



CityMatters

CUTS 
International

Harnessing the demographic dividend in India



www.google.com

Andrew McAfee, the techno-optimist, tweeted in 2017 that the world has reached peak children, which is to say that there will be never more of them than there are now. To most of us in India, this fact was highlighted by former Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India, Arvind Subrahmanian in his book *Of Counsel: The Challenges of the Modi-Jaitley Economy*. In a chapter dedicated to his book on India's demography, the author argues that while the rest of the world is aging, India can still reap the demographic dividend.



With 35 percent of India's population under the age of 25, India's demographic cycle is 10-30 years behind that of other countries, such as China, South Korea and Brazil. This means that India still has some time to catch up with its per capita income levels.

But this will not happen automatically. Over the past few decades, we have seen jobless growth resulting in underinvestment in human capital. It is not as if it is on account of the State alone, the private sector is equally responsible. The current economic slowdown is the grimmest reminder of this fatal error. At the heart of this slowdown is a significant fall in consumption essentially emanating from the combination of underemployment and unemployment. In other words, while labour force has been consistently increasing, productive work and wages have not.

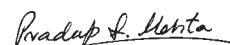
Therefore, if India has to unleash its true growth potential it will have to unlock opportunities for its young demography. There is no other way but to put its 'people' at the centre of economic policy thinking. This will entail a continuous process of tweaking both supply and demand-side factors to ensure that we remain competitive in what we produce while ensuring that incomes too rise progressively for most of the population.

Remember we are the only country in the world with billion-plus people in one place as part of one nation. But we are not yet an 'economy' of a billion people and for so long we cannot provide our people with the opportunities to make an economy and engage with it, we will not have the dignity that we aspire for. We have to remember that a nation's dignity is the sum of the dignity of each one of its citizens.

We have already lost a generation in the decades of jobless growth, we cannot lose another one. We simply cannot afford it. This is literally our last chance. Our young demography is not here to stay forever.

INSIDE

- ◆ At 97, finally Goodenough to get a Nobel Prize
- ◆ Working Incognito
- ◆ Covering Flyovers
- ◆ Google reaches quantum supremacy
- ◆ India's youngest judge of 21 years



Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General

P.S. Our gratitude to esteemed subscribers.

At 97, finally Goodenough to get a Nobel Prize

If one is reading this on a mobile phone or laptop computer, he/she might thank this year's three laureates for the Nobel Prize in chemistry for their work on lithium-ion batteries.

The prize went to John B Goodenough, 97, a German-born American Engineering Professor at the University of Texas; M Stanley Whittingham, 77, a British-American Chemistry Professor at the State University of New York; and Akira Yoshino, 71, of Asahi Kasei Corp and Meijo University in Japan.

Goodenough is the oldest person ever to win a Nobel Prize in Physics in 2018. Goodenough still works every day.



(Tol, 10.10.19)

Time Person of the Year for 2019



Greta Thunberg, a 16-year-old, the Swedish schoolgirl who inspired a global movement to fight climate change, has been named Time magazine's Person of the Year for 2019.

In 2018, the teenager started an environmental strike by missing lessons to protest outside the Swedish parliament building. It sparked a worldwide movement that became popular with the hashtag #FridaysForFuture.

Since then, she has become a strong voice for action on climate change, inspiring millions of students to join protests around the world. She was nominated as a candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize.

(Mint, 12.12.19)

Portrait of a Lady

A painting believed to be a Gustav Klimt, an Austrian symbolist painter, stolen almost 23 years ago has been discovered in a wall of the gallery it went missing from.

'Portrait of a Lady', one of the world's most sought-after missing artworks, was stolen in 1997 from a modern art gallery in Piacenza, northern Italy. It has been valued at around £50m.

After most experts had given up hope of it being recovered, a garden

worker clearing ivy from the gallery wall stumbled on a metal panel. Beneath it was a recess concealed within, which was a black bag that contained what appeared to be the missing painting.

(TG, 11.12.19)

Starving artist eats US\$120K banana

A performance artist shook up the crowd at the Art Basel show in Miami Beach when he grabbed a banana that had been duct-taped to a gallery wall and ate it.

The banana was, in fact, a work of art by Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan entitled 'Comedian' and sold to a French collector for US\$120,000.

Lucien Terras, Director of Museum Relations for Galerie Perrotin stated that he did not destroy the artwork. The banana is the idea.

(ET, 09.12.19)

New WhatsApp 'risk' identified

WhatsApp has identified a vulnerability that could have been exploited through a malicious MP4 file. India's Computer Emergency Response Team described the vulnerability's severity rating as 'high' and advised users to update to the latest version of WhatsApp.

The development comes after WhatsApp sued Israeli company NSO group over the alleged misuse of their spyware Pegasus that was installed in the phones of 1,400 users, including at least 120 Indians.

(ET, 18.11.19)

Celebrating soccer after 40 years

Iranian women watched the country's national soccer team for the first time in 40 years, celebrating their long-awaited access to the national stadium but also paying tribute to the 'Blue Girl' fan who died.

Women have been banned from watching men's games in Iran since shortly after the 1979 Islamic revolution with only a few exceptions made for small groups on rare occasions.

(Tol, 11.10.19)

Don't text while walking

A pedestrian looks at his cellphone while standing at a traffic light in Zagreb, Croatia. As part of the 'Day without



Cellphones in Zagreb' campaign, a new type of traffic light has been installed in the Croatian capital, which sheds light on the pavement just outside the pedestrian crossing to indicate red for those pedestrians and cyclists who are crossing the intersection but are so engrossed in their cell phone screens to look at the existing crossing indicators.

(Tol, 15.10.19)

Working Incognito

Justice Ravindra Bhat, Judge of the Supreme Court of India used to travel incognito to find out the truth, during his earlier avatar as the Chief Justice of Rajasthan High Court. He would just walk up to the sessions and trial court judges, introduce himself and try to find out the problems. "I am your Chief Justice, let's talk to understand problems in your jurisdictions" Bhat would say. The method turned out to be effective and things got streamlined.



(ET, 18.11.19)

Miscellany

Dying for a better life

A South Korean service is offering free funerals - but only to the living. More than 25,000 people have



participated in mass 'living funeral' services at Hyowon Healing Centre since it opened in 2012, hoping to improve their lives by simulating their deaths.

Dozens took part in the event, from teenagers to retirees, donning shrouds, taking funeral portraits, penning their last testaments, and lying in a closed coffin for around 10 minutes.

(Reuters, 06.11.19)

Google reaches quantum supremacy

Google claims to have built the first quantum computer that can carry out calculations beyond the ability of today's most powerful supercomputers, a landmark moment that has been hotly anticipated by researchers.

A paper by Google's researchers claimed that their processor was able to perform a calculation in three minutes and 20 seconds that would take today's most advanced classical computer, known as Summit, approximately 10,000 years.

The researchers said this meant the 'quantum supremacy', when quantum computers carry out calculations that had previously been impossible, had been achieved.

(FT, 20.09.19)

Shelter to 250 feral cats

On the outskirts of suburban Jakarta, housewife Dita Agusta lives with more than 250 cats she has taken in off the streets, creating a shelter for the animals



she hopes will one day be adopted.

She says she does not take in healthy-looking cats, only ones that need help, and expects disabled cats to stay in her shelter forever. She also regularly walks throughout her neighbourhood putting down food for every cat she encounters. (Tol, 23.12.19)

The race to eat 'biggest burger'

A Bangkok burger joint has become an internet sensation after YouTubers started challenging each other to eat its biggest meal - a near 6kg (13 pounds) patty covered in fried onion rings, bacon and mayonnaise.

Chris Steaks and Burgers is offering a 10,000 baht (\$330) prize for anyone who can finish the mammoth

snack in nine minutes - one baht for every calorie.

(Reuters, 31.10.19)

Bride finds another groom

Arriving late for the wedding proved costly for a groom in Uttar Pradesh's Bijnor as the bride cancelled the match and got married to another man from her neighbourhood instead.

The couple got married at a community wedding in the village of

Nangaljat six weeks ago but the girl did not go to her in-laws' house as both the bride and groom first wanted a formal ceremony to take place.

The bride's family accused the groom and his father of demanding a bicycle and cash, which they were not in a position to give. (Tol, 09.12.19)

Iconic 'Nike' gave a golden edge

To some athletes, brands count for everything when it comes to performance.

Filipina schoolgirl Rhea Bullos bagged three gold medals at an athletics without wearing shoes, opting instead to wrap her feet in tape and draw an iconic Nike "swoosh" logo on them.

Bullos, 11, was one of several on her team of 12 athletes who made their own footwear because they had only two pairs of running shoes between them at the competition in the central province of Iloilo. (Reuters, 14.12.19)

Anatomy lesson in a full bodysuit

One of the biggest challenges teachers face in a classroom is capturing the attention of their students and holding it. However, Verónica Duque had no trouble getting her students to focus on a lesson about human anatomy after she showed up to class in quite a head-turning outfit.

Verónica, who has been teaching for more than 15 years, chose a very innovative means to make sure the young class would pay attention to the class by wearing a skin-tight bodysuit that showed the organs of the human body.



Her creative solution won the internet's seal of approval after her husband gushed about the 'volcano of ideas' he is married to.

(www.mirror.co.uk, 23.12.19)

Covering Flyovers

Assam government has found an innovative way to protect its freshly painted flyovers and dividers.



They have been wrapped with plastic sheets to save them from dirt and spit. The flyovers and dividers in Guwahati have been spruced up for the annual summit of PM Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe.

(ET, 06.11.19)

India's youngest judge of 21 years

Jaipur boy Mayank Pratap Singh, has made history by cracking the Rajasthan judicial services 2018 exam at just 21 years of age, which has set him on the path of becoming the youngest judge in the country.

The original age requirement for appearing in the judicial services exam was 23 years, which had been reduced to 21 years by the Rajasthan High Court in 2019.

Singh said that it was a good move as it would help fill vacancies of the posts lying vacant and said it would also help him help more people throughout his career.



The extension in the time has been done bowing to the pressure from travellers and taxi drivers. They feel that 3 minutes is very little time to pick someone from the arrival or drop someone at the departure.

(www.jaipurcityblog.com, 15.11.19)

By-laws for rooftop restaurants

The Government of Rajasthan has finally come up with a solution for the unregulated rooftop restaurants and G+3 buildings in the state.

After the by-laws on rooftop restaurants are notified, all the reopened rooftop restaurants and others will have to take the approval of the Jaipur Municipal Corporation



(JMC) within three months fulfilling all the requirements.

It was decided that all the rooftop restaurants will be constructed of a temporary structure using iron, steel and aluminum material and following guidelines made by the National Building Code.

(Tol, 23.11.19)

Polythene ban on paper

The blanket ban on polythene bags in the state seems to be just on paper, as shopkeepers and customers continue to use these bags without any fear of repercussions.

Rajasthan was declared a plastic-free zone since 2010 by the then Ashok Gehlot-led Congress government. However, even after nine years, plastic continues to form a major portion of the garbage in the bins on roads, landfill sites and garbage depots in the city.



Various drives have been launched all over the state from time to time to seize the plastic bags and fine the people using them.

(Tol, 10.10.19)

Households to get water connections

Rajasthan Chief Secretary D B Gupta directed Public Health and Engineering Department's officials to take up Jal Jeevan Mission as a target so that every household in the state gets a connection of piped water.

Gupta said that water connections are to be issued in 98 lakh houses under the mission in the state. The availability of water should be increased from 40 litres for a person each day to 55 litres/person in villages.

The mission would be implemented under the already constituted State Water and Sanitation Mission.

(Tol, 10.10.19)

Days of ghoonghat are over

Stressing on the importance of women empowerment for nation-building, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said the custom of 'ghoonghat' must be eradicated at the earliest.

Expressing displeasure at the practice of covering women's faces with a 'ghoonghat' or veil in some rural areas, Gehlot said the custom belongs to a bygone era. He was speaking in Jaipur at the 20th-anniversary celebrations of Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan, an NGO.

Gehlot also highlighted schemes and programmes of his government and launched a book based on women's struggles.

(IE, 06.11.19)

Formation of youth and eco clubs

The Rajasthan State Education Department has issued orders for the formation of youth and eco clubs in government-run schools for the overall development of children.

Under these clubs, five houses will be formed in each school in which students will perform group activities. The names of these houses are – Jal, Agni, Vayu, Prithvi and Akash. The principal will be the head of these clubs.

(Tol, 18.11.19)

Waiting at airport porch extended

The Airports Authority of India, Jaipur has increased the porch time from 3 to 5 minutes. This is done on an experimental basis and if this new porch time would cause traffic jams or congestion, they will again enforce the previous timing.

Luxury buses to be rented out

In a first, cash-strapped Rajasthan State Roadways Corporation (RSRTC) decided to rent out its luxury buses for a wedding, tourism, study, and religious tours.

The RSRTC is just following private players who are already offering these services and will help it to boost earnings.



The express service buses were already available on rent, however, the luxury buses, including Volvo and Mercedes, would now be available to people seeking a bus to travel for a marriage ceremony and other purposes.

(Tol, 23.11.19)

Swachhta stickers distributed

The JMC introduced six types of stickers to promote *Swachhta*. These stickers will be distributed among restaurant owners and hoteliers who



will be requested to paste it on their properties and delivery packages.

This is being done to promote the message of cleanliness to earn get better ranking in *Swachhta Survekshan* – 2020. (Tol, 05.12.19)

Raj ranks low in innovation

Rajasthan has fared poorly in the Niti Aayog's Innovation Index 2019. The desert state has been placed at 13 positions, among the bottom five, in the major states category.

The state's below-par performance on seven pillars, which include five enablers and two performance indicators, underpins the importance of improving the ecosystem for innovation and growth. (Tol, 19.10.19)

Mega Cricket Stadium gets a nod

The Jaipur Development Authority (JDA) has earmarked around 35 hectares in Chop village

E-waste Collection Bins in Jaipur: CUTS Initiative

In India, Rajasthan stands as the 6th largest E-waste generator. CUTS in collaboration with Etco E-Waste Recycler Pvt. Ltd. has installed six E-waste collection bins in Jaipur, which can be used to deposit electronic as well as electrical waste items. Given below are six locations of E-waste bins:

1. D-218 A, Bhaskar Marg, Bani Park, Jaipur (CUTS International office)
2. D-117, Amababari, Jaipur (Etco E-Waste recycler Pvt. Ltd. office)
3. Alankar Plaza, Main Gate, Ground Floor, Vidhyadhar Nagar, Jaipur
4. E-9, Gokhale Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur (Mac Photo Printers)
5. G-202, Anand Chambers, Near Raiser Plaza, Indra Bazar, Jaipur (Pure Tech Business System)
6. H1- 240-243 & H1- 252-255, EPIP, RIICO Industrial Area, Sitapura, Jaipur



on the Jaipur-Delhi National Highway for developing a new stadium.

During the previous Congress tenure, the civic body had allotted nearly 18.16 hectares to RCA in Chop village in 2012. However, the then BJP government cancelled the allotment in 2017 claiming that the academy did not adhere to the terms and conditions. (Tol, 22.12.19)

Electric pyre at Chandpol soon

The electric crematorium at Chandpol will become functional three years after it was established with the JMC deciding to hand it over to a social welfare organisation.

The electric pyre was set up to cut down on the usage of wood.

Due to a lack of awareness among people and technical issues, it was lying unused. (Tol, 04.12.19)

Govt. schools to grow veggies, fruits

The Rajasthan state government has directed the Education Department officials to help schools grow vegetables and fruits on their



campus to reduce the cost of midday meals (MDM) and give students a first-hand experience of gardening.

MDM is provided to all students from classes I to VIII studying in 66,493 government schools across the state. (DB, 12.12.19)

Healthcare to go digital

Janta clinics are all set to redefine healthcare facilities in the city as the Health Department is roping in NGOs for paperless registration of patients as doctors will prescribe medicines on computer applications.

A computerised machine will be installed at the Janta clinic, on which a patient will file his/her details on his/her own or with a helper. The prescription will go to pharmacists directly online and the patients will get medicines. (Tol, 19.12.19)



Jaipur Metro stations to be renamed

Metro stations in the city may soon be named after big brands or companies. On the lines of big cities, including Delhi, Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation (JMRC) has planned to give branding and 'semi-naming in rights' to companies whose name may appear as a prefix to a station's name. (Tol, 06.12.19)

Trial runs for I(B) metro corridor

The JMRC has expedited the ongoing work on the Mansarovar-Chandpole metro to open it for public use by March 2020. To start with, internal tests on Phase I(B) metro would be conducted to check the physical infringements with the underneath platform and the tunnel. (www.pinkypost.com, 14.11.19)

'Jan Aadhar Card' will be applicable in Rajasthan from April 01, 2020



The Rajasthan government has made a formal announcement to bring a new card 'Jan Aadhaar' to give benefits of various government schemes to the citizens of the state. Jan Aadhaar scheme commenced on December 18, 2019 to mark the completion of one year of Ashok Gehlot government's tenure and the same card will be valid from April 01, 2020.

A senior official said that after the new 'Jan Aadhaar Card' came into existence, the 'Bhamashah Card' run by the previous BJP government will be closed. The official said that the process of issuing 'Jan Aadhaar Card' in place of the existing 'Bhamashah Card' has been started and it is expected to be completed in the next three months.

He said that the Jan Aadhaar card will be a unique 10-digit number. Its registration can be done free of cost by visiting Jan Aadhaar portal or e-friend. The State's Medical and Health Minister, Raghu Sharma said after the cabinet meeting, 'Bhamashah card will be replaced by March 31, 2020 in entire Rajasthan. After that only Jan Aadhaar card will be useful. The Jan

A senior official said that after the new 'Jan Aadhaar Card' came into existence, the 'Bhamashah Card' run by the previous BJP government will be closed.

Aadhar card number will be created separately. Bhamashah card number will not be useful after March 31, 2020.

It is noteworthy that the Bhamashah card was started in 2014 by the then Vansudhara Raje government. In this, the card is issued in the name of the woman of the family and the beneficiaries of the public distribution system, free medical, pension and all government schemes are available to the beneficiary through this card. In this, the benefit of cash goes directly to the beneficiary's bank account.

At the same time, CM Gehlot had said that in his budget presented in July, he will bring Rajasthan Jan Aadhaar scheme. According to its guidelines, under this, each family of the state will be given a Jan Aadhaar card with a 10-digit family identification number. A woman of 18 years or more in the family will be made the head. If not female, then 21 years or more will be male head.

The news item appeared in the Times of India on December 15, 2019.

Sources: DB; Dainik Bhaskar; ET: The Economic Times; IE: The Indian Express; IT: India Today; TG: The Guardian; Tol: Times of India

The news/articles in this Newsletter are compressed from several newspapers. The sources given are to be used as a reference for further information, and do not indicate the literal transcript of a particular news/story. CUTS International is a not-for-profit organisation and the listing of paid news/articles is for informative and educative purposes only.

CityMatters is a quarterly newsletter published by Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS), D-217, Bhaskar Marg, Bani Park, Jaipur 302016, India, Phone: 91.141.2282821, Fax: 91.141.2282485, Email: cuts@cuts.org, Web site: www.cuts-international.org, and printed by SGM Printers, Jaipur, India. CUTS offices also at Kolkata, Chittorgarh and New Delhi (India); Lusaka (Zambia); Nairobi (Kenya); Accra (Ghana); Hanoi (Vietnam); Geneva (Switzerland) and Washington DC (USA).