

# CUTS CITEE in Action

January-March 2014

## Events

### Training Programme for Indian Government Officials on Economic Diplomacy

**E**conomic diplomacy is concerned with anticipating and influencing the outcomes of future economic policy (trade, investment, etc.) regimes of other countries. This requires a need for better understanding of the working of market forces in different countries in the given but dynamic global economic environment. In this regard, CUTS with support from the Government of India organised a three-day training programme during March 24-26, 2014 in Jaipur for capacity building of government officials/diplomats, private sector and civil society in India.



[http://www.cuts-citee.org/Economic\\_Diplomacy](http://www.cuts-citee.org/Economic_Diplomacy)

### Need for a Public Procurement Policy of India

**C**UTS is implementing a project on 'National Public Procurement Policy in India' with support from the British High Commission, New Delhi, India. The long term objective of the project is to conduct applied research and advocate for a comprehensive and balanced National Procurement Policy of India which will allow governmental bodies to determine their approach to public expenditure after assessing the macroeconomic climate under which such they are to be made and by taking into account their impact on major socio-economic development objectives. It will be implemented from July 01, 2013 to March 31, 2015.



A National Consultation Meeting entitled, 'Need for a Public Procurement Policy of India' was held at New Delhi on March 07, 2014 to identify specific concerns pertaining to public procurement, as expressed by stakeholders, which could find possible reflection in the policy instrument. The meeting was attended by variety of stakeholders, such as the public and private sector, government officials, business associations and civil society organisations.

Regional stakeholder consultations were organised at Ranchi on January 08; at Mumbai on January 20; and at Bangalore on February 25, 2014 respectively. The objectives of the meetings were to understand

stakeholders' experience in the public procurement system and to obtain their-inputs on (draft) policy briefs exploring interfaces between procurement policy and other macroeconomic policies, such as manufacturing, competition, sustainable procurement, trade, fiscal and state-government-level-procurement in order to adapt them for the National Public Procurement Policy.

<http://www.cuts-citee.org/NPPPI/>

## Trade Consignment Mapping for Better Regional Connectivity in South Asia



CUTS with the support of the Asia Foundation and along with its partners has undertaken the study entitled, 'Trade Consignment Mapping for better Regional Connectivity in South Asia' to assess the trade facilitation requirements to improve some of the most important overland trade corridors in South Asia.

The Project Inception Meeting was organised at New Delhi on February 21, 2014. The objective of the meeting was to present research methodology, initial results and expected outcomes as well as to deliberate upon the key impediments to trade and trade facilitation measures along selected trade corridors in mainland South Asia.

<http://www.cuts-citee.org/TCMSA/>

### Sustainable Development in South Asia

CUTS, as a partner organisation, joined the project Inception workshop organised by Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Government of Australia, at Canberra on February 24-26, 2014. The main objectives of this workshop were to:

- develop a shared understanding of the Sustainable Development Investment Portfolio (SDIP) vision and practice of the portfolio approach, including what success will look like and fit within the South Asia Regional Programme;
- confirm approach to monitoring and evaluation at the portfolio level development impact, development outcomes, and organisational outcomes;
- elaborate and validate an initial snapshot of the development landscape for the SDIP impact areas across the Himalayan river basins of South Asia, and where portfolio partners fit within this framework;
- consolidate the administration of the SDIP, particularly the role of DFAT; and
- provide an opportunity for SDIP partners to use the open spaces tool to raise and address outstanding issues or questions.

<http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/>

### Food Security, Climate Change and Trade

CUTS with its consortium partners, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI, India), National Institute for Consumer Research (SIFO, Norway), and Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI, Norway) is implementing a project 'Food Security in India: The Interactions of Climate Change, Economics, Politics and Trade'. The project is supported by The Research Council of Norway and seeks to explore a model for analysing food security in India through the interactions of climate change, economics, politics and trade.



To advance the activities of the project, CUTS International and IFPRI jointly organised a workshop at New Delhi, on March 11, 2014. The major objective of the workshop was to discuss and explore possible effects of climate change on agricultural production in India and to understand effects of changes in food entitlements on household food security. A CUTS publication entitled, 'National Food Security Act of India, 2013: A Compendium' was also released on the occasion.

<http://www.cuts-citee.org/FOODSEC/>

### Financial Intermediaries and Trade Facilitation in South Asia



CUTS with the support of the Asia Foundation has undertaken a project entitled 'Financial Intermediaries and Trade Facilitation in South Asia' under the programme 'Innovative Approaches to Address a Specific Non-Tariff Barrier to Trade in South Asia'.

A Focused Meeting between Clientele Group on 'Lack of Reliable and Fast Payment Options to Facilitate Trade Transactions in South Asia' was held at New Delhi on February 20, 2014. The objective of

the meeting was to gather concerns of the industry and their policy suggestions regarding trade related banking transactions in South Asia, in general, and between India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, in particular.

This was a focused meeting with the participation of representatives of apex industry bodies from three countries in focus, including SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry, South Asia Watch on Trade Economics and Environment and Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce & Industry.

<http://www.cuts-citee.org/FITF/>

## Mega FTAs and the Indian Economy

CUTS with support from UK's Department for International Development, under its Knowledge Partnership Programme, is implementing a project on 'Mega FTAs and the Indian Economy'.

A brainstorming meeting on 'Mega FTAs and the Indian Economy: *Analyses of Impacts and Counter Measures*' was organised at New Delhi on January 24, 2014 to present the methodology, initial results and expected outcomes. A number of relevant Indian stakeholders and experts from and outside India participated to help achieve the expected outcomes of the study.

<http://www.cuts-citee.org/EPTAs/>



## Development Dimensions of India's Foreign Trade Policy



CUTS with support from UK's Department for International Development, under its Knowledge Partnership Programme, has undertaken a project on 'National Foreign Trade Policy of India'. A brainstorming meeting on 'Development Dimensions of India's Foreign Trade Policy' was organised at New Delhi on January 31, 2014 to present the methodology, initial results and expected outcomes.

<http://www.cuts-citee.org/NFTP/>

### Participation

- Venugopal Ravindran and Prashant Sharma participated in 5<sup>th</sup> SAARC Business Leaders Conclave: South Asian Century: Progressing towards Regional Integration organised by FICCI at New Delhi on January 16-17, 2014. The focus of the conclave was to come up with policy measures that would create an enabling environment for easy and frequent business to business interaction in South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation region.
- Aparna Sharma participated in '2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference on Normalising India-Pakistan Trade' by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations at New Delhi on January 21, 2014. The objective of the conference was mainly to discuss the opportunities and challenges for enhancing trade between India and Pakistan.
- Ram Kumar Jha attended 14<sup>th</sup> Delhi Sustainable Development Summit on 'Energy, Water and Food Security for All' organised by The Energy and Resources Institute at New Delhi on February 06-08, 2014. The focal point was energy-water-food security for all and to discuss the need of developing strategies to counter the associated challenges.
- Bipul Chatterjee attended an event entitled, 'Regional Cooperation on Trade, Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia: Some Reflections and Way Forward' organised by South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment at Kathmandu on March 13-14, 2014. He spoke in the session on 'Transit Agreement'.
- Bipul Chatterjee made a presentation on 'WTO Bali Ministerial – Implications for Developing Countries and LDCs' at the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Programme/Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme (ITEC/SCAAP) Capacity Building Programme organised by Research and Information System for Developing Countries at New Delhi, on March 14, 2014.
- Simi T B participated in the consultation workshop on 'Consumer Perceptions of Green Products in India', organised by Green Purchasing Network India & Econnect Knowledge Foundation at Mumbai on March 21, 2014. The objective was to present the findings of a study entitled, '*Consumer Perceptions of Green Products in India*' and make recommendations for better communication as well as to discuss the challenges and explore opportunities to take the project further.
- Bipul Chatterjee attended an event entitled 'Deconstructing South-South Cooperation: A South Asian Perspective' organised by National Council of Applied Economic Research and Centre for Policy Dialogue, Dhaka on March 28, 2014.

## Unpacking the Bali Package: A Snapshot of the Bali Ministerial Decisions of the WTO Members

The paper aims to serve as a precursor to identifying the challenges that countries may face in implementing the Bali Package by giving a brief history of each pillar, identifying what the possible next steps of each ministerial decision might be and by providing a brief assessment of how this decision could affect various other stakeholders, especially consumers.

[http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Unpacking\\_the\\_Bali\\_Package-A\\_Snapshot\\_of\\_the\\_Bali\\_Ministerial\\_Decisions\\_of\\_the\\_WTO\\_Members.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Unpacking_the_Bali_Package-A_Snapshot_of_the_Bali_Ministerial_Decisions_of_the_WTO_Members.pdf)

## Harmonisation of Seed Certification Processes in Bangladesh and India

The paper seeks to analyse and understand factors that support or hinder harmonisation of seed certification processes between India and Bangladesh. The analysis, however, is confined to variety rice seed. It provides theoretical background to seed certification and analyses similarities and dissimilarities in seed standards and certifications in the two countries.

[http://www.cuts-citee.org/riste/pdf/Harmonisation\\_of\\_Seed\\_Certification\\_Processes\\_in\\_Bangladesh\\_and\\_India.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/riste/pdf/Harmonisation_of_Seed_Certification_Processes_in_Bangladesh_and_India.pdf)

### Upcoming Event

## India in the International Trading System New Delhi, India, October 2014

Due to India's growing influence in the in the global economy, in October 2014 CUTS will be hosting a conference entitled India in the International Trading System. The conference will invite esteemed speakers from various organisations and will serve as a platform to discuss how India can navigate more effectively within the international trading system; and play a more constructive role in its engagements at both the multilateral and regional levels.

After more than two decades of ministerial conferences resulting in less than optimum outcomes, the Bali Ministerial Conference, held in December 2013, marked the first substantive breakthrough of the WTO since the launch of the Doha Round. Not only did the successful outcome of the ninth ministerial conference restore faith in a system that many had begun to view as defunct, it also paved the way for the implementation of specific trade-related rules and regulations that are expected to have large benefits for the global economy.

As a result of lack of progress at the multilateral level, the international trading system witnessed a dramatic shift towards regional trading agreements resulting in a four-fold increase in these preferential trading agreements in the space of twenty years. With the recent success of the Bali Ministerial however, the WTO has reasserted its primacy as the pre-eminent forum for global trade within the international trade system. This development however now places countries in a position where they now need to identify how best to steer themselves within the complex network of both multilateral and regional trading rules.

