

CUTS IN ACTION

CUTS
International

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Good Economics is Good Politics Launching of PAR-FORE



Greetings and a Very Happy, Exciting and Productive New Year from me and every atheist, agnostic, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jew, Muslim, Sikh, and Zoroastrian at CUTS.

When we celebrated our 20 years in 2003, a souvenir was published (and announced in this column of October-December 2002 issue). The souvenir was not the usual type seeking good wishes from well-wishers, but also sought their impressions of and advice for future. One such message was from Frederic Jenny, Judge of the French Supreme Court and Chairman of CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation (CUTS-CCIER): "In the ultimate analysis, CUTS must get the ear of politicians to foster competition policy".

Somewhat on the same lines, another old friend, Ajay Kumar of Tata Sons Ltd, wrote: "More active involvement with the whole class of political executives to inform them of the developments in the world economy with one slogan in mind: Good Economics is Good Politics".

With the aim of putting these advices into action, we launched the Parliamentarians' Forum on Economic Policy Issues (PAR-FORE) in December 2005. CUTS is playing the host to this non-partisan forum whose aim to provoke dispassionate debate among Parliamentarians. It was initiated by Suresh Prabhu of the *Shiv Sena*, Yashwant Sinha of the *Bharatiya Janta Party* (BJP), Dinesh Trivedi of the *Trinamool Congress* (TMC), Madhusudhan Mistry of the Congress and N N Krishna Das of the Communist Party of India (CPI-M). Over 45 MPs from both the Houses have joined the forum, of which an equal number are from the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

During the second meeting, held on December 21, 2005, Dr P C Alexander, the former Governor of Maharashtra and

an independent Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament (MP), was elected as its chairman. At this meeting, Members discussed the outcomes of the recently concluded World Trade

Organisation (WTO) Hong Kong Ministerial, and concurred with CUTS' findings, which concluded that our Commerce Minister, Kamal Nath did a good job. Given the difficulties with the recalcitrant rich countries, we could not have got what we wanted. Alas, that is what always happens in international negotiations, one has to give up something

come up before the House, and do an analysis of the budget proposals, especially looking at unmet promises. In addition, discussions on the amendments to the new Competition Act, 2002, were also slated. However, it was suggested by the Members that this matter could be taken up during the Budget Session of the Parliament, when the amendment proposal will be placed before the two Houses.

Members also felt that we need to increase the participation of MPs in this forum and, therefore, the venue and timing of the meeting needs to be finalised strategically. It was thus decided that the future meetings be held for about an hour over a single issue at the Parliament Library



L-R: M V Rajasekharan, Yashwant Sinha, P C Alexander and Pradeep S Mehta

to pick up something. That is the law of negotiation between unmatched parties.

Two meetings have since been organised at Delhi on a small range of issues. The first meeting was held on December 7, 2005, when the regulatory policy framework of India was discussed. For each of these issues, we have been preparing a briefing: 'Issues for Parliamentarians'; which captures the essentials in a few words. Members also suggested that we continue publishing critiques on new economic bills, which

over lunch. Some of the other matters, which will come up for orientation, will include international environmental agreements, urban development etc. At CUTS, all of us are very excited and hope that, in 2006, we will be able to solidify PAR-FORE and aid the process of economic reforms, so that more jobs are created and lesser people go to bed hungry.

Pradeep S Mehta
Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General

CUTS@Hong Kong

The Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference was held in Hong Kong, China, during December 13-18, 2005. A large delegation of CUTS from five Programme Centres in India and three overseas Resource Centres participated in the Ministerial.

The Secretary General of CUTS International, Pradeep S Mehta, was invited to join the official Indian delegation to the WTO Ministerial. Besides, 11 network partners also formed a part of the CUTS International delegation.

During the week-long Ministerial, CUTS organised various events at the sidelines of the WTO meeting which are mentioned below:

- CUTS-CCIER, in association with the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) and Consumers International (CI), organised a panel discussion on 'Competition Issues in the Global Agricultural Commodity Markets and the WTO: Whose Agenda?', on December 17, 2005. The main objective of the session was to highlight the impact of restricted competition in the global market for agricultural commodities.



L-R: Mario Marconini, Sok Hach, Manuel Montes and Pradeep S Mehta

- CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS-CITEE), in association with Economic Institute of Cambodia (EIC), the Network of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (NEED), India and CUTS Africa Resource Centre (CUTS-ARC), Zambia organised a panel discussion on 'Does Trade Lead to Poverty Reduction? Voices from Grassroots Alliances', on December 15, 2005. In the discussion, eminent panellists pointed out that the linkages between trade and poverty reduction are not yet clear. A book entitled, 'Globalisation and Livelihood Concerns: People's Perception in Agriculture and Textiles & Clothing (T&C) Sector in Rajasthan and West Bengal, India', was released on the occasion.

- CUTS-ARC, Zambia, in collaboration with civil society partners, organised a panel discussion on 'Synergising LDC and Developing Country Priorities', on December 13, 2005. The objective of the discussion was to promote cooperation among the developing and least developed countries (LDCs) in the WTO system.

- CUTS-CITEE, in association with the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), EIC, Institute for International Trade Negotiations (ICONE), Brazil, and Southern and Eastern African Trade, Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI), Zimbabwe, organised a panel discussion on 'South-South Cooperation on WTO Issues: Where Do We Stand and How to Move Forward?' on December 15, 2005. The meeting aimed towards further consolidating South-South alliances on WTO issues to reap maximum benefits out of international trade negotiations. The book entitled, 'South Asian Positions in the WTO Doha Round: In Search of A True Development Agenda', was released on the occasion.

(cuts-international.org/cuts-hk-eventreport.htm)

Alerting Youth on HIV/AIDS

CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS-CHD), in association with CARE India and District Health Department, Chittorgarh, organised 'AIDS Awareness Programme' at Bhilwara, Rajasthan, during December 01-15, 2005.



The programme aimed at social mobilisation in order to promote awareness on HIV/AIDS and to sensitise the community, especially the youth to be on the alert against the dangerous consequences of this fatal disease.

(www.cuts-international.org/eventsreport2005.htm#aids1des05)

Trade for Human Development

CUTS-CITEE organised a three-day National Seminar, under two projects: 'Grassroots Reachout & Networking in India on Trade & Economics' (GRANITE) being implemented in eight states in India, with the support of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), and Novib (OXFAM, The Netherlands); and 'Linkages between Trade, Development and Poverty Reduction', under implementation in 15 countries across

Asia, Africa and Europe, with the support of The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINBUZA) and the Department of International Development (DFID), UK, at Jaipur, Rajasthan, on November 13-15, 2005.

The Seminar aimed to facilitate cross-fertilisation of experiences and lessons learnt during implementation of the projects, including deliberations on linkages between trade and development policy in India *vis-à-vis* stakeholders' perception about these linkages and related issues.

(granite.org.in/pdf/national-seminar.pdf & cuts-international.org/pdf/TDP-Report15nov05.pdf)

Stratagem for Trade

CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CUTS-CART), the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), and the Federation of Indian Micro and Small & Medium-sized Enterprises (FISME), jointly organised an inception workshop for the project on 'Strategies and Preparedness for Trade and Globalisation in India' (small and cottage industries including handicrafts and leather footwear), at Jaipur, Rajasthan, on November 07, 2005.

More than 70 participants from across the state attended the workshop, which included different stakeholders, industry associations, representatives from United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), FICCI, FISME, media, CSOs, state government departments, artisans, weavers, academia, etc.

(cuts-international.org/pdf/ER-inception7nov05.pdf)

Mass Awareness on Drugs

CUTS Calcutta Resource Centre (CUTS-CRC) organised the 'Training of Trainers' Workshop for generating consumer awareness on the Rational Use of Drugs at Kolkata, West Bengal, India, on October 1, 2005. The Workshop was held under the project, 'Promotion of Rational Use of Drugs through Patient Information Manual (PIM) and Consumer Awareness Programmes'.



The objective of the workshop was to make consumers (patients) aware about their rights and responsibilities regarding the proper usage of drugs.

(cuts-international.org/eventsreport2005.htm#t1oct05)

Benefit Sharing Process

Mita Duta of CUTS-CRC attended the 8th Sustainable Development Conference organised by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), at Islamabad, Pakistan, on December 07-09, 2005. She presented a paper at the panel on 'Natural Resource Management: Access Benefit Sharing (ABS)'. The discussion tried to bring out the role of ABS in managing natural resources to protect indigenous communities.

Infrastructure Regulation

Vinayak R Pandey of CUTS CCIER attended a brainstorming meeting of 'National Council on Infrastructure', organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) at New Delhi, on November 21, 2005, to share its presentation made before the Planning Commission on infrastructure regulation in India. He submitted CUTS' viewpoint (CUTS being a member of the Council) that competition issues should not be left exclusively for regulators to deal with.

The WTO: Challenges Ahead



Pranav Kumar of CUTS-CITEE participated in a multi-stakeholder dialogue entitled, 'The Multi-Dimensional Challenges of the WTO Ministerial' at International Institute for Management Development (IMD), Lausanne, Switzerland, on November 11-13, 2005. The meeting was jointly organised by the Evian Group, Switzerland, and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), Geneva, in which he facilitated a Working Group discussion on India's domestic issues and trade policy.

Advocacy

Amendments in Education Sector

CUTS hails the recommendations of Tiwari Committee and demands for its immediate implementation. Earlier, in a letter addressed to Ghanshyam Tiwari, Rajasthan State Education Minister, CUTS-CART had requested to bring reforms in the education sector particularly the policies of the private schools, which included selling school uniforms and books; and charging different levels of fees structure, among other things. Most of these demands have been considered by the Committee and are included in its recommendations. However, the recommendations are yet to come into force.

Competition Regimes in the World

CUTS International embarked on an ambitious endeavour to develop a report entitled, 'Competition Regimes in the World – A Civil Society Report', which is a compilation of short essays on the national competition regimes in about 117 countries. An 'advance copy' of the report was released in the presence of more than 50 international delegates in one of the side events of the Fifth Review Conference of the UNCTAD held in Antalya, Turkey, during November 14-18, 2005.



L-R: Frederic Jenny, Dave Levis, Mehta, Allan Asher, Santiago Roca, George Lipimile and Gesner Oliveira

The members of the International Network of Civil Society Organisations on Competition (INCSOC) and other scholars have contributed essays on the state of competition across the globe. The book received huge admiration at the conference. (cuts-international.org/news-cuts2005.htm#un17nov05)



SHORT CUTS

- Santanu Banerjee of CUTS-CRC attended a programme organised by the Consumer Affairs Department, Government of West Bengal on December 26, 2005, to celebrate National Consumer Day that falls on December 24, every year.
- R K Sharma of CUTS-CART attended a half-day State-level Consultation on UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) organised by the Centre for Community Economics and Development Consultants Society (CECOEDECON) at Jaipur, Rajasthan, on December 08, 2005.
- Madhumanti of CUTS-CITEE attended the 'International Conference on Economics of Sustainable Development', organised by Anuvrat Global Organisation (Anuvibha), Jaipur and the Institute for Integrated Learning in Management (IILM), Jaipur at New Delhi, on December 07-08, 2005. The focus of the conference was to synthesise alternative strategies for sustainability and human welfare by bringing together visionaries from various fields ranging from economics to spirituality.
- Anne Maina and Grace Njeru of CUTS-NRC attended a meeting on 'East and Southern Africa Civil Society on WTO towards Hong Kong', organised by EcoNews on behalf of Africa Trade Network, at Nairobi, Kenya, on November 25-26, 2005.
- Vladimir Chilinya of CUTS-ARC participated in the 'Pre-Hong Kong Retreat', organised by the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry (MCTI), Zambia on November 24, 2005. The objective was to review the activities under the DDA negotiations and to make recommendations relevant to Zambia *vis-à-vis* sixth WTO Ministerial in Hong Kong, in December 2005.
- Signe Glahn of CUTS-LRC attended the seminar entitled, 'Sustainable Production and Consumption: Practical, Efficient and Proactive Innovation', at Vasteras, Sweden, on November 22-23, 2005. She also attended the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) Meeting on 'Economic Partnership Agreements' (EPAs) and the WTO' at London, UK, on November 25, 2005.
- Mehta, Dalia Dey, Madhumanti and John Tabari of CUTS participated in a two-day stakeholders consultation workshop organised by the Department of Commerce, Government of India and UNCTAD, at New Delhi, during November 28-29, 2005. This was a concluding meeting prior to the Hong Kong Ministerial, aimed to bring together views from different civil society meetings held throughout the year on WTO issues.
- Alice Pham of CUTS C-CIER moderated the session on 'International Cooperation among Competition Authorities in Asia', during the Seoul Annual Competition Forum held at Seoul, Korea, on November 11-12, 2005.
- Ruchi Sharma of CUTS attended a workshop on 'Outsourcing Strategy to Improve Competitiveness: Sharing Experience', organised by the Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), at New Delhi, on October 15, 2005. The workshop aimed at enabling enterprises to carve out an outsourcing strategy to improve their competitiveness.

FORUM

Thank you very much for your kind greetings and for the information that you have sent to me about the activities of the CUTS.

I always think that the role of India in the management and in the further building of the WTO is of fundamental importance. This is also why I consider that the role of your Centre is of great value.

Renato Ruggiero
Chairman of Citigroup in Switzerland
Vice Chairman of Citigroup European Investment Bank and former Director General, WTO

Glimpses of Ongoing and Future Projects of CUTS

CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS-CITEE)

CUTS-CITEE is planning to start the project on 'Dumping Disputes and Livelihoods' in April 2006. It will be a one-year pilot study investigating the concept within Bangladesh and India. The project will seek tendencies in livelihood adjustments from past and present dumping disputes to ascertain whether there is effective governance provided at both national and international levels.



CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation (CUTS-CCIER)

CUTS-CCIER is implementing a project entitled, 'Competition Issues in Pharmaceutical Industry and Health Delivery Systems in India' to assess the extent of anticompetitive practices in the Indian pharmaceutical industry and health delivery systems. The project is being supported by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.



CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CUTS-CART)

CUTS-CART, in partnership with the South Asia Social Accountability Network (SASANet) of the World Bank, has launched a project to conduct a Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) on the Mid-day Meal Scheme (MDMS) in Rajasthan, in October 2005, which would continue till March 2006. It would look into the schemes and expenditure at the State-level in Rajasthan, with special focus on Chittorgarh district for an in-depth analysis.



CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS-CHD)

CUTS-CHD, in association with CARE, India has implemented Reproductive and Child Health, Nutrition and AIDS Programme (RACHNA) from October 15, 2005 to March 31, 2006. The project aims at improving the quality and coverage of maternal and child health services and engages and strengthens the local government bodies for community engagement process.



CUTS Calcutta Resource Centre (CUTS-CRC)

CUTS-CRC is implementing a project entitled, 'Farmers Rights to Livelihood' being funded by Ford Foundation, New Delhi and Novib, (Oxfam, The Netherlands) and would continue till June 2007. The project intends to study the *Access and Benefit Sharing and Prior Informed Consent issues relating to the Traditional Knowledge* of the mountain farming communities in particular and the farmers' role in the decision-making process.



VISITORS

Name	Comments
S Sundar, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), New Delhi	I have always been impressed and excited by the work CUTS does and wish it all the best.
Meenakshi Hooja, Principal Secretary, Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Jaipur, Rajasthan	A very educative and interactive visit giving food for thought and action. Discussion on the State Competition and Regulatory Act (SCoRA) will facilitate more clear thinking on the subject.
B M Jain, Professor and Research Scientist in Political Science, South Asia Studies Centre, University of Rajasthan, India	It was a great pleasure to meet Mehta to discuss academic and research matters. He demonstrated a great sense of commitment to fostering a high quality of research. The congenial environment in the organisation having a good library and an array of publications impressed me.
Chandrakant Patel, Southern and Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI), Geneva	It has been a pleasure visiting CUTS and meeting its fine staff. To Pradeep, my admiration for CUTS and your work grows each time.
Navneet Sharma, Eritrean Institute of Technology, Eritrea	CUTS is a role model for a developing country NGO. CUTS has demonstrated that advocacy and research-based action is vital to all countries.

MOVING ON

Promoting Excellence!



George Cheriyan

After completing my two-year stint with CUTS, I move on. On the whole, I enjoyed working here and learned a lot, especially the professional environment and the systematic manner whereby the development sector is dealt with. I got new insights about a number of programme areas ranging from consumer protection to good governance. CUTS makes sincere efforts towards perfection, and maintains high quality in all its activities, which makes it stand aside from other NGOs. I wish CUTS, especially CART and CHD, all the best in its future endeavours.

An Enriching Experience!

Working at CUTS has been a wonderful experience for me. I came here with no work experience at all, but because of the warm attention of my colleagues, I faced absolutely no problems in adjusting. My stay here has been cut short because of my wedding. Nevertheless, my two and a half month experience has been extremely enriching. I wish my association with CUTS to continue, if need be, I shall be willing to help it any which way.



Pallavi Mukherji

Greater Opportunities!



Garima Shrivastava

I am extremely grateful to CUTS for giving me the opportunity to work, grow and learn. The management made me feel comfortable by cooperating and listening to my problems. I wish that all the Centres of CUTS, though functional in different areas, should work for one common mission to grow, prosper and reach new heights. I am glad that I was associated with 'CUTS' and would be available whenever I am needed.