

# CUTS CITEE in Action

April-June 2015

## Events

### Trade and Knowledge Sharing in HYV Rice Seeds

CUTS International organised an advocacy and dissemination meeting of the project entitled, 'Addressing Barriers to Rice Seeds Trade between India and Bangladesh' (RISTE) at New Delhi, on April 30, 2015. The objectives of the meeting were to facilitate



the signing of MoU between the apex seeds associations of Bangladesh and India; disseminate major outputs of the project; and advocate for an enabling environment for cross-border trade and knowledge-sharing not just in HYV rice seeds but also in other agricultural inputs between two countries.

[http://www.cuts-citee.org/RISTE/pdf/Report-Dissemination\\_and\\_Advocacy\\_Meeting-RISTE.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/RISTE/pdf/Report-Dissemination_and_Advocacy_Meeting-RISTE.pdf)

### Indo-Nepal Dialogue on Trade Facilitation and Commercial Access through Raxaul-Birgunj

CUTS International, in partnership with Consulate General of India, Birgunj, Nepal organised 'Indo-Nepal Dialogue on Trade Facilitation and Commercial Access through Raxaul-Birgunj: Stakeholders Perspective' at Birgunj, Nepal on April 16, 2015. The meeting, supported by The Asia Foundation and in association with Birgunj Chamber of Commerce and Industry, aimed at discussing infrastructural, regulatory and procedural barriers to India-Nepal Trade & Commerce through Raxaul-Birgunj corridor; and eliciting stakeholders' recommendations for relevant and specific solutions.

[http://www.cuts-citee.org/TCMSA/pdf/Report-Raxaul-Birgunj\\_Trade\\_Facilitation\\_Dialouge.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/TCMSA/pdf/Report-Raxaul-Birgunj_Trade_Facilitation_Dialouge.pdf)

## Mega Regional Trade Agreements and their Impacts on the Indian Economy

CUTS International, in association with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) organised a seminar on 'Mega Regional Trade Agreements and their Impacts on the Indian Economy' at New Delhi on April 22, 2015. The aim of the seminar was to present the overall



findings of the 'External Preferential Trade Agreements and the Indian Economy (EPTA)' report carried out by CUTS International which was managed by IPE Global and funded by Department For International Development (DFID), UK.

[http://www.cuts-citee.org/EPTAs/pdf/Report-Mega\\_Regional\\_Trade\\_Agreements\\_and\\_their\\_Impacts\\_on\\_the\\_Indian\\_Economy.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/EPTAs/pdf/Report-Mega_Regional_Trade_Agreements_and_their_Impacts_on_the_Indian_Economy.pdf)

### Participation

- Chenai C Mukumba participated as the resource person at the South Asia Women's Entrepreneurship Symposium Dialogues to Advance Women's Entrepreneurship in India organised by The Asia Foundation on June 11, 2015. The objective of the meeting was to provide a platform for women entrepreneurs to access information on government policies and contribute ideas to advance women's entrepreneurship, particularly among women in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in India.
- Neeraj R S and Sara attended the 'Global Exhibition on Services' jointly organised by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Confederation of Indian Industries during April 23-25, 2015 to gather perspective on the growing relevance of the services sector in Indian economy.
- Neeraj R S attended the conference on 'Changing Economic Scenario: Implications for India's Trade Policy and Make in India Programme' at New Delhi on May 12, 2015 to gain better understanding of the implications that mega RTAs will have on India.
- Prashant Sharma attended the 'Sixth Round of India-Bangladesh Friendship Dialogue' organised at New Delhi on May 22-23, 2015. It was a joint endeavour of the India Foundation, Friends of Bangladesh and Bangladesh High Commission. The dialogue attempted to elicit stakeholders' views on security and confidence architecture; infrastructure and connectivity; and water and energy security.
- Surendar Singh participated in a two-day International expert seminar on 'Mechanisms of trade facilitation and economic development in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States' on May 13-14, 2015. He also delivered a presentation on *Trade and Transport Facilitation Issues in SCO Countries: Some Insights of North-South Trade Corridor*.

Briefing Paper

Regional Trade Potentiality in Ornamental Horticulture



A huge part of agricultural exports from India comprise of horticulture and allied sectors like fruits, vegetables, aromatic and herbal plants, flowers, spices and plantation crops. In recent years, floriculture has become a viable business sector. Despite covering only 3 percent of the world area, the collective floriculture export potential of SAARC nations (excluding Bhutan) is around 50000 metric tonne with a monetary trade value close to US\$251mn.

India has a strong presence in procuring propagation materials like live plants, plant bulbs, tubers etc. from abroad and excels in exporting finished products like cut flowers, foliage, parts of plants for bouquets and ornamental purposes. However, ornamental horticulture trading is yet to attain momentum in South Asia due to numerous lacunae along the production setup. This Briefing Paper is an attempt to acknowledge those voids and address potentials for improvements.

[http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Regional\\_Trade\\_Potentiality\\_in\\_Ornamental\\_Horticulture.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Regional_Trade_Potentiality_in_Ornamental_Horticulture.pdf)

Discussion Papers

HYV Rice Seeds Accessibility and Availability in India and Bangladesh Stakeholders' Perspective

This Discussion paper presents set of seven case studies (four from India, and three from Bangladesh) is premised on interactions of the project team with stakeholders engaged in rice seed supply chain in India and Bangladesh. It presents stakeholders perspectives on issues related to ensuring adequate availability and accessibility to variety rice seeds.

These reveal major issues and challenges faced by farmers in the two countries in accessing quality seeds, and how informal access to seeds are helping farmers in meeting their requirements of quality rice seeds. Therefore, there is urgent need for the governments of both countries to come forward and create a mechanism for formal knowledge sharing, trade and cooperation. It will benefit farmers, seed producers, seed dealers and traders.

[http://www.cuts-citee.org/RISTE/pdf/HYV\\_Rice\\_Seeds\\_Accessibility\\_and\\_Availability\\_in\\_India\\_and\\_Bangladesh.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/RISTE/pdf/HYV_Rice_Seeds_Accessibility_and_Availability_in_India_and_Bangladesh.pdf)

Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal Motor Vehicles Agreement Unlocking the Potential for Vibrant Regional Road Freight Connectivity

On June 15, 2015, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (the BBIN group of countries) signed a sub-regional Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) for facilitating easy cargo movement across their borders. It is expected to reduce trade transaction costs significantly and can be an effective tool to realise their trade and investment potentiality. The BBIN MVA has put in place a good framework for facilitating transit and transport within four countries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal. It has aptly capitalised on the present political clout for sub-regional integration and quickly put on the table a framework that can provide a much awaited push towards economic integration for the sub-region.

This Discussion Paper analyses how the regulatory objectives of this MVA can be achieved. It provides roadmap on operational issues and solutions for crossborder movement of vehicles as well as customs procedures.

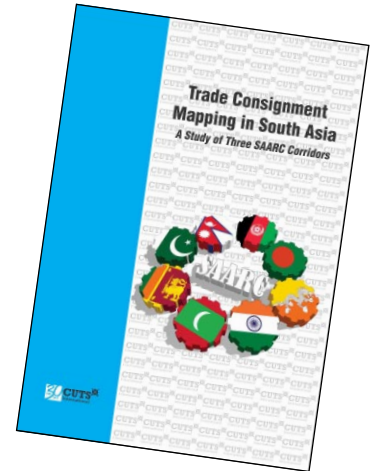
[http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/BBIN\\_Motor\\_Vehicles\\_Agreement-Unlocking\\_the\\_Potential\\_for\\_Vibrant\\_Regional\\_Road\\_Freight\\_Connectivity.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/BBIN_Motor_Vehicles_Agreement-Unlocking_the_Potential_for_Vibrant_Regional_Road_Freight_Connectivity.pdf)

## Trade Consignment Mapping in South Asia A Study of Three SAARC Corridors

Trade facilitation has emerged as an important international trade policy tool for enhancing cross-border trade. South Asia is one of the least integrated regions of the world despite strong facilitating factors such as geographical proximity, a long open border and similar value systems. Even the formation of the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) has not improved intra-regional trade, which is a mere five per cent their total trade.

Given the current state of trade facilitation in South Asia, the present study makes an attempt to investigate the specific set of issues that hinder the movement of goods across borders. The central focus of the study is on three major land routes of South Asia: Islamabad-Lahore-Wagah/Attari-Ludhiana-Delhi, Kathmandu-Hetadua-Birgunj/Raxaul-Kolkata and Kathmandu-Kakarvitta/Panitanki-Phulbari/Banglabandha-Hatikumrul-Dhaka.

[http://www.cuts-citee.org/TCMSA/pdf/Report-Trade\\_Consignment\\_Mapping\\_in\\_South\\_Asia-A\\_Study\\_of\\_Three\\_SAARC\\_Corridors.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/TCMSA/pdf/Report-Trade_Consignment_Mapping_in_South_Asia-A_Study_of_Three_SAARC_Corridors.pdf)



### In Media

#### Why States do their BIT?

*The Hindu Business Line, June 26, 2015*

**Pradeep S Mehta**

While launching the Make in India campaign, the Prime Minister had also unveiled 'Team India' — including the Prime Minister and chief ministers — to work in sync for development. This has become pivotal in economic decision making at the Centre, and its imprint can be seen in almost every policy.

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/will-states-do-their-bit/article7354543.ece>

#### A Boost for India-Bangladesh Relations

*The Diplomat, May 25, 2015*

**Ram Kumar Jha and Saurabh Kumar**

May 7, 2015 was a historic day in India-Bangladesh relations. That was the day when Indian parliament passed a Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) Bill. The amendment ensures a settlement of the long-running land boundary dispute with Bangladesh.

<http://thediplomat.com/2015/05/a-boost-for-india-bangladesh-relations/>

#### The Case for Stronger India-China Economic Relations

*The Diplomat, May 21, 2015*

**Ram Kumar Jha and Saurabh Kumar**

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has completed his three-day visit to China, where he sought to upgrade India-China relations on a number of issues ranging from economic to military.

<http://thediplomat.com/2015/05/the-case-for-stronger-india-china-economic-relations/>

#### Resource-rich Mongolia has much to offer India

*The Asian Age, May 16, 2015*

**Pradeep S Mehta and Prashant Sharma**

A new era is expected to usher in stronger India-Mongolia ties when for the first time an Indian Prime Minister sets his foot in Ulaanbaatar on May 17. Mongolia is a country with which India shares centuries-old cultural and historical linkages.

<http://www.asianage.com/india/resource-rich-mongolia-has-much-offer-india-203>

#### An Opportunity for India in Central Asia

*The Diplomat, May 04, 2015*

**Bipul Chatterjee and Surendar Singh**

The Foreign Trade Policy of India, 2015-20, has highlighted the importance of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) in expanding India's trade and investment links with Central Asia.

<http://thediplomat.com/2015/05/an-opportunity-for-india-in-central-asia/>

#### The new trade order

*Business Standard, May 02, 2015*

**Pradeep S Mehta**

One of the two mega regional trade and investment agreements being negotiated by the United States will soon reach the winning post, by, say, the end of the year.

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/opinion/pradeep-s-mehta-the-new-trade-order-115050200641\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/opinion/pradeep-s-mehta-the-new-trade-order-115050200641_1.html)



## Towards a smarter trade policy

*The Asian Age, April 17, 2015*

**Pradeep S Mehta and Bipul Chatterjee**

The new foreign trade policy (FTP) of India, 2015-20, is SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, result-oriented and time-bound. It is not overambitious and is a welcome departure from its earlier avatars for at least four reasons.

<http://www.asianage.com/columnists/towards-smarter-trade-policy-330>

## Why the RCEP is the opportunity India needs

*East Asia Forum, April 08, 2015*

**Bipul Chatterjee and Kyle Robert Cote**

As two mega-regional preferential trade agreements — the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) — loom closer to completion, India must move towards higher trade standards.

<http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2015/04/08/why-the-rcep-is-the-opportunity-india-needs/>

## India's new foreign trade policy: setting its own house in order

*World Commerce Review, June 2015*

**Bipul Chatterjee and Chenai Mukumba**

The government of India released its new national Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2015-20 on 1 April 2015. The aim of this FTP is to almost double India's exports of merchandise and services from USD 465.9 billion to USD 900 billion by 2019-20; and raise its share in world exports from two per cent to 3.5 per cent.

<http://www.worldcommercereview.com/html/chatterjee-and-mukumba-india-s-new-foreign-trade-policy-setting-its-own-house-in-order.html>

## Integrated approach for better management of water resources

*The SARCist, June 2015*

**Veena Vidhyadharan**

Blessed with a wide network of rivers, canals and other water bodies, India has inland water resources covering about 7 Mha. The Himalayan glaciers and seasonal rains are the sources of water which feed the extensive river system of the country.

[http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Article-Integrated\\_approach\\_for\\_better\\_management\\_of\\_water\\_resources.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Article-Integrated_approach_for_better_management_of_water_resources.pdf)

## Transboundary Water Security: An analysis of water treaties in South Asia

*The SARCist, June 2015*

**Akshat Mishra**

Lacking a regional governance framework for transboundary water management and still dangling on to bilateral water sharing treaties having vague clauses and redressal mechanisms, South Asia will not be able to reap 'regional integration' economic benefits unless several water disputes hovering in the Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra basins are put to an end using architecture of an international water governance framework having a regional character attached to it.

[http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Article-Transboundary\\_Water\\_Security-An\\_analysis\\_of\\_water\\_treaties\\_in\\_South\\_Asia.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Article-Transboundary_Water_Security-An_analysis_of_water_treaties_in_South_Asia.pdf)

## Challenges to Agriculture and Food Security in South Asia

*The SARCist, May 2015*

**Suresh P. Singh and Susan Mathew**

Agriculture is the primary source of food. As per a FAO's estimate 30 agri-crops provide 95 percent of human food-energy needs. Among these just five of them – rice, wheat, maize, millet and sorghum – provide about 60 percent. Strong food-energy linkage is indicative of the importance of agriculture for the survival of human beings and their food security.

<http://thesarcist.org/Opinion/97>