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Ease of doing business in India: Investors watching state-level rankings, says US envoy Richard Verma

By: [Deepa Jainani](#) | Jaipur | Published: November 19, 2016 6:00 AM

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There is good news for the states that have done well in the recently released Ease of Doing Business rankings. US envoy to India Richard Rahul Verma has said investors all over the world are closely watching the state-level rankings and performance on ease of doing business and are increasingly reaching out to states. He emphasised that the country must seize the opportunity to transform the lives of a sixth of world's population and set example for other economies, including the US in this regard.

Speaking at a symposium organised by CUTS in Jaipur on 'Making North Indian States Competitive: Path to Inclusive and Sustainable Growth', Verma, who was the guest of honour at the event, highlighted that competitive federalism is a key feature of the US economy as it is in India. CUTS had organised the symposium with support from the Confederation of Indian Industry and the US Embassy.

Arun Maira, president, CUTS, emphasised on using tools like Regulatory Impact Assessment of focusing on micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to create jobs and ensure sustainable and inclusive growth. "The biggest challenge is to generate more jobs and for that we need to create more enterprise, more SMEs. These SMEs are our feet on the ground. Hence, we need to formulate policies after listening to their experiences. India would rank better globally if we formulate better laws after consulting these SMEs and actually got the policies implemented in the right spirit," he said.

Rajpal Singh Shekhawat, urban development minister, Rajasthan, mentioned that several initiatives have been taken to improve transparency and governance and the

Shekhawat emphasised on the importance of creating human competitiveness which include citizens participating and benefiting from competition. He also acknowledged the need to improve capacity at lower levels of governance to improve engagement with stakeholders.

Pradeep S Mehta, secretary general, CUTS International, said while several reforms have been adopted by north Indian states, unfinished agenda remains to pursue.

He also noted that while the central government has adopted pro-competitive legislations, capacity within states to promote competition and check abuse remains limited. Pointing out the need to build the capacity of entry- and mid-level government officials, Mehta noted these officials are key to implement reforms adopted by states.

Albert Allen Foer, founder, American Antitrust Institute, highlighted the American experience on competitiveness and Anthony D'Sa, former chief secretary, Madhya Pradesh, shared the good practices adopted by Madhya Pradesh to promote competitiveness.

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