indian pharma exports to China.
- According to a scientific paper published in May 2018 in the Journal of Aquatic Conservation, Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems, shows that Small Hydropower Projects (SHPs) fragmented rivers, altered their physical characteristics and water chemistry and affected fish species.
- According to the Chairman of Manipal Global Education, T V Mohandas Pai who was sharing his thoughts on a recent report by the research wing of SBI:
  - ◇ India has 10 crore people in the 21-35 age category with bad skills
  - ◇ India no longer enjoys the advantage of demographic dividend. There is a need to improve quality of education, stopping controlling education, and opening up of the sector with transparent norms and enforcing quality standards in higher education.
- GITAM university to launch training centre to train the small farm holders and rural unemployed youth particularly on food processing units.
- Government to soon launch national portal to be developed by NSDC and WB to converge all skilling data to assess demand and supply for the skilled workforce.
- VP said that KVKs must act as a bridge between scientists and farmers in providing knowledge and latest farming techniques to farmers.
- According to Ministry of Labour, 48L labourers brought under organised sector (number would increase to 1 crore next year). More ESI dispensaries are being planned in the country.
- FFO of Bharat – 22 ETF has been a resounding success with strong participation of Foreign Institutional Investor.
- The Maharashtra Police has launched its own skill development scheme, Kaushalya Vikas Yojna (SDP):
  - ◇ Only the wards of constables, police naiks, head constables and ASI are eligible for this scheme
  - ◇ The enterprise could range from mobile sales/repair shop, electrical/hardware store to car/bike garage or photocopy shops.

- IIFL has embarked on a mega hiring plan, to recruit 4000 people this financial year and the total strength would reach 14,000 by March end next year.
- According to Rodger Voorhies of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, small farmers can be engines of economic growth and not just beneficiaries.
- As the BMC in Mumbai has started inviting bids to start work on the first phase of the Coastal Road Project, city fishermen fear it could kill their livelihood.
- The marine products exports development authority has planned to expand the aquatic quarantine facility here to increase shrimp production by 3.50 lakh metric tonnes per annum.
- Eight nations, including India, around the Bay of Bengal to get funds from GEF to tackle unsustainable fisheries and marine conservation on which some 450 million people depend.
- Around 1 lakh sheep and goat will be exported over a period of three months from the Nagpur airport starting from June 30,2018 to benefit the farmers of Vidarbha Region.
- The Balipara Foundation is working on an India-China joint venture to enable Assam weavers to market their products globally.
- Odisha signs MoU with RIMES FOR ZERO CASUALTY IN DISASTERS. The MoU was signed to protect the people and their livelihoods which are affected during disasters.
- Rajasthan government plans safari to educate people about cows.
- CM of Gujarat announced a JWG between Gujarat and Israel in the fields of agriculture, horticulture and allied sectors.
- Silk reeling, spinning unit launched in Ngaikhong Khullen village in Manipur with an aim to encourage the local farmers to take up mulberry farming and silkworm rearing.
- PM interaction with sugarcane farmers:
  - ◊ Kharif MSP at 150% of input cost to be announced next week. FRP to be announced too. States told to ensure payment of cane arrears by sugar mills
- Kharif crop sowing crosses 165.21 lakh hectare area as compared to 210.75 lakh hectare at this time last year.
- Government announced that 22,000 rural markets would be linked to e-NAM portal by 2020.
- iKure which created a hub-spoke model network of rural health centers is expanding its footprint pan-India. It has firmed up plans to set up 25 new hubs by the year-end.
- NITI Aayog partners with GNFC Ltd to implement FSD through Blockchain Technology.
- Change in Tariff Value of Crude Palm Oil, RBD Palm Oil, Crude Soyabean Oil, Brass Scrap (All Grades), Poppy Seeds, Areca Nuts, Gold and Silver Notified.
- UN MSME Day celebrated on 27th June 2018.
- NIMSME and WE AIM organized the first International MSME day on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at Hyderabad. The event was attended by 300 women entrepreneurs. The WomenEnergy App and “ WE AIM HER MARKET” was launched.
- In Tamil Nadu state, Around 50,000 MSMEs closed in just one year period:
  - ◊ Nearly five lakh people lost livelihoods because of this closure.



- ◇ According to a report submitted by MSME, 2,67,310 MSMEs were registered in 2016 - 17, this number declined to 2,17, 981 during 2017 - 2018.
- ◇ Industrial observers stated that, may be Chennai floods, Cyclone Vardah, demonetisation and GST are factors behind the closure of MSMEs.
- According to an IWG study, around 58 per cent office-goers in India work remotely at least once week, indicating that flexible workplace has reached a tipping point.
- The overall job market grew by 21 per cent in April 2018. According to a report by Naukri.com:
  - ◇ Hyderabad stood at the bottom of the list in job market growth which was only 13 per cent. Kolkata was at the top of the list.
  - ◇ The growth of the country's job market was largely driven by non-IT sectors such as automobile, telecom, construction and engineering.
  - ◇ Hirings recorded in the ITeS sector stood at 13 per cent.



- According to CSO report, 41 lakh (4 million) new jobs created from September 2017 till April 2018.
- Ministry of Health signs an MoU with IGNOU to make available 14.4 lakh trained manpower by 2025 in healthcare.
- According to a report by Team lease:
  - ◇ Estimated a net job loss of 11-18 lakh women for the FY 2018-19.
  - ◇ Women hiring to dip over maternity leave and may cause 1.2 crore job loss in FY19.
- EPFO is expected to soon give its nod to the proposal of doubling monthly pension for EPS subscribers to Rs 2,000.
- Apple has started commercial production of the iPhone 6s in India since last week at Bengaluru.
- Cooperatives have the potential to revive agriculture and make it sustainable: Vice President.
- According to a study by NIPFP on an analysis of the PMAY construction has concluded that the scheme over two years has generated 52.7 crore of direct employment for skilled and unskilled labourers.
- The labour ministry has set up a committee panel to look into the shortcomings of its QES.
- According to a study by a job site (Indeed), Bengaluru tops the list for job seekers in technology sector. Bengaluru, Delhi-NCR, Pune, Hyderabad and Mumbai are the top five destinations for technology careers in India.
- Karnataka government to start its own job portal to help private sector firm recruit youth trained under various government programmes.
- Two fishermen groups from Kolkata has written to the central government, raising several objections to the Draft CRZ Notification, 2018, issued by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- Ramdev's Patanjali Ayurved announced that, it is withdrawing Rs.6000/- crore mega food processing project at Yamuna Expressway in Uttar Pradesh stating that, lack of cooperation from the state government for providing 425 acres land for the mega project. It is estimated that, it produces Rs.25,000 crore products value per year and creates 10,000 direct jobs.
- US senior diplomat an event of Student Visa Day of the US Embassy in India, told that, there is changes



in H—1B visa policy for the Indian professionals in the IT sector in US.

- According to Swiss Bank study, India's financial capital city Mumbai is top in the world with the employees having longest annual working hours (3,315 hours). Hanoi (2,691.4 hours) and Mexico (2,622.1 hours) cities are placed second and third positions in longest annual working hours. New Delhi is in fourth place.
- Central government ambitious Mumbai - Ahmedabad bullet train project which cost Rs.98,000 crore is facing land acquisition problem in Palghar district, Maharashtra state. In the district, more than 70 tribal villages' people are reluctant to give their land to the bullet train project.

### **Policy/Schemes/Initiatives**

- The CCEA approved Rs. 2,225.46 crore funds to be utilized till 2020 to strengthen and develop higher agricultural education and generate quality human resources. The fund will be used for strengthening agri-education being imparted by various institutes under the ICAR, NAARM, CIWA and AICRP-HS.
- National Sports University Ordinance, 2018 which will be on the lines of the National Sports University Bill, 2017 has come into force as the President of India has given his assent to the Union Cabinet's decision to promulgate the said Ordinance.
- Government introduced new scheme 'SevaBhojYojna'.
- The Government has allowed 100 per cent FDI in the mining sector and exploration of metal and non-metal ores under the automatic route, which will propel growth of this sector.
- Six states; Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Goa and Jammu & Kashmir are set e-way bill system from 1 June 2018, for intra - state movement of goods. So far, total 27 states and union territories have made e-way bill mandatory for intra - state movement of goods.
- The government invites comments on draft of NVG on Social, Environmental and Economic Responsibilities of Business.
- Government to scrap subsidy for private electric cars.
- Union Home Minister calls for expediting online cybercrime reporting portal.
- BHIM-UPI transactions hit a record high of 1 crore transactions in a day on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018.
- PM said 42 lakh senior citizens voluntarily gave up their railway concession in the past 9 months, while 1.25 crore families surrendered their gas subsidy
- Railways now offers free Wi-Fi at over 700 stations, covers 8 million people a month.
- DoT may spare additional funds to set up more hotspots in GPs.
- MoRD has requested the government to employ SHGs the job of Banking Correspondents in the banks in villages with low transactions.
- CEMS has announced setting up of 24 Labs in Mumbai (6) and Vizag (18) campuses. This is First-of-Its--Kind Infrastructure in Asia Pacific Region.
- Government in Kerala announced a slew of initiatives including the abolition of plantation tax, a moratorium on agriculture income tax and legislation to take over closed estates to revive the crisis-driven plantation sector.
- An audit by the Jharkhand government of the DBT of food subsidy found that majority of HHs (97% of

8,370 respondents) preferred subsidised grains over cash transfers.

- Gujarat govt announced Wind-Solar Hybrid Power Policy-2018.
- Railways plans kiosks for sanitary pads, contraceptives as a part of Sanitary Policy.
- According to a report prepared by HLRN, Smart city mission is too project-based and lacks integrated vision.
- Ministry of WCD receives the 'Best Performing Social Sector Ministry' SKOCH Award for its Achievements and Initiatives.
- Workshop on EoPT of Waste Water entering River Yamuna & Ghaggar organised in New Delhi. Database on towns along River Yamuna to be prepared and reuse of treated waste water to be promoted.
- Power Ministry launches campaign to promote EE in the area of AC. The manufacturers of ACs advised to keep default setting at 24 degree Celsius.
- PM will interact with a delegation of about 150 sugarcane farmers at his residence today.
- PM laid the foundation stone for the National Centre for Aging at AIIMS, Delhi.
- NITI Aayog will release the First Delta Ranking of the Aspirational Districts Programme today.
- Jan Andolan Guidelines launched at POSHAN Abhiyaan TECH-THON. September to be celebrated as POSHAN month.
- Madhya Pradesh will be awarded for reducing maternal mortality under PM's safe Motherhood campaign.
- Ranchi DA adopted 'Liter of Light' of Philippines to train SHGs to lighten the villages in district.
- NABARD sanctioned Rs 274.4 crore under RIDF for development of 108 roads in Andhra Pradesh.
- Indore Municipal Cooperation to issue bonds worth 170 crore rupees under AMRUT.
- Government is appointing a research agency to assess the impact and reach of its ongoing 'Saaf Niyat, Sahi Vikas'. GPS reports for location of interviews done along with the reports to be submitted to the government by July.
- CSIR lab to give technology for India's first indigenous Lithium Ion Battery project.
  1. Currently, Indian manufacturers source Lithium Ion Battery from China, Japan and South Korea among some other countries.
  2. It will give tremendous boost to two flagship programmes of the country i.e. increasing the share of Clean Energy in the energy basket and the second NEM Mission.
- Met dept to use flash flood guidance system for first time in the country to forecast floods.
- Northern Railways to monitor cleanliness of its trains using WhatsApp groups supervised by senior officials.
- PM calls for meaningful cooperation of SCO member countries towards security, economic development & connectivity in the region. In this regard, PM coined a new acronym, Secure.
- J&K govt making all-out efforts to provide electricity to uncovered households.
- Microgrids is helping remote villages in Maharashtra to gain electrification.

- US senior diplomat at an event of Student Visa Day of the US Embassy in India, told that, there is changes in H—1B visa policy for the Indian professionals in the IT sector in US.
- Election Commission of India (ECI) launches online Right to Information (RTI) portal <http://rti.eci.nic.in>. It provides replays to the applicants information seeking from ECI under RTI Act.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) relaxes norms in lending loans for houses. This move gives boost for housing construction under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) particularly to economically weaker sections. The new norms will effect from 30 June 2018. RBI increased loan limit as given below:
  - ◇ From Rs. 28 lakh to Rs. 35 lakh in metropolitan areas
  - ◇ From Rs. 20 lakh to Rs. 25 lakh in other areas
- Cabinet approved three times hike in salaries of the postmen those who are working in rural areas in the country. Around 2.6 lakh postmen from 1.3 rural post offices will be benefited by the salaries increase.
- On 06 June 2018, the Cabinet announced, the World Bank approval of Rs. 6000/- for Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABHY). ABHY scheme aims to improve ground water management in priority areas in the country through community participation. The priority areas were identified 7 states such as Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.
- The Cabinet approved the revised guidelines for sick Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) for time-bound closer of sick /loss making Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) and disposal of movable and immovable assets of CPSEs. According to the revised guidelines, CPSEs' surplus land can be obtained by the governments to provide affordable houses to the people.
- The shipping ministry in association with DDU GKY and MoRD conducted a one day workshop on "skill development in the port and maritime sector". For implementation, training of 500 students per-year-per-district is being considered for the next 3 years.
- MoRD to confer national awards on best performing SHG under DAY-NRLM on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018 in Delhi. NRLM Best Practices Compendium and Self Help Group products catalogues for stimulating grass root development will also be launched.
- Central government is going to create centralized Authority of Advance Rulings (AAR) for Goods and Service Tax (GST) to address different rulings regarding applicability and rate of tax. The AAR is a quasi-judicial body which provide guidance on potential tax liabilities.
- Central government likely to disburse Rs.8000 crore to sugar cane farmers to settle payment arrears. In this year, sugar production reached to record quantity with 315 lakh tonnes. The government is planning to set sugar minimum price Rs. 29/- per one kg.
- The Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Water Resources accepted two major irrigation projects and four flood management projects in five states like Telangana, Maharashtra, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh and West Bengal and one Union Territory (UT) Puducherry. Accepted projects cumulative cost estimation is Rs. 84, 748 crore.
- Telangana government is planning to provide health and hygiene kits to girl students, those who belong to weaker sections. This initiative covers six lakh girl students studying from VII to XII. For this initiative, Telangana government is spending around Rs. 16,00/- per year on each girl.
- Ministry of Commerce is working on the policy for logistics hubs. The policy will be a comprehensive

plan to boost business and exports.

- ESI scheme's 'revenue to social spending ratio' has been consistently high, resulting in huge surpluses from premiums. Also, lower uptake by beneficiaries is another a key issue.
- Rural sanitation coverage under SBM crosses the 85% mark.
- Andhra Pradesh CM declares the state ODF.
- Union Home Ministry has asked states to conduct survey of Rohingya Muslims in country.
- The government has approved a 33 per cent increase in carpet area of houses eligible for interest subsidy under PMAY(U) to attract more beneficiaries.
- Ten new Swachh Iconic Places launched under SBM.
- Social reformer and founder of Sulabh International' Bindeshwar Pathak was honoured with Japan's prestigious 'Nikkei Asia Prize for Culture and Community' for his significant work in tackling poor hygienic and discrimination.
- Ph.D will be mandatory for anyone aspiring to teach a college or university in India. The new regulation was announced by Union Human Resource Minister. It will be from 2021 year onwards. And, Master's Degree and NET qualification will not be enough for teaching job.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi presided over a meeting of the council of ministers in which he sought scaling up of performance indicators of various schemes with the aim of benefiting a large number of people before he seeks a fresh mandate early next year.
- Shri Nitin Gadkari released a book 'Water productivity mapping of major Indian crops' (based on study of 10 important crops) published by NABARD on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2018.
- Water storage level of 91 major reservoirs of the country goes up by one percent.
- A National Tribal Museum along with a National Level Tribal Research Institute is proposed to be set up at Delhi by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- MoTA is focussing on 40 tribal dominated Aspirational Districts of 115 Aspirational Districts identified by NITI Aayog.
- According to MD TRIFED, currently around 70,000 tribal artisans are enrolled with Tribes India for supply of products, and the numbers is expected to increase to 1.5 lakh soon.
- According to Infosys Annual Sustainability Report, over 43 per cent of electricity needs of the organization met through renewable energy.
- 1500 kW capacity solar plant developed by DSGMC at the Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib was inaugurated.
- Power Ministry launches campaign to promote EE in the area of AC. The manufacturers of ACs advised to keep default setting at 24 degree Celsius
- Home Minister attends Ground Breaking Ceremony for Oil Refinery in Mongolia. Refinery to strengthen bilateral ties.
- OPEC, agrees on a modest increase in oil production from next month.
- IMA agreed to extend their support for better implementation of AB-NHPM.
- Ministry of WCD receives the 'Best Performing Social Sector Ministry' SKOCH Award for its

## Achievements and Initiatives.

- Workshop on EoPT of Waste Water entering River Yamuna & Ghaggar organised in New Delhi. Database on towns along River Yamuna to be prepared and reuse of treated waste water to be promoted.
- McD's adopts eco-friendly cutlery in West and South India, a move that comes following Maharashtra's plastic ban.
- PM inaugurates Bahadurgarh-Mundka Metro Line via video conference.
- 16 more Steel Products (Covering Overall 85-90% Steel and Steel Products) have been brought under Quality Control Orders issued by Ministry of Steel.
- President to present 'National Awards for Outstanding Services in the Field of Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drug) Abuse'.
- Union Minister for Science and Technology, launches four major projects at SCTIMST.
- GSTN designing tools for taxmen to analyse data to check evasion.
- Infrastructure Expo 2018 at the NCPA, Mumbai was inaugurated. Investors from 80 countries to participate.
- NCST to organise "National Seminar on Conservation of PVTs of Andaman & Nicobar Islands: The Way Forward" on 27-28 June, 2018.
- Government proposes to set up 3000 VDKs involving 30,000 SHGs across the country.
- 51 Lakh houses sanctioned under PMAY(U) in three years of its implementation.
- According to DIPP, Food retail firms having foreign investments will have to maintain separate books of accounts and inventories in warehouses.
- The Jharkhand Project a \$38 billion warning sign for Indian banks.
- NF Railway has introduced 'Train Captain' in premium trains from yesterday.
- On Maharashtra's 108<sup>th</sup> Democracy Hearing Day, the government claimed that till May 2018 1,470 complaints addressed in the 107 democracy days.
- Saudi ARAMCO and ADNOC sign MoU for participating in the Ratnagiri Refinery project in Maharashtra.
- International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking is observed today.
- According to a report by NITI Aayog, Delhi may face the apocalyptic scenario of Zero Day by 2020.
- India commits \$15m to handle global environment crises.
- IMD Forecast for Rapid Rise in Water Levels of Rivers in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Assam, Meghalaya And North Bengal Following Heavy Rainfall.
- Sanitation Action Plans prepared for 10 New SIPs. The sites to go 100% Plastic Free. 10 more iconic tourist places of India have been adopted by Corporates and PSUs as a part of CSR under SIP programme.
- McD's, Burger King, Star Bucks and several other companies fined for plastic ban violation in Mumbai.
- SDRF and DoNER released Rs 340.4 crore flood relief fund for Assam.

- Passport Seva App launched on the occasion of Passport Seva Divas.
- According to CIO of MetLife, AI and blockchain will change the way insurance is done in India.
- 15th Finance Commission may propose performance-based incentives for states.
- Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare inaugurated the NIMHANS Digital Academy.
- As on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018, under the NSHC Scheme, more than 13 crore cards have been distributed.
- Government approves draft Act for setting up of HEC of India by repealing UGC Act.
- Sagarmala' received the 'Gold Award' and 'Order of Merit' in infrastructure sector in Skoch Summit.
- Union government launched biodegradable eco-friendly sanitary napkins on the occasion of World Environment Day (6 June). This eco-friendly sanitary napkin packet of four pieces cost Rs. 10/-. Government plans to implement it in phases manner:
  - ◇ On pilot basis, government ensured to available in 103 generic medicine stores across the country.
  - ◇ After the pilot program, in first phase, pads will be made available in 3,603 generic medicine store across the country.
  - ◇ In second phase, pads will be made available in all primary health centres and government hospitals.
- Union government new initiative Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabiyon (KUSUM) scheme is materializing in next month (July). The Scheme salient features are;
  - ◇ Total project cost is Rs. 1.4 lakh crore
  - ◇ Providing 2.5 million solar pumps to farmers in first phase.
- Punjab state government is in preparation of farmers' draft policy to charge to rich farmers for electricity consumption for farming. According to the policy, farmers having four hectares of land and more have to pay a flat rate of Rs.100/- per Brake Horse Power (BHP) per month for electricity consumption.
- Andhra Pradesh government is planning to scale up Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) in the state for next six to eight years. On Sunday, AP government made agreement with Sustainable India Finance Facility (SIFF), a collaborative initiative of United Nations (UN) Environment, World Agroforestry Centre. ZBNF initiative started in 2015 and reached to 1,38,000 farmers covering with 1,50,000 acres in 13 districts in the state. AP government announced 2018 as ' Natural Farming Year'.
- India is hosting World Environment Day (WED) 2018 celebrations as global host nation for the 43rd edition of the event. The theme of the WED 2018 is 'Beat Plastic Pollution'. Every year 5 June, WED celebration has been organizing since 1974. The main aim of WED celebrations is to ensure clean and green planet for future generations.

### **Partnerships**

- India signed a \$ 500 million (Rs.3,371/- crore) loan agreement with WB to provide additional funds for rural road projects under PMGSY. So far, WB invested \$ 2 billion (Rs. 13,440 crore) as loans in building roads under the scheme.
- India and Tajikistan agreed to enhance cooperation for sustainable water development.



- India, UAE and Saudi Arabia likely to enter into trilateral oil cooperation.
- India & Cuba sign MoUs to enhance co-operation in field of Biotechnology, traditional medicine & homoeopathy.
- India and the UAE are hoping to put in place a Food Security Partnership:
  - ◊ That envisages storage farms in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh to store excess agriculture produce for supply to markets in the Arab state.
  - ◊ The plan comes in the backdrop of the UAE looking to address India's energy security needs.
  - ◊ Morgan Stanley raises \$300 million for India focused infrastructure fund. It is looking at raising around \$600-700 million in total for the fund.
  - ◊ Cabinet has approved the capital infusion of Rs.2000 crore for strengthening of ECGC.
  - ◊ Cabinet has approved contribution of Grant-in-Aid (Corpus) of Rs.1,040 crore to NEIA.
  - ◊ According to US Energy Secretary India offers an amazing opportunity for US energy sector as it is a huge market for the American energy products including CCT.
- India has signed the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) in Nursing with Singapore. This is the first MRA being signed by India with any of our FTA partners. It has paved way for our healthcare service providers to institutionally access markets abroad. It will further open up doors for India to enter into similar MRAs with other countries.
- Cabinet apprised of the MoU between India and Denmark for cooperation in the fields of Animal Husbandry and Dairying; Science, Technology and Innovation.
- Union Agriculture Minister and Deputy CM of Uzbekistan meet to strengthen bilateral cooperation in agriculture & allied sectors.
- Cabinet approved MoU between India and Germany on Cooperation in the field of Civil Aviation.
- Cabinet approves MoU between India and Bahrain on cooperation in the field of Healthcare.
- 'Cabinet approved MoU between India and Singapore on cooperation in the field of Planning.
- Cabinet approved MoU between India and Indonesia on Technical Cooperation in the field of Railways sector.
- Cabinet approved :
  - ◊ Establishment of additional 6.5MMT Strategic Petroleum Reserves at Chandikhol in Odisha and at Padur, Karnataka.
  - ◊ Mechanism for procurement of ethanol by Public Sector OMCs to carry out the EBP Programme.
- Odisha state government signed MoU with GIZ GmbH for technical cooperation in planning and implementation of sustainable and integrated urban transport systems and solutions.
- CWC has entered into a collaboration Agreement with Google for flood forecasting.
- Maharashtra government signed 62 MoUs, 10 letters of intent and launched four schemes:
  - ◊ To take the '1000 village transformation' plan ahead and give an impetus to the social sector.

## Laying Ground for Farm-to-port Project

As part of the partnership with the UAE, Indian states will also grow agricultural produce dedicated for the UAE market



◇ The project is being undertaken by establishing MCX centres.

- RBI has made changes in the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS) of 2015 to enable people to open a hassle-free gold deposit account.
- Union Home Minister launches Online Analytical Tool to monitor foreign contributions under FCRA.
- Ministry of Commerce is creating an Integrated Logistics Division to facilitate exporters.
- India & Cuba sign MoUs to enhance co-operation in field of Biotechnology, traditional medicine & homoeopathy.

### Miscellaneous/Social Issues

- Thunderstorms and dust storms are killing hundreds of people in the country. Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has given warnings that, Uttar Pradesh (UP) may face another round of thunderstorms in the coming two days. IMD predicted thunderstorms apart from UP, the country's eastern, central and southern regions.
- On Monday, Mumbai city has experienced heavy pre - monsoon rains along with strong winds, thunder and lightning. 26 mm rainfall was recorded in several places such as Dadar, Dharavi, Kurla, and King Circle etc., Waterlogging in places caused disruption of suburban trains' services and flight delays.
- According to experts in the context of Shimla water crisis, several hill stations and metro cities in the country could face a severe water crisis within a decade. Already, water shortage is a serious issue in states like Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka. More than 70% of the ground water is in 'overdraft'. According to the World Resource Institute (WRI) report, India is one of the most water-challenged countries in the world with at least 54% of the country recognized as extremely water-stressed.
- According to the United Nations (UN) Joint Group of Experts, our plastic waste over consumption, increasing use - and - throw culture and littering creates a hazardous environment. Increasing plastic debris is killing animals and humans, particularly in the sea;
  - ◇ 1,00,000 marine mammals and fishes are dying per year.
  - ◇ Every year millions of birds are dying.
  - ◇ Causing to 80% of world's marine pollution.
  - ◇ Eight million metric tonnes of plastic waste are gathered in the sea per year. It means, every minute one full garbage truck.
- Report developed by NITI Aayog on the Composite Water Management Index was released. The CWMI is an important tool to assess and improve the performance of States/ UTs in efficient management of water resources. According to the report, currently, 600 million Indians face high to extreme water stress and about two lakh people die every year due to inadequate access to safe water.
- Union government sent warning signals about heavy, very heavy rainfall situation which may lead to "flash floods" during 7 - 12 June 2018 in 5 states such as Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Goa and Gujarat.
- Advance of Monsoon and associated heavy rainfall spell along the west coast and formation of low

pressure system over north Bay of Bengal.

- According to a report by NITI Aayog, Delhi may face the apocalyptic scenario of Zero Day by 2020.
- According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), There is likely to be little respite from the scorching heat in parts of the country anytime soon with the weather office forecasting a week-long stagnation in the advance of the southwest monsoon because of the weakening of the monsoon circulation pattern. “As a consequence, rainfall activity is very likely to reduce over the interior parts of the south peninsula, central and eastern parts of India. However, the enhanced rainfall activity over the northeastern states is likely to continue during the next three days.
- Water storage level of 91 major reservoirs of the country goes up by one percent.
- According to IMD, The monsoon has covered the entire country, 17 days ahead of its normal onset date.
- Floods declared in Central and South Kashmir as river Jhelum crosses danger mark.
- The government has sanctioned nearly 400 crore rupees as additional assistance to states of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland that were affected by natural calamities during 2017-18.
- According to Infosys Annual Sustainability Report, over 43 per cent of electricity needs of the organization met through renewable energy.
- India commits \$15m to handle global environment crises.
- McD’s, Burger King, Star Bucks and several other companies fined for plastic ban violation in Mumbai.
- SDRF and DoNER released Rs 340.4 crore flood relief fund for Assam.
- IMD Forecast for Rapid Rise in Water Levels of Rivers in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Assam, Meghalaya And North Bengal Following Heavy Rainfall.
- 1500 kWp capacity solar plant developed by DSGMC at the Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib was inaugurated.
- On the occasion of World Day Against Child Labour on 12<sup>th</sup> June, WCD ministry expands ChildLine to 435 locations and key railway stations.
- Mumbai collects Rs 3.5 lakh in fines over plastic ban, faces protests.
- AIF’s Women’s Circle of Hope contributes 25K to support women with disability in India (to support 100 women initially in Bangalore).
- The WHO has commended India's progress in reducing the MMR by 77 per cent:
  - ◇ From 556 per one lac live births in 1990 to 130 per one lac live births in 2016.
  - ◇ This progress puts the country on track towards achieving the SDG target of an MMR below 70 by 2030. India's present MMR is below the MDG target.
- Sanitation Action Plans prepared for 10 New SIPs. The sites to go 100% Plastic Free. 10 more iconic tourist places of India have been adopted by Corporates and PSUs as a part of CSR under SIP programme.
- As per a recent poll titled ‘The world’s most dangerous countries for women 2018’ by Thomson

Reuters Foundation:

- ◇ Proclaimed India as the most dangerous country for women. The poll has been conducted with 548 respondents, which have been defined by Reuters as 'experts focused on women's issues'.
  - ◇ The ranking is based on a perception poll based on responses to six questions.
  - ◇ WCD ministry has cited that the methodology used was flawed and that the ranking was based on a perception poll and not data.
- CSE recommends stringent service standards for mini-grid electricity generators in rural Uttar Pradesh.
  - Sikkim tribals represented by Sikkim Limboo-Tamang Apex approach DoNER Minister for reservation in State Assembly.
  - According to CIO of MetLife, AI and blockchain will change the way insurance is done in India.

## Updates from Weeklies

### Livelihoods/Employment/Enterprises

- **How Will India Respond to Internal Climate Migration?** According to WB report, 'Groundswell: Preparing for Internal Climate Migration' based on climate change-induced migration:
  - ◇ Climate change could potentially cause 143 additional people to migrate internally in SSA (86 million), SA (40 million) and LA (17 million) regions by 2050. People will move from 'vulnerable' to 'viable' areas.
  - ◇ These numbers represent a 'pessimistic scenario' and hold in case no action is taken.
  - ◇ The report seems to adopt, more implicitly than explicitly, a people-centred livelihood perspective. By highlighting how droughts, crop failures, rising sea levels affect people lives and livelihoods, vulnerability to climate change is viewed as situated within the broader set of livelihood circumstances of people.
  - ◇ The significance of rural-urban migration will rise in future as agriculture-dependent livelihoods come under increasing climatic stress.
  - ◇ The tragic irony is climate change will displace those from their habitats who are least responsible for this planetary crisis. It is the rural poor with already limited means whose lives and livelihoods will be hardest hit.
  - ◇ India needs to worry more about the climate migration for two important reasons: Firstly, the size of the country and levels of poverty. Secondly, the significance of internal migration as a livelihoods strategy is already on the rise. (Visit <https://thewire.in/environment/how-will-india-respond-to-internal-climate-migration> for further reading).
- **After 25 Years of Broken Promises, India is Counting its Manual Scavengers again:** After the Prohibition of Employment of Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act 2013 came into being, the government recognised 12,742 manual scavengers in 13 states. 82% were in Uttar Pradesh. Activists, politicians and even the Supreme Court have said that this number is a gross under representation, so have the government's own statistics. According to Census of India 2011, there are 740,078 households across the country where human excreta is removed by a person from a dry latrine. On top of this, there are also septic tanks, sewers, railway platforms from where human excreta is cleaned by people. In addition, the Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 said that there are 182,505 families in rural India engaged in manual scavenging. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has recognised that the problem exists, and has begun a new survey process, from January 2018, to count India's manual scavengers. The first phase (currently ongoing) involves counting those who clean night soil (buckets and cesspools in which excreta is collected overnight) and pit latrines in 164 districts across five states. The second phase will look at people who clean septic tanks, sewers and railway tracks. The survey is expected to include those still engaged in the profession, as well as those who left it after 2013. ( Visit <https://thewire.in/caste/after-25-years-of-broken-promises-india-is-counting-its-manual-scavengers-again> for further reading)
- **Maharashtra's War on Plastic:** On 15 March 2018, the Maharashtra state cabinet passed a decision to ban single-use plastics. This includes items such as thermocol plates, small polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles, flexes and plastic cutlery. This was neither the first state-wide plastic ban in India, nor was it a first for Maharashtra. With this ban, Maharashtra joined a list of over 18 states in the country,

which have imposed a partial or complete ban on single-use plastics. A brief investigation into the effects of the plastic ban in Maharashtra reveals that such regulations are riddled with arbitrariness and the absence of any accurate assessment of the scale of the problem of plastic waste. Further, such bans have the unintended consequence of creating a downturn in the plastic recycling sector, a sector which—in the absence of municipal support—handles much of the plastic waste of urban centres like Mumbai. But, there is still no clarity on the many inputs to the recycling industry that stand to be banned. This affects thousands of workers and recycling unit owners across the state. Despite their presence for well over 50 years, recycling clusters in Mumbai have been ignored, and their contribution to waste management and sustainability in the regional economy has been discounted. Irrespective of the way in which the ban is implemented, the cost of such arbitrary decisions and cavalier environmentalism will be borne by workers who are losing their livelihood. (Visit <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/24/commentary/maharashtras-war-plastic.html> for further reading)

- **Trade Union Status for Domestic Worker's Organization:** According to a report in the Hindu, Paschimbanga Griha Paricharika Samit, a Kolkata-based workers' organisation was granted a trade union certificate from the state government. It was the first organization of domestic workers to be granted such status in the State. There are only two laws in the country that grant domestic workers 'labour' status. First, Unorganised Labour Social Security Act, 2008 and second, Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013. But none of the laws talks about any legal framework regarding rights of domestic workers.
- In the light of this, granting trade union status to domestic workers' union is a milestone for those working in the unorganised sector, say experts and activists. (Visit <https://thewire.in/rights/in-a-first-kolkata-domestic-workers-organisation-gets-trade-union-status> for further reading).
- **Brass Smiths of Bihar:** The Brass Smiths of Porev district (42kms from the Bihar's capital Patna) which is also known as the hub for traditional brass utensils manufacturing units are keeping the traditional crafts alive despite facing hurdles such as no government support, the lack of banking infrastructure and inadequate power supply are some of the problems they are facing. (Visit <https://thewire.in/labour/brass-smith-traditional-craft-bihar-hardships-government> for further reading).
- **Marginalized Fishing Community:** The marginalised fishing community of Thoothukudi conflicts with land today. As the sea and beaches are inextricably linked to their lives, any move detrimental to the fragile marine ecology on which they have been sustaining for generations also disturbs their lives. Heavy industries and development activities on the shores began pushing the indigenous people away from the beaches, leading to frequent public disorder. The coastline became a dumping yard for poisonous waste that has transformed the landscape for the worse, besides polluting the air and groundwater. Even beach sands are scooped out and looted for minerals, making the community virtual "environment refugees" in their own habitats. The competitive environment forced traditional fishers out and made them mere labourers in the giant fishing vessels manned by multinationals. At a time when the fishermen at Thoothukudi are struggling to come to terms with the falling catches, they are also forced to face the ill-effects of a rise in polluting industrial activity. (Visit <https://www.frontline.in/cover-story/sense-of-betrayal/article10108722.ece> for further reading)
- **Sandstorm in the desert:** On May 4, the SC turned down the Vasundhara Raje government's plea to relax its total ban on sand mining imposed in November last year. Justice M.B. Lokur reiterated that mining could be permitted only after a scientific assessment of the ecological impact and the rate of sand replenishment, deferring the case to July. A day earlier, the Rajasthan High Court directed all

district collectors to set up special teams to prevent sand mining across the state. Affecting more than a million livelihoods in the mining and construction sectors, the ban has become a major cause of unrest against the government in Rajasthan. Its also impacting the public as sand and gravel prices have spiralled. **(Visit <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/states/story/20180625-sandstorm-in-the-desert-1261115-2018-06-17> for further reading)**

## **Agriculture**

- **E-mandis in Demand**: Globally, India has the second largest amount of arable land (next only to the US) but less than 35% of this land comes under irrigation. Consequently, in a bad rainfall year, crops fail. The problem is aggravated as 83% of farmers in India, who are marginal and small farmers (someone with less than two hectare of landholding), do not have the wherewithal to understand technology or have the money power to mechanise agriculture (that will enhance productivity). Loan waivers actually do harm to small farmers as with less credit outlay from the formal sector, these farmers increasingly have to depend on the informal sector. Moreover, loan waivers mostly help richer and bigger farmers, leaving the smaller ones worse-off in the future. According to a study, titled Farmer Distress: An Analysis of Intervention in Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh, India Consensus Report, 2018, we show that the real benefit of the farmers will come through two interventions – operationalising e-mandis (online trading of agricultural output) and building more storage facilities for farm output. ( Visit <https://thewire.in/agriculture/not-farm-loan-waiver-what-small-and-marginal-farmers-need-is-more-e-mandis> for detailed Analysis)
- **Model Contract Farming and Services Act**: On May 16 this year, Union minister for agriculture released the 41-page Model Contract Farming and Services Act, 2018. The Act brings all services in the agriculture value chain, including pre-production, production and post-production, within its ambit along with contract farming activity. (Visit <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/cover-story/story/20180611-green-shoots-1246599-2018-06-02> for detailed analysis)
- **Rice Becomes Less Nutritious If There's More Carbon Dioxide in the Air** : Rice could produce fewer proteins, vitamins and minerals essential for humans in response to rising carbon dioxide concentrations that are implicated in global warming, new research assessments from 10 countries that consume the most rice has shown. The findings not only confirm previously reported declines in protein, iron and zinc levels but also offer additional information on consistent declines in vitamins B1, B2, B5, and B9 and – conversely – an increase in vitamin E in rice produced under higher carbon dioxide conditions. And they add to the general concern over global warming impacting food and nutritional security. (Visit <https://thewire.in/environment/rice-becomes-less-nutritious-if-theres-more-carbon-dioxide-in-the-air> for further reading)
- **Farmers Sow Unapproved Monsanto Cotton Seeds**: Many Indian farmers are openly sowing an unapproved variety of genetically modified (GM) cotton seeds developed by Monsanto to boost their incomes. Union environment ministry said last year planting the seeds violated the Environment Protection Act, and farmers who did so were risking potential jail terms. (Visit <https://thewire.in/agriculture/risking-arrest-farmers-sow-unapproved-monsanto-cotton-seeds> for further reading)
- **Unending Woes of Pulse Farmers**: The current crash in pulse prices is on account of excess supply in the pulses market. This is the second year in a row that pulse prices have fallen and have not been remunerative for farmers. There have been increases in acreage since that have led to excess supply and drastic price reductions in 2018. Sustainable policies are needed to protect farmers and



consumers against output and price fluctuations of pulses. (Visit <https://epw.in/journal/2018/25/editorials/unending-woes-pulse-farmers.html> for further reading)

- **Gujarat government launches solar scheme for farmers:** The Gujarat government launched Rs 870-crore pilot project Suryashakti Kisan Yojana (SKY) which is considered first of its kind in the country. SKY is expected to cover, through solar power generation, 12,400 farmers in 33 districts through 137 feeders. The move is being seen as an attempt to pacify the farmers. (Visit <https://www.theweek.in/news/india/2018/06/23/gujarat-government-launches-solar-scheme-for-farmers.html> for further reading).
- **IVRS for farmers in Andhra Pradesh:** The IVRS has been introduced in Anantapur district under the flagship ZBNF. The main purpose behind the voice calls is to improve the adoption rate among farmers. Currently, IVRS is extended only to the groundnut crop in Anantapur and paddy in East Godavari and Visakhapatnam districts. (Visit <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/agriculture/voice-calls-to-help-andhra-farmers-in-decision-making-60923> for further reading).
- **De-Feminisation of Agriculture Wage Labour:** A study of three villages in Jalpaiguri district, West Bengal, reveals that there is an alarming decline in female agricultural wage labour, resulting in de-feminisation, devastating poverty and outmigration of young boys and men in the Terai region. (Visit <https://epw.in/journal/2018/25/special-articles/de-feminisation-agricultural-wage-labour-jalpaiguri-west-bengal> for further reading)
- **Mango output in UP:** Bad weather and recent thunderstorms has taken a heavy toll on Mango output in UP this year. This has not only hit the prices of the 'king of fruits' but also its quality and the quantum of exports. Mango production, which was estimated to be around 50 lakh tonnes this year, is now expected to reach only 25-30 lakh tonnes in the state because of continued thunderstorms, dust storms and untimely showers this season. The mango belt farmers have also been facing problems of insufficient power and water supply and have not got any special advantage. UP has 14 Mango Belts and is also one of the major producers. Dussheri and Chausa varieties are exported from the state. (Visit <https://www.thewire.in/environment/bad-weather-takes-a-heavy-toll-on-mango-output-in-up-exports-may-be-hit> for further reading).
- **The Politics of Contemporary Dairying in Gujarat:** A study on market-driven agriculture in the dry lands in Gujarat, especially households which embarked on dairying through the acquisition of loan-buffaloes, reveals that dairying is shot through with the politics of economic value involving dairies and milk producers. Commercial milk-production is interrupted by economic value encountering other values and affective relations of milk producers. (Visit <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/22/special-articles/cattle-milk-and-womens-labour.html> for detailed analysis)
- **Extra Interest on KCC loans:** In February this year, farmers of Chhani Bari village in Hanumangarh district of Rajasthan staged a protest in front of the local SBI branch against the extra interest charged on their Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loans. After the 58 days of protesting, interest of approximately Rs 16,52,000 was reversed in 350 KCC accounts. The bank authorities admitted that SBI made a mistake in the subvention. However, thousands of farmers of the village are still waiting to get back their hard-earned money. (Visit <https://thewire.in/rights/sbi-rajasthan-farmers-extra-interest-kisan-credit-card> for further reading).

### Policy/Schemes:

- **National Bio Fuel Policy:** The move to let damaged crops be used for fossil fuel production may hurt



food availability, price. ( Visit <https://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/guzzle-grain-go-hungry/300210> for detailed Analysis).

- **IMA supports Ayushman Bharat:** IMA representatives agreed to extend their support for better implementation of AB-NHPM especially in field of empanelment of hospitals, spreading awareness and beneficiary identification processes. Less than two weeks ago, IMA had strong and reasoned criticisms of the insurance scheme. It is worth to understand that why IMA planned to support the scheme despite of having criticisms for it.(Visit <https://thewire.in/health/ima-health-insurance-scheme> for further reading)
- **National Health Profile 2018:** The NHP covers demographic, socio-economic, health status and health finance indicators, along with comprehensive information on health infrastructure and human resources in health. According to the report, Fertility is declining rapidly, including among the poor and illiterate. Total Fertility Rate (TFR) falls below two children per woman in 12 states, reaches replacement levels in 9 others. (Visit <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/health/fertility-in-india-is-declining-rapidly-says-national-health-profile-2018-60921> for further reading)
- **Govt wishes to achieve healthcare goals by spending Rs 3 a day?:** According to NHP, the Indian government plans to live up to its promise of 'health assurance to all Indians' with a health spending of just Rs 3 per day that counts for 1.02 per cent of the GDP. At Rs1,112 per capita, India is one of the countries with the lowest per year public health spending. This is when the NHP said the country would increase health spending to 2.5 per cent of GDP by 2025. (Visit <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/health/govt-wishes-to-achieve-healthcare-goals-by-spending-rs-3-a-day--60919> for further reading).
- **NITI Aayog's Water Management Index:** In the last week, various national media outlets reported that 600 million Indians are exposed to extreme water stress, that three-fourths of households have no piped water, 70% of all water is contaminated and India stands at the 120th among 122 countries on the WQI This alarm followed the NITI Aayog's release of the CWMI, on 14 June 2018 in New Delhi. The CWMI document has ranked India's states (except J&K) and ordered them based on their ability and preparedness to manage their water resources properly. However, the report did not contain any details on how this ranking scheme was arrived at nor did it clarify whether certain critical parameters were included. In its current form, the CWMI needs major amendments to become useful as a reliable planning tool. (Visit <https://thewire.in/environment/niti-aayogs-water-management-index-may-be-an-experiment-but-it-is-lazy> for detailed analysis).
- **Law for PwDs:** A round-table on accessible road transport for persons with disabilities (PwDs) was organised by the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) in New Delhi on May 30. Some key suggestions made by a cross-section of individuals working in the disability sector included the need for making public transport friendly for PwDs, easing norms for modification of private vehicles (by PwDs) and encouraging vehicle manufacturers to build vehicles modified as per their needs.(Visit <https://thewire.in/law/disabled-persons-public-transport-access> for further reading).
- **RERA:** The Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, or RERA, was expected to clear up India's murky real estate sector. Across India, about 25,000 real estate projects have been registered under RERA, said a study by Knight Frank. However, about 62 per cent of these projects are in one state—Maharashtra. Unorganised real estate players, who do not have the business model in place to meet the strict requirements of RERA, far outnumber the organised developers in the sector. (Visit <https://www.theweek.in/theweek/business/2018/06/16/rera-is-still-a-work-in-progress.html> for further reading).

### Miscellaneous

- **Paytm Data Controversy:** In a sting operation conducted by the online investigative portal Cobrapost, the controversy over e-payments company Paytm's alleged sharing of user data with the government raises larger concerns about digital data privacy. While the company later denied sharing any information with third parties, the reputation of this start-up, which saw overnight success, has suffered a nosedive. (Visit <https://www.frontline.in/the-nation/stinging-facts/article10108711.ece?homepage=true> for further reading).
- **Free Insulin for Diabetics?** Madras HC Issues Notice to Govt on Plea for Free Insulin for Diabetics. The petitioner said the average monthly medical expenses for a diabetic was anywhere between Rs 3,000 and Rs 8,000. (Visit <https://thewire.in/health/madras-hc-issues-notice-to-govt-on-plea-for-free-insulin-for-diabetics> for further reading) ❖