

Weekly Livelihoods Update

06 November 2018

- ✚ **Is MSP a Viable Proposition in Marine Fisheries?** - The system of minimum support price (MSP) for agricultural commodities¹ in India has stood the test of time and continues to be one of the successful price support mechanisms practised in the country. Essentially, the MSP acts as a benchmark price below which the state promises to compensate the farmers either through direct procurement or through deficiency payments. Farmers' produce procured under the scheme are subsequently routed through the public distribution system (PDS) reaching the PDS beneficiaries at subsidised rates. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/44/commentary/msp-viable-proposition-marine-fisheries.html>]

- ✚ **Help rebuild Kerala** – Responding to the severe floods in Kerala, the Care Today Fund initiated relief efforts in the worst-affected districts in partnership with ActionAid Association. So far, relief material consisting of sleeping mattresses, clothes, hygiene kits, cleaning kits and dry rations have been provided to 470 families in Idukki and Alappuzha districts. [For further reading: <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/care-today/story/20181112-help-rebuild-kerala-relief-fund-1380067-2018-11-05>]

- ✚ **Victims of development** – The story of Adivasi dispossession in the colonial and postcolonial period, often in the name of development and the greater public good, is fairly well known. Adivasi women are doubly “disadvantaged” as Adivasis and as women. They bear not only the brunt of development’s violence but also the adverse impact of that on gender relations. By drawing on short case studies from across West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha, Debasree De offers glimpses of the hazardous work conditions that Adivasi women face as the project of development steamrolls ahead. She narrates how the Oraon, Munda and Santhal women who work in tea estates in West Bengal were hit by the crisis in the tea industry in the early 2000s, many losing their jobs and dying of starvation. [For further reading: <https://www.frontline.in/books/article25166589.ece?homepage=true>]

- ✚ **Anthropology of Tourism - Political Economy of the Dal Lake Region** - Tourism is an important industry and provides a livelihood to many communities living in Kashmir,

especially those in the areas surrounding the Dal Lake. However, tourism has seldom received attention outside the domain of business and management studies. The houseboat community, agriculturists, business persons and artisans form the core of the tourism industry thriving in the Dal Lake region. A critical understanding of the political economy of the industry is necessary to comprehend some of the challenges confronting the various groups that are the stakeholders of the tourism sector in this region. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/44/special-articles/anthropology-tourism.html>]

✚ **Value Added Tax Scams and Introduction of the Goods and Services Tax** - In the postcolonial era, tax reforms in many developing/emerging economies resorted to indirect taxes under the presumptions of broadening the tax base and achieving horizontal equity. But, leakage in the form of evasion had challenged the attainment of these objectives, and continues doing so even after half a century of constant churning by tax architects to arrive at an optimum solution. The ease of evasion is indicative of the gap in the “lab to land” transfer of technique. From a theoretical standpoint, the goods and services tax (GST), based on the principles of value added tax, can potentially address much of the malaise afflicting VAT in a federal polity, and may also offer the desired bridge for an informal economy to move towards the realm of formalisation in the long run. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/journal/2018/44/special-articles/value-added-tax-scams-and-introduction.html>]

✚ **Universalisation of School Education Using the Public-school System is Feasible** - EPW Engage recently featured a discussion map on the feasibility of universalisation of school education using the public-school system (PSS). The inability of the PSS to deliver learning outcomes has prompted several scholars to suggest public–private partnerships (PPP) as alternatives to government schools. The PPP model, in the shape of low-cost private schools, ostensibly provides the added advantage of substantial cost savings to the government. [For further reading: <https://www.epw.in/engage/article/universalisation-of-education-using-public-school-system-is-feasible-response>]