

THE WEEKLY RURAL NEWSLETTER



ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

Greetings Readers!

An overwhelming population in India continues to live in what is defined as 'non-urban' or rural. As per the last Census (2011), of the total 1210.2 million population 833.1 million or 69 per cent lived in rural areas in around 6.4 lakh villages. The rural life, while popularly portrayed as simple, slow, and serene, is much more complex, unsettling, diverse and going through rapid changes. In a world dominated by the hustle and bustle of urban life, the heartbeat of rural India often goes unnoticed. **Welcome to the Weekly Rural Newsletter**, where we aim to bridge this gap by shedding light on the stories, struggles, and triumphs of the large majority of India's population.



Presented by the diligent students of Rural Sociology, this Newsletter is a humble effort to amplify the rural voices that deserve to be heard. By closely following the national and regional media platforms students cover different states as 'state correspondents' and document the developments unfolding in the socio-economic, political and cultural spheres of the countryside. A team of two students compiles these news reports in the form of a newsletter on a weekly basis and brings the newsletter to you. We believe that incorporating exercises that focus on rural affairs into educational settings can have far-reaching effects in terms of students' awareness about the challenges and opportunities in rural areas, holistic education, empathy, community engagement, and policy advocacy. We hope this exercise also creates a ripple effect among the larger audience.

Stay tuned for more stories from the heartlands of our nation!

With rustic regards,
The Rural Sociology Students' Team

ANDHRA PRADESH

ANDHRA PRADESH: WITH SURGE IN DEMAND SINCE COVID-19, IT'S 'ENTER THE DRAGON' FRUIT FOR BAPATLA FARMERS

Dragon fruit cultivation is gaining momentum among farmers in Bapatla district, India, due to favorable climatic conditions and government support. Over 25 hectares have been dedicated to dragon fruit farming in recent months. The fruit's popularity, enriched with nutrients, has surged during the COVID-19 pandemic, boosting profits for farmers. Some invest Rs 8 lakh to Rs 20 lakh in cultivation. Government subsidies of Rs 30,000 per hectare under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture make the investment reasonable.

Dragon fruit, with multiple flowering and fruiting cycles from July to November, requires minimal water as it's a cactus, reducing risks for farmers. Anticipating continued growth, officials highlight its low pest susceptibility.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV 16TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://WWW.NEWINDIANEXPRESS.COM/STATES/ANDHRA-
PRADESH/2023/NOV/16/ANDHRA-PRADESH-WITH-SURGE-IN-
DEMAND-SINCE-COVID-19-ITS-ENTER-THE-DRAGON-FRUIT-
FORBAPATLA-FARMERS-2633346.HTML](https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/andhra-pradesh/2023/nov/16/andhra-pradesh-with-surge-in-demand-since-covid-19-its-enter-the-dragon-fruit-for-bapatla-farmers-2633346.html)

ASSAM

ASSAM CULTURAL MAHASANGRAM ORGANIZED FOR RURAL TALENT

Minister of Water Resources, Information, and Public Relations Piyush Hazarika were present at the Raas Mandir of Baghja Gaon Panchayat in the Morigaon district for an exclusive Assam Cultural Mahasangram event. The Assamese Cultural Affairs Department organized the Mahasangram with the intention of identifying cultural potential at the local level. It has already begun in several Gaon Panchayats and wards. According to the minister, initiatives such as Sanskritik Mahasangram are arranged to give rural areas' talented artists a platform. Prominent social worker Apurba Deha, District Cultural Officer Rajiv Koiri, Additional District Commissioner Dr. Sangeeta Barthakur, and several dignitaries were present at the ceremony.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV 14TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://WWW.SENTINELASSAM.COM/NORTH-EAST-INDIA-NEWS/ASSAM-
NEWS/ASSAM-CULTURAL-MAHASANGRAM-ORGANIZED-FOR-RURAL-
TALENT-675482](https://www.sentinelassam.com/north-east-india-news/assam-news/assam-cultural-mahasangram-organized-for-rural-talent-675482)

GUJARAT

IG RELIEF TO FARMERS: 303 FARMERS IN RAPAR TALUKA GOT THRESHING MACHINES APPROVED

Sometimes the hard work done by the farmer comes to naught as the animals including the Nile cow entered the fields in the evening and caused extensive damage to the mall. Zatka machines are installed around the farm to protect against these animals. The taluka is mostly a desert area and forest, and a large number of animals including sheep, roes, pigs are causing great damage to the crops in the fields. There are forms of threshing machines on Khedut-I portal by the government.

In a month many registrations came in. The machine that's costs around 30K rupees, was provided to the farmers in a subsidised price of 7K.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV IITH, 2023)

[HTTPS://WWW.DIVYABHASKAR.CO.IN/LOCAL/GUJARAT/KUTCH/NEWS/303-FARMERS-THRESHING-MACHINES-WERE-APPROVED-IN-RAPAR-TALUKA-132134417.HTML](https://www.divyabhaskar.co.in/local/gujarat/kutch/news/303-farmers-threshing-machines-were-approved-in-rapar-taluka-132134417.html)

(TRANSLATED FROM GUJARATI TO ENGLISH)

HARYANA

MOST RURAL ROUTES WERE AFFECTED DUE TO 50 BUSES GOING TO PALWAL, WILL REMAIN CLOSED EVEN TODAY

The road buses that were being sent from the Narnaul depot to Palwal disrupted numerous routes. The majority of buses were operating on rural routes, such as Narnaul to Kanina, Narnaul to Mahendragarh, and Narnaul to Nangal Choudhary, throughout the day. The majority of the affected routes are rural ones since 50 buses left the Narnaul depot on Sunday. Numerous routes at the Narnaul depot have been impacted as a result of Haryana Roadways requisitioning 50 buses for the Jhalkari Bai Jayanti Samman function in Palwal.

The public has been greatly inconvenienced by this. The public would not have been disturbed if 50 private buses, similar to Group D documents, had been obtained and sent to Palwal in place of 50 buses on the roads.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV I9TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://WWW.AMARUJALA.COM/HARYANA/MAHENDRAGARH-NARNAUL/MOST-RURAL-ROUTES-WERE-AFFECTED-DUE-TO-50-BUSES-GOING-TO-PALWAL-WILL-REMAIN-CLOSED-EVEN-TODAY-NARNAUL-NEWS-C-196-I-NNLI004-6557-2023-II-I9](https://www.amarujala.com/haryana/mahendragarh-narnaul/most-rural-routes-were-affected-due-to-50-buses-going-to-palwal-will-remain-closed-even-today-narnaul-news-c-196-i-nnli004-6557-2023-ii-i9)

(TRANSLATED FROM HINDI TO ENGLISH)

HARYANA

WEAKER SECTIONS ACROSS COUNTRY SUFFER UNDER BJP REGIME: HARYANA CONGRESS INCHARGE

Deepak Babria, the in-charge of the Haryana Congress, claimed on Wednesday that the BJP government nationwide is responsible for the greatest atrocities against members of the Scheduled Caste and other marginalised groups in society. During a conference for Scheduled Caste workers in Sonapat, Babria stated that criminals who perpetrate crimes are free to roam around in states that are governed by the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Chief Haryana Congressman Udai Bhan said the BJP was against a caste survey and demanded one be conducted in the state. In addition to closing 498 schools, he claimed that the state government had combined 4,800 government schools.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV 9TH, 2023)

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/chandigarh-news/weaker-sections-across-country-suffer-under-bjp-regime-haryana-congress-incharge-IOI699470936026.html>

JAMMU & KASHMIR

WINTER WOES | AMID CHILL, GUREZ VILLAGERS FORCED TO WALK SEVERAL KILOMETRES TO COLLECT RATION

The twin Gurez villages in northern Kashmir's Bandipora district are enraged by the administration's failure to provide them with a local ration collecting facility. The inhabitants of Nayal and Kanzalwan in the Bagtore district of Gurez Valley reported that the village stores were sealed because no ration from the Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Department was kept available there. Lone, a villager, stated that with the onset of winter and a great deal of snow, it is impossible for them to leave their houses and pleaded with the authorities to keep a nearby ration shop accessible for them.

They claimed that transportation in the villages is nearly non-existent, adding to the difficulty of obtaining rations from 4 kilometres away.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV 15TH, 2023)

<https://www.greaterkashmir.com/gk-top-news/winter-woes-amid-chill-gurez-villagers-forced-to-walk-several-kilometres-to-collect-ration/>

KERELA

KERALA GOVERNMENT FORMS ORGANIC FARMING MISSION TO BOOST CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE

The Kerala Government has established an 'Organic Farming Mission' to promote sustainable, organic and climate-smart farming practices in the state. It aims to expand organic farming to 5,000 hectares over the next five years, with an annual target of 1,000 hectares. At least 10% of the area in farms operated by the State Agriculture department will be designated for organic farming practices. The mission is supposed to work on certification, branding, and marketing of organic agricultural products, implementing an organic farming protocol aligned with national and international standards.

It will also focus on value addition and ensure farmers' access to quality seeds and production equipment.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV 6, 2023)

[HTTPS://WWW.THEHINDU.COM/NEWS/NATIONAL/KERALA/KERALA-GOVERNMENT-FORMS-ORGANIC-FARMING-MISSION-TO-BOOST-CLIMATE-SMART-AGRICULTURE/ARTICLE67512619.ECE](https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/kerala-government-forms-organic-farming-mission-to-boost-climate-smart-agriculture/article67512619.ece)

MADHYA PRADESH

CONDITION OF TRIBAL SEATS OF MP: WOMEN STATE- THEY CAST THEIR VOTE WHEREVER THE VOTE-CASTING OFFICIALS TELL THEM.

In the Shahdol division, tribal voters have the last say. Tribal people are entitled to seven of the division's eight seats.

The Bhaskar group made visits to roughly 20 villages. They conversed with the youth, women, and elderly from these areas. The Kol, Gond, and Baiga communities in the Shahdol division are primarily represented among the voters. Tribes dominate all of the rural areas. The majority of the population works as farmers and laborers. Women, children, and the elderly are unaware of elections and the candidates running.

A lot of people claimed that because they labor on farms all day to pay for their daily food, they are unaware of the elections. It was mentioned that they would click the vote button as they were told.

LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV 10TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://DAINIK-B.IN/NEJWBBEKBE](https://dainik-b.in/nejwbbekbeb)

TRANSLATED FROM HINDI TO ENGLISH



MAHARASHTRA

1927 FARMER SUICIDES IN WEST VIDARBHA IN TEN MONTHS; CRIES THAT GOVERNMENT BENEFITS ARE NOT REACHING

In the last ten months, 1927 farmers committed suicide in the Amravati division of West Vidarbha, with the highest number of 268 suicides in the Amravati district. Since 2001, 18,891 farmers have taken their lives in the region, but only 8,864 cases qualified for government assistance. The families of these farmers receive one lakh rupees in assistance, but only for cases related to barrenness and indebtedness. Despite various government schemes and measures, the benefits are not reaching the farmers. The region faces issues of climate change, with droughts and unseasonal rains affecting crop yields being a major factor for the suicides.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV 16TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://WWW.LOKSATTA.COM/NAGPUR/1927-FARMER-SUICIDES-IN-WEST-VIDARBHA-IN-TEN-MONTHS-ZWS-70-40483II/](https://www.loksatta.com/nagpur/1927-farmer-suicides-in-west-vidarbha-in-ten-months-zws-70-40483ii/)

TRANSLATED FROM MARATHI

MANIPUR

MANIPUR CM LAUNCHES HOUSING SCHEME FOR DISPLACED PERSONS, SAYS ABOUT RS 400 CRORES ALREADY SPENT FOR RELIEF WORKS

CM Biren Singh launched a permanent housing scheme on 9th November for those whose houses were damaged or burnt down during the violence in the state. He stated that more than 4,800 families would be covered under the scheme, and has handed over cheques to selected beneficiaries from Meitei-dominated Imphal East, Kakching and Bishnupur district. More than 180 people have been killed and over 60,000 displaced during the conflict. The government had earlier provided temporary shelters for those displaced, and Singh stated that the government has already spent Rs. 399.92 crores with the aid of the Centre for providing relief assistance to persons and families affected by the violence.

A proposal for an amount of Rs, 476 crores has also been submitted to the Centre for provision of more relief measures.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV 10TH, 2023)

[FHTTPS://WWW.DECCANHERALD.COM/INDIA/MANIPUR/MANIPUR-CM-LAUNCHES-HOUSING-SCHEME-FOR-DISPLACED-PERSONS-SAYS-ABOUT-RS-400-CRORES-ALREADY-SPENT-FOR-RELIEF-WORKS-2764893](https://www.deccanherald.com/india/manipur/manipur-cm-launches-housing-scheme-for-displaced-persons-says-about-rs-400-crores-already-spent-for-relief-works-2764893)

ODISHA

ODISHA TESTS OUT FOREST RIGHTS ACT

The Forest Rights Act (FRA) was passed in 2006 to recognize the rights of forest-dwelling communities. However, the implementation of the FRA has been slow and uneven. Two of the challenges is that the forest department is resistant to giving up control of the forests and that many communities do not have the resources to file claims under the FRA. The act has been met with resistance. However, it has also led to increased forest protection and livelihood opportunities for some communities. One example is the village of Kodalpalli in Odisha, which has been able to protect its forests and earn income from cashew plantations. The challenges of forest rights in India include the need for more government support and the need to pass on traditional knowledge to younger generations.

Despite these challenges, there have been some successes in implementing the FRA. For example, the state of Odisha is working to expand FRA coverage to 30,000 villages. This would make Odisha the first state in India to implement the FRA fully. The FRA can potentially improve the lives of millions of forest-dwelling communities in India. However, it is important to address the implementation challenges to ensure that the FRA is a success.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV 19TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://NEWS.MONGABAY.COM/2023/11/CAN-INDIAS-FOREST-RIGHTS-ACT-DELIVER-ODISHA-STATE-IS-TRYING-TO-FIND-OUT/](https://news.mongabay.com/2023/11/can-indias-forest-rights-act-deliver-odisha-state-is-trying-to-find-out/)

PUNJAB

AMID LAX CRACKDOWN ON PUNJAB FARM FIRES, FIRS NAME 'UNKNOWN PEOPLE'

Most of the identical FIRs that were filed by the Punjab police were against unknown people setting fires on their farmland. Unnamed police officers have said that it would be foolish to charge farmers after seeing what farmer unions have done to Punjab. Even though the Supreme Court ordered the ban and crackdown on farmers setting fire to the hay to protect air pollution levels in Delhi, However, the Punjab police would file FIRs before finding the person responsible for the fire, and go on record that they did not want to stir a fight against the farmers who carry huge sociopolitical significance.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV 17TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://WWW.HINDUSTANTIMES.COM/INDIA-NEWS/AMID-LAX-CRACKDOWN-ON-PUNJAB-FIRM-FIRES-FIRS-NAME-UNKNOWN-PEOPLE-101700160453148.HTML](https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/amid-lax-crackdown-on-punjab-firm-fires-firs-name-unknown-people-101700160453148.html)

RAJASTHAN

INFORMING LABOR WOMEN ABOUT MINIMUM WAGES AND SECURITY

The National Domestic Women Workers Organization conducted a program to inform women in domestic work about minimum wages and security, addressing the lack of information on wages. Sister Kirti, the state coordinator, organized the event. She highlighted the lack of information among women laborers regarding wages and organized the program to address this issue. Govind Lal Od, President of Aravali Nirman Mazdoor Suraksha Sangh, emphasized the labor helpline (18001800999) for wage disputes. Rekha Bhatnagar discussed safety during work.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV 20TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://WWW.BHASKAR.COM/LOCAL/RAJASTHAN/UDAIPUR/NEWS/TOL-D-LABOR-WOMEN-ABOUT-MINIMUM-WAGES-AND-SECURITY-132165583.HTML](https://www.bhaskar.com/local/rajasthan/udaipur/news/tol-d-labor-women-about-minimum-wages-and-security-132165583.html)

RAJASTHAN

BJP MANIFESTO: SCOOTY FOR I2TH GRADERS, FREE KG TO PG EDUCATION, EMPOWERING WOMEN IN RAJASTHAN

Bharatiya Janata Party President Jagat Prakash Nadda has unveiled the party's resolution letter for the Rajasthan assembly elections, branding it a developmental roadmap. Nadda emphasized the BJP's commitment to supporting all sectors, including villages, the underprivileged, farmers, women, youth, and scheduled castes and tribes. He positioned the resolution as the party's overarching vision for Rajasthan's progress. Nadda also highlighted central government initiatives specific to Rajasthan, citing the establishment of 23 medical colleges in the past nine years as a testament to the commitment to improving healthcare infrastructure in the state.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE (NOV 16TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://WWW.ABPLIVE.COM/STATES/RAJASTHAN/BJP-PRESIDENT-JP-NADDA-RELEASED-SANKALP-PATRA-FOR-RAJASTHAN-ASSEMBLY-ELECTION-2023-2538291](https://www.abplive.com/states/rajasthan/bjp-president-jp-nadda-released-sankalp-patra-for-rajasthan-assembly-election-2023-2538291)

(TRANSLATED FROM HINDI TO ENGLISH)

TAMIL NADU

WORKERS UPSET OVER 100-DAY JOB PLAN: NO PAY FOR 10 WEEKS, CAUSING DISTRESS.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), initiated in India post-2005, faces challenges in Kovilpatti. Daily wages of Rs. 294, crucial for rural workers, have been delayed for about 10 weeks, causing distress. K. Raveendran notes a decline in agricultural production due to weather changes, increasing demand for rural employment. However, the central budget for MGNREGS has decreased, with Tamil Nadu allocated only Rs. 4,118 crores. This budget constraint has led to delays in wage disbursement, affecting various regions. The Assistant Budget scheme aims to create employment opportunities for 11 crore people but awaits active fund allocation from the government.



Link to the article: (Nov 20, 2023)

<https://www.hindutamil.in/news/tamilnadu/II56337-salary-issue-in-national-rural-employment-guarantee-scheme.html>

(Translated from Tamil to English)

TELANGANA

2 DEAD AS WALL AT UNDER-CONSTRUCTION INDOOR STADIUM IN TELANGANA COLLAPSES

Tragedy struck in Moinabad as an under-construction indoor stadium witnessed a collapse, leading to the death of two migrant workers from West Bengal and Bihar. Ten others were injured when a concrete slab and a compound wall fell during construction. The injured were promptly taken to the hospital. The incident occurred as construction work was underway at the site, prompting ongoing investigations by the police.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE (NOV 20TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://ENGLISH.VARTHAHARATI.IN/INDIA/2-DEAD-AS-WALL-AT-UNDER-CONSTRUCTION-INDOOR-STADIUM-IN-TELANGANA-COLLAPSES](https://english.varthaharati.in/india/2-dead-as-wall-at-under-construction-indoor-stadium-in-telangana-collapses)

TRIPURA

TRIPURA GOVERNOR URGES ACTION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Tripura Governor Indrasena Reddy directed officials of the Rural Development Department to identify impoverished individuals and prioritize their development overall. The directive came during a meeting chaired by Governor Reddy on Monday where many key officials were present to discuss and strategize the state's development initiatives. Governor Reddy, known for his commitment to socio-economic development, took a keen interest in the ongoing projects and programs of the Rural Development Department.

The Governor stressed the swift completion of house construction projects and emphasized the importance of enhancing road connectivity in villages that are yet to be connected.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE (NOV 20TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://WWW.INDIATODAYNE.IN/TRIPURA/STORY/TRIPURA-GOVERNOR-CHAIRS-REVIEW-MEETING-URGES-ACTION-FOR-RURAL-DEVELOPMENT-FOCUS-ON-IMPOVERISHED-COMMUNITIES-7I4049-2023-II-20](https://www.indiatodayne.in/tripura/story/tripura-governor-chairs-review-meeting-urges-action-for-rural-development-focus-on-impooverished-communities-7i4049-2023-ii-20)

UTTAR PRADESH

69 PC RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN THE U.P. NOW HAVE TAP WATER CONNECTIONS

Uttar Pradesh has achieved significant success in the Har Ghar Jal campaign, providing over 1.80 crore tap water connections to 69% of rural households. The state surpassed its target by 125% in the third quarter, ranking first nationally in prompt connection delivery. Key cities like Kanpur, Sant Ravidas Nagar, and Moradabad lead in the high achievers category. With ₹53,752 crore spent, the state aims to connect 179.70 lakh households by March 31, 2024.

Chief Secretary Durga Shankar Mishra commended the progress but stressed the importance of sustaining momentum. Additionally, he reviewed the completion of dedicated eastern and western freight corridors.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE (NOV 17TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://WWW.HINDUSTANTIMES.COM/CITIES/LUCKNOW-NEWS/69-PC-RURAL-HOUSEHOLDS-IN-U-P-NOW-HAVE-TAP-WATER-CONNECTIONS-10I700232398467.HTML](https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/lucknow-news/69-pc-rural-households-in-u-p-now-have-tap-water-connections-10i700232398467.html)

WEST BENGAL

UNIDENTIFIED BODY OF A WOMAN RECOVERED FROM FULBARI

A tragic incident occurred in Fulbari on November 16th when the body of an unidentified woman was found dead next to a sewer canal in the Changrabandha area, which is under the Fulbari-II Gram Panchayat. The New Jalpaiguri (NJP) police station was promptly notified by the locals upon discovering the body. When the police arrived, they retrieved the body and dispatched it for a post-mortem examination.

As investigations unfolded, community members speculated that the woman may have been mentally ill, noting that she had not been seen in the area before. The police are conducting a thorough inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the incident.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE (NOV 16TH, 2023)

[HTTPS://SILIGURITIMES.COM/UNIDENTIFIED-BODY-OF-A-WOMAN-RECOVERED-FROM-FULBARI/](https://siliguritimes.com/unidentified-body-of-a-woman-recovered-from-fulbari/)

WEST BENGAL

PATHETIC STATE OF EDUCATION IN WEST BENGAL'S MUSLIM MAJORITY VILLAGE

The dire state of education in Punisol has driven parents to enroll their children in coaching centers run by unemployed educated youth. The village, with around 80,000 residents, lacks effective government-sponsored schools and madrasas, leading to a lack of trust in these institutions among students and parents. The teachers, education department, and Panchayat have not addressed the issue. Punisol is one of the largest Muslim-populated areas in the state and faces severe unemployment and poverty due to the lack of cultivated land and job opportunities. Most villagers engage in laborious and risky jobs.

Inadequate education facilities and job opportunities are driving residents to coaching centers, leaving many children without access to quality education. Education in Punisol is in a state of crisis, with insufficient teachers and inadequate infrastructure in school. However, there are efforts to improve the situation at the administrative level.



LINK TO THE ARTICLE: (NOV 7, 2023)

[HTTPS://WWW.NEWSCLICK.IN/PATHETIC-STATE-EDUCATION-WEST-BENGALS-MUSLIM-MAJORITY-VILLAGE](https://www.newsclick.in/pathetic-state-education-west-bengals-muslim-majority-village)



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