

CUTS IN ACTION

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Infrastructure Holds Key to India's Growth



Infrastructure, as everyone knows, will be the key challenge for India's growth story. One of the key factors in infrastructure is roads, and it is worth recalling John F. Kennedy's famous: 'American roads are not good because America is rich, but America is rich because American roads are good'. Hopefully, the same will happen in India, too.

Here let me take an example of the new four lane highway between Jaipur and Udaipur via Ajmer and Kishangarh, and everyone will agree that it is beautiful. The drive is smooth and the time has been cut down hugely. Some of you may remember the 20 km stretch between Bagru, Dudu and Kishangarh which was a jinxed section with an unusually large number of accidents claiming innocent lives.

The campaign to build modern highways and bypasses was launched sometime in 1995 as the government realised that the existing highway network was not helpful for easy movement of goods and people. It also did not help the economy. The new projects were done under the Public Private Partnership framework. The same campaign was continued by the Manmohan Singh government since 2004, but during his first five year regime the progress, in terms of launching new projects, was hopeless due to an ineffective minister.

On his second term since 2009, Manmohan Singh has appointed a dynamic minister, Kamal Nath to push the agenda with vigour. On taking over as minister for roads, transport and highways, Kamal Nath said: "We have to build 7,000 kms of road network every year, taking the overall target to 35,000 kms in the next five years. We have decided to build 20 kms of roads every day, and then take it to 7,000 kms every year. The government is changing some of the regulations ...to make the road infrastructure sector more investor friendly".

While delivering the 1st CUTS Silver Jubilee Lecture in Jaipur on October 12, 2009, he said "The Indian reform model, because of its calibrated nature and encouragement of interconnectedness with the rest of the world without dependence, is the only model in which no bubble has burst. The challenge before Indians is to harness the highest growth rate in free market democracies to achieve greater inclusiveness and alleviate food insecurity and poverty. Infrastructure constitutes a key link in facilitating sustainable growth and harnessing it for our policy objectives".

Another responsibility of Kamal Nath is to promote road safety, in a country which has one of the worst records of road accidents and fatalities in the world. Therefore, one hopes that he will take the new initiatives to accelerate the road building project by keeping human safety in mind. While building 20 kms of highways every day is laudatory and needed, we also need to save over 250 lives every day from unnecessary road accidents.



Pradeep S Mehta

Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General

Boosting Indo-Bangla Trade

CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS CITEE) organised a stakeholder consultation on '*Indo-Bangla Trade: Focus on the North-East*' in Agartala, on August 09, 2009.

The workshop was attended by high level delegates from Bangladeshi and Indian civil society and business as well as representatives of the Tripura government.

The focus was on trade and transit issues concerning Bangladesh and India, especially the Northeast. The emphasis was on recent developments involving the Government of Bangladesh and Tripura.

A Voice for the Voiceless

CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS CHD), in association with Save the Children-*Bal Raksha Bharat*, organised the launch meeting of the project entitled '*Stronger Voice to Excluded Children in Government and NGO Policies and Programmes*' in Chittorgarh, on July 28, 2009.

The objective of the project is to build a conducive societal atmosphere for overall development and protection of children from various kinds of exploitation and abuse.

Consumer Law in Vietnam

CUTS Hanoi Resource Centre (CUTS HRC), in partnership with the Vietnam Standards and Consumer Protection Association (VINASTAS), organised a national consultation under the project entitled '*Strengthening the Consumer Movement in Vietnam*', in Da Nang, on July 31, 2009.

The consultation was organised with a view to collecting feedbacks from consumers and consumer organisations (VINASTAS and members) on the draft Consumer Protection Law of Vietnam.

Promoting RTI Awareness

CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CUTS CART) in association with Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF), US organised a launch-cum-orientation workshop under the second phase of the RTI project '*Reforming the Processes in the Rural Development Department through Policy and Civic Engagement, based on RTI Act 2005' (RePoRDD)* in Jaipur, on June 13-14, 2009.

The project is being implemented in two administrative districts of Rajasthan, viz., Jaipur and Tonk, with a rural community-based approach.

Its objective is to provide a common platform to all selected Consortium of Groups for Combating Corruption (CGCC) members and orient them to the project goals, objectives, outputs and activities.

Triumph Over Politics

CUTS Geneva Resource Centre (CUTS GRC) organised a reception in Geneva, on July 07, 2009. The reception was for delegates who had attended the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Intergovernmental Group of Experts Meeting on Competition Law and Policy.

CUTS' publication entitled '*Politics Triumphs Economics*' was released on the occasion by Petko Draganov, Deputy Secretary General of UNCTAD. While releasing the book, Draganov commended the publication for its fresh and insightful treatment of regulatory issues.

He opined that it will strengthen the joint efforts of CUTS and UNCTAD to help developing countries introduce and adapt regulatory regimes and pursue international co-operation to maximise the welfare of their citizens and the world at large.

Competition Reforms: A Stocktaking

CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation (CUTS CCIER), in collaboration with Pro-Poor Advocacy Group (Pro-PAG), The Gambia and with the support of the Gambia Competition Commission, organised an interim review meeting of the project, '*Strengthening Constituencies for Effective Competition Regimes in Select Countries of Eastern and Southern Africa*', popularly referred as 7Up4 project in Banjul, The Gambia on July 29-30, 2009.

Partner organisations, competition scholars, practitioners, business representatives, policymakers, regional authority and representatives of the media reviewed the outcomes of the first phase of the

project and suggested the way forward for finalising the research outcomes and launching the advocacy and the capacity building activities for the next phase.

Resource persons from across the world presented their views on specific aspects of competition policy and law, including the future of competition in the present economic downturn, and beyond.



Africa in the Global Crisis

Rashid S. Kaukab of CUTS Geneva attended a joint German Marshall Fund-Evian Group symposium entitled 'Africa in the Global Crisis and Trade Disorder: Transatlantic Policy Options, Regional Integration and Opportunities for Business Leadership', at IMD Lausanne, on July 08, 2009.

He made a presentation on the role of the private sector in trade policy-making in some African countries based on the Fostering Equity and Accountability in the Trading System (FEATS) first phase study.

Informal Sector in South Asia

Niru Yadav of CUTS participated in the two-day international conference on 'Informal Sector in South Asia: Organisational Dynamics, Institutional Determinants, Inter-linkages and Development' held at the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), University of Delhi, in collaboration with Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSC), and Research Programme Consortium on Improving Institutions for Pro-Poor Growth, UK, in New Delhi, on July 27-28, 2009.

The presentations at the conference entailed a wide range of topics both pertaining to informal employment and sector in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

A New Dimension for Competition

Rijit Sengupta of CUTS CCIER participated in the Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) Competition Conference organised by the Federal Antimonopoly Service of the Russian Federation, together with the Brazilian Competition Policy System, Competition Commission of India and State Administration for Industry and Commerce of the People's Republic of China, in Kazan, on September 01-03, 2009.

The conference would add a new dimension to international cooperation on competition – especially by focusing attention on the challenges and requirements for competition reforms in the developing countries.

Africa@WTO

Pradeep S Mehta, Atul Kaushik and Clement Onyango of CUTS participated in a two-day Expert Group meeting on 'Enhancing Africa's Participation in WTO's Negotiation Process' organised by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in Nairobi, on September 07-08, 2009.

Mehta made a presentation highlighting the main outcomes and recommendations relevant for African countries emerging from the CUTS implemented project 'Trade-Development-Poverty Linkages', with emphasis on implications for Doha Round negotiations.



- Suresh P Singh of CUTS CITEE attended a workshop on Trade and Development organised by the European Economic and Social Committee at India Habitat Centre in New Delhi, on September 24, 2009.
- Patrick Chengo of CUTS Lusaka attended the workshop for Parliamentarians and Civil Society on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) in Addis Ababa, on July 31, 2009.
- Clement Onyango of CUTS Africa Resource Centre (CUTS ARC), Nairobi, attended the First African Consumer Dialogue organised by the US-Federal Trade Commission (US-FTC) and the South Africa's Department of Trade in Johannesburg, on August 17-19, 2009.
- Varsha Rathore of CUTS CART participated in the workshop on 'Environment and Tribal Rights' organised by the Centre for Social Development (CSD), in partnership with the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India, in Jaipur on August 18, 2009.
- Amit Chowdhury of CUTS CHD attended a national Conference on 'Making Medicines Affordable – Reaching the Unreached' organised by the District Administration, Medical and Health Department and Indian Medical Association, in Chittorgarh, on July 29, 2009.
- Alice Pham of CUTS Hanoi attended a 'Stakeholder Workshop on Corporate Social Responsibility', convened by ANZ Vietnam (Hanoi's bank), in Hochiminh City, on July 28, 2009. Alice made a presentation on 'How to Promote Consumer Welfare in Banking and Financial Services'.
- Pradeep S Mehta participated in the Third Annual Conference and Ten Year Celebration of the South African Competition Commission and Competition Tribunal in Pretoria, on September 03-04, 2009. He made a presentation and spoke in the session on 'Dimensions of Competition Policy and Law in Emerging Economies'.
- Rajesh Kumar of CUTS CCIER attended the meeting of the Central Advisory Committee, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC), in New Delhi, on July 06, 2009.
- Angela Mwape Mulenga of CUTS Lusaka participated in the Training Workshop on Economic Partnership Agreements organised by Zambia Competition Commission (ZCC), in collaboration with Trade Law Centre for South Africa (TRALAC), Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry (MCTI) and International Development Law Organisation (IDLO), in Lusaka, on September 23, 2009.
- George Cheriyan and Madhu Sudan Sharma of CUTS CART participated in the half-day workshop on 'Integrating Disability in Development Programming in the Light of UNCRPD', organised by Sight Savers International, in Jaipur, on September 08, 2009.
- Keya Ghosh, Prithviraj Nath and Mrimoy Dey of CUTS Calcutta Resource Centre (CUTS CRC) attended a conference entitled 'Powering towards the Future', organised by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), in partnership with West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd. (WBSEDCL), in Kolkata, on July 02, 2009.

VISITORS

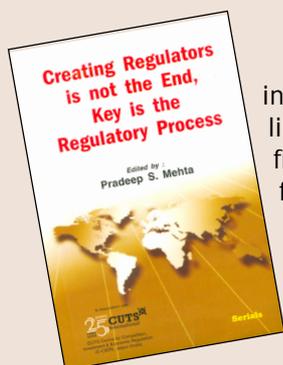
Name	Comments
Sandeep Verma, Commissioner College Education Government of Rajasthan	I am grateful for a truly productive and informative meeting on competition and related aspects of government contracts.
R. Mehta Adviser Ministry of Environment and Forests	It was a nice opportunity to visit CUTS office at Jaipur and renew my interaction with CUTS officials including Pradeep S Mehta. CUTS is doing wonderful work in various spheres including Environmental Education, Trade, etc.
John Bryden & Karen Refsgaard Norwegian Agricultural Economics Research Institute, Oslo	It was wonderful to meet you again and in your home offices. We very much hope to work with you in future on rural development issues.
Tushar Pandey Executive V P YES Bank Ltd.	Very nice to meet the CUTS team. There seems useful synergy in some areas and look forward towards more interactions with CUTS in future.

CUTS' Intervention at the Grassroots' Applauded



The efforts of CUTS CHD in connecting the Kanjar community (which is practicing burglary/robbery/crime) to the main society deserve an applause. The rehabilitation programme for the Kanjar community helped getting 22 people of the community to surrender before the police. The Centre received an appreciation letter by Bharat Singh, State Minister for Rural Development and *Panchayati Raj* on the occasion of Independence Day Celebrations at the district level in Chittorgarh, on August 15, 2009.

PUBLICATIONS



Creating Regulators is not the End, Key is the Regulatory Process

This report focuses on the regulatory process and examines how regulation actually works in a cross-section of developing countries that have taken significant step towards liberalisation and commercialisation. There is a commendably wide range of seven countries from Asia and Africa, and regulated sectors including telecoms, energy, water, transport and financial services. It encompasses many aspects of the regulatory framework.

<http://www.serialspublications.com/bookdetails.asp?bookid=447&title=Creating+Regulators+is+not+the+End,+Key+is+the+Regulatory+Process>

Improving Ownership through Inclusive Trade Policy-making Processes: *Lessons from Africa*

CUTS FEATS project during the first phase of its implementation, has undertaken studies of trade policy-making processes in the five project countries: Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. This monograph presents the key findings of the five country studies, including conclusions and recommendations. The studies have generated information and analysis that can be quite helpful in improving the trade policy-making processes in the project countries. http://www.cuts-grc.org/pdf/FEATS-Advocacy_Monograph.pdf



Towards More Inclusive Trade Policy Making: Process and Role of Stakeholders in Select African Countries

This research publication presents the status of inclusiveness of trade policy-making processes and the role and constraints of various groups of stakeholders in the project countries: Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. It shows the progress towards more inclusive policy-making processes that has generally accompanied the adoption of more outward-oriented trade policies by these countries.

http://www.cuts-grc.org/pdf/FEATS-Research_Report-Trade_Policy.pdf

