

CUTS CITEE in Action

July-September 2015

Events

Facilitating Trade through Tried and Tested UN Transport Facilitation Instruments

International Road Transport Union (IRU) and CUTS International jointly organised a working session during the 15th WTO Public Forum at Geneva, Switzerland on September 30, 2015. The session introduced participants to the benefits of TIR – a global customs transit system and guarantee that reduces waiting times at borders,



ports and railway terminals. The panellists discussed questions, such as how facilitating transport drives trade, what the barriers are facing seamless transport and transit, best practices on transport facilitation and what roles road transport conventions and agreements are playing or could play in facilitating transport and trade among countries.

The key speakers were Eva Molnar, Director of the Transport Division, UNECE; Mohsen Naziri Asl, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to UN Office in Geneva; Jan Hoffman, Chief of Trade facilitation Section, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD; and Bipul Chatterjee, Executive Director, CUTS International. The session was moderated by Jens Hügel, Head of Goods Transport and Sustainable Development, IRU.

www.iru.org/en_news_item?story=3617

India, Eurasian customs union FTA to boost trade: Study

Economics Times, August 21, 2015

A free trade agreement “will benefit the people of both regions in short and long-term. It will strengthen and enhance economic, trade and investment cooperation and promote trade in goods and services,” the study by think tank Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) said.

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-08-21/news/65706282_1_joint-study-group-regional-and-multilateral-institutions-trade-and-investment

Do we need a change of tack on climate?

The Hindu Business Line, September 17, 2015

Pradeep S Mehta

With the submission deadline for the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) for the Paris Climate Summit drawing near, the spotlight is once again on New Delhi. India, which is hosting a meeting of like-minded developing countries on this subject, is the last major player which is yet to announce its INDC.

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/indias-change-of-tack-on-climate-issue/article7659911.ece>

Participation

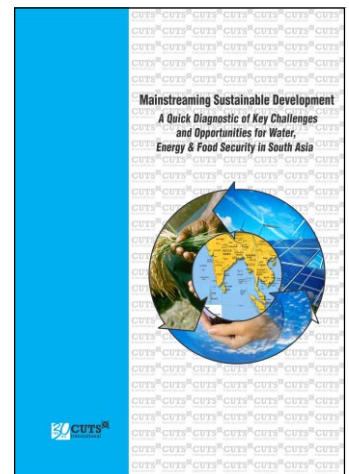
- Prashant Sharma participated in a discussion with the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India on the ‘Arrangements of Pilot Implementation of Cargo Transport’ under the BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement at New Delhi on September 29, 2015.
- Surendar Singh and Veena Vidyadharan participated in a seminar on ‘Distribution of Solar Water Pumping Programme for Ground Water in Rajasthan’ organised by the Department of Agriculture Rajasthan and Teri University at Jaipur on September 29, 2015.
- Chenai C. Mukumba and Arundhati Kulshrestha participated and made a presentation on *Women Entrepreneurship in India* in a conference on ‘Advancing Women’s Entrepreneurship in South Asia’ organised by the South Asian Women Development Forum in partnership with The Asia Foundation at Kathmandu, Nepal on September 20-21, 2015. The aim of the conference was to provide an opportunity to build a common strategy for promoting women’s economic empowerment in South Asia for deepening regional cooperation. It prioritised various issues on women entrepreneurship.
- Veena Vidyadharan and Susan Mathew participated in a meeting ‘Increasing Access to Reliable and Affordable Solar Products in Rural Rajasthan’ organised by International Finance Corporation at Jaipur on September 14, 2015.
- Susan Mathew presented a case study scenario for ‘Presenting data in interesting ways in cases of time stressed situations’ in TehCamp India organised by the US Department of State and the Observer Research Foundation at New Delhi on September 08-09, 2015.
- Susan Mathew attended a regional consultation on ‘Conservation, Use and Exchange of Crop Genetic Resources: Promoting Regional Cooperation for a Food-Secure, Climate-Resilient South Asia’ organised by South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics & Environment & Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Norway at Kathmandu, Nepal on August 25, 2015. She presented CUTS’ work and the case of India in the session *Climate and Natural Disasters in South Asia: Scope for Regional Cooperation on the Conservation, Use and Exchange of Crop Genetic Resources*.

Mainstreaming Sustainable Development

A Quick Diagnostic of Key Challenges and Opportunities for Water, Energy & Food Security in South Asia

Water, energy and food are interlinked and highly interdependent. This diagnostic study that draws on a range of interviews with key stakeholders, discusses key challenges around water, energy and agriculture in the South Asian subcontinent. It identifies and analyses challenges in access to these resources in three river basins (viz. Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra) spread across five South Asian countries (viz. Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh). It also analyses the possible solutions to these challenges from the stakeholders' perspective.

www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Mainstreaming_Sustainable_Development_A_Quick_Diagnostic_of_Key_Challenges_and_Opportunities_for_Water_Energy_Food_Security_in_South_Asia.pdf

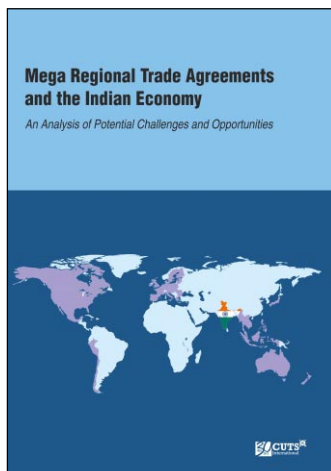


Mega Regional Trade Agreements and the Indian Economy

An Analysis of Potential Challenges and Opportunities

The study assesses the potential impact of the three mega regional trade agreements (RTAs) on the Indian economy, with particular focus on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). In detailing the forecasted implications, it provides a series of recommendations as to how India should adapt its trade policy and strategy, efficiently embrace the opportunities arising from this new international trade regime and minimise the potential negative impacts.

www.cuts-citee.org/EPTAs/pdf/Mega_Regional_Trade_Agreements_and_the_Indian_Economy_An_Analysis_of_Potential_Challenges_and_Opportunities.pdf



Briefing Paper

WTO Verdict on Livestock Sector

A Threat or an Opportunity to Strengthen our System?

WTO panel has recently ruled that India's ban on importation of various agricultural products, such as poultry meat, eggs and live pigs from the US purportedly because of concerns related to Avian Influenza violated several global trade laws because they were imposed without sufficient scientific evidence. Though India has appealed to the Dispute Settlement Board of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), it is wise to develop and enhance India's own livestock sector, both in terms of domestic demand and in terms of exports to other countries. Besides, coming up with a more robust livestock policy to boost the exports and at competitive rates to countries from where India is importing at present.

www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Briefing_Paper15-WTO_Verdict_on_Livestock_Sector_A_Threat_or_an_Opportunity_to_Strengthen_our_System.pdf



Regional Cooperation in South Asia *Can Prospects Outweigh Problems?*

The objective of regional cooperation is to enhance each member state's security, economic growth and cultural harmonisation. Prior to 1950s and 1960s, most of the Asian region was a single entity and after the end of colonialism in this region it was divided into multiple sovereign states. This new arrangement has resulted into tariff barriers, slow progress in intra-regional trade, continuous armed conflicts and negligible cross-cultural cooperation. In light of above, this paper discusses South Asian regionalism with its future prospects followed by its current issues and opportunities.

www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Regional_cooperation_in_South_Asia_Can_prospects_overweigh_problems.pdf

India's Free Trade Agreement Record

India's experience in negotiating free trade agreements (FTAs), especially with Asian countries, can be a valuable indicator of possible implications in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) talks. This paper provides an overview of select issues and concerns as well as India's overall record with FTAs that can guide India in its negotiations on RCEP to conclude a beneficial agreement. For India to gain the most for its economic and development needs as well as regional interest, it will need all the resources available to engage with the trade agreement's large and diverse negotiating membership.

www.cuts-citee.org/EPTAs/pdf/Indias_Free_Trade_Agreement_Record.pdf

India's Neighbourhood Aid Policy *Opportunities and Challenges*

India's aid policy towards South Asian neighbours has been driven by economic, historical and political reasons. Economic factors include the economic benefits of expanding Indian multinational corporations (MNCs), India's energy interests and long term natural resource sustainability. In this context, this paper focuses on the India's role in the growth and development of its neighbourhood. It also analyses the misconceptions about India's aid policies and politics and offers suggestions to address those misconceptions.

www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Indias_Neighbourhood_Aid_Policy-Opportunities_and_Challenges.pdf

Development through Connectivity *How to Strengthen India-ASEAN Trade and Commerce*

This paper is about why India needs to have a better trade relation with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Between 2008 and 2013, India's trade with ASEAN region has increased faster than two of its two largest trading partners, namely, European Union (EU) and the US. We find evidence of cross-border investment and trading activities between ASEAN and Indian firms. There exists complementarity in trading relation, which are documented.

www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Development_through_Connectivity-How_to_Strengthen_India-ASEAN_Trade_and_Commerce.pdf