



CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation

Publications Digest • 2022

*CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation
(CUTS CCIER) produces this document for informing the relevant
stakeholders its major publications in 2022*



REPORTS

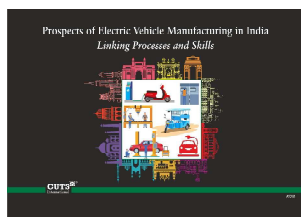
Prospects of Electric Vehicle Manufacturing in India: *Linking Processes and Skills*

Electric Vehicles (EVs) are set to be a game-changer in India's transport sector decarbonisation efforts. But one of the major roadblocks to EV production is the significant dependence on international supply chains for raw materials and components.

Keeping in mind India's electrification targets and push for indigenisation of EV manufacturing, CUTS International and FES India embarked on a study on 'Exploring the Potential of E-mobility as a Booster for Local Economy and Livelihoods in India.'

Based on the interactions with diverse stakeholders from two important clusters of India's EV manufacturing ecosystem, CUTS has developed a report that captures the current status, challenges, and prospects of EV manufacturing in the country through interesting infographics.

https://www.cuts-ccier.org/pdf/prospects_of_electric_vehicle_manufacturing_in_india_linking_processes_and_skills.pdf



Status of E-Consumers in India: *Consumer Welfare Index*

E-commerce is growing at an unprecedented pace, both in India and globally. Such growth is fuelled by the

COVID-19 pandemic, which saw an uptake in consumers transitioning to online shopping to ensure greater safety and social distancing. However, some concerns keep consumers from onboarding the e-commerce platforms, which revolve around data protection and privacy, product safety, counterfeit goods, lack of grievance redress system, language barriers, and predatory pricing, among other things.

In this regard, CUTS International undertook a two-year project to gauge the status of e-consumers while studying the e-commerce ecosystem in India. A total of 2254 respondents were surveyed during the study.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/seci-consumer-welfare-index.pdf>

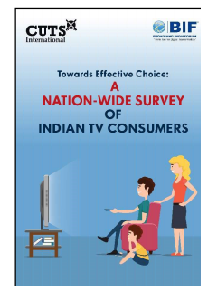


Towards Effective Choice A Nation-Wide Survey of Indian TV Consumers

TV, a mass medium of video content consumption, has played a pivotal role in empowering its consumers with information, education and entertainment. A nation-wide survey of over 10,000 TV consumers conducted by CUTS International and Broadband India Forum (BIF), highlighted consumer concerns about the *status quo* and gathered insights that may inform further regulatory discourse.

Findings from the survey have been captured in a research report titled 'Towards Effective Choice: A Nation-Wide Survey of Indian TV Consumers.'

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/research-report-towards-effective-choice-a-nation-wide-survey-of-indian-tv-consumers.pdf>

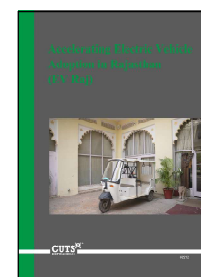


Accelerating Electric Vehicle Adoption in Rajasthan

According to the World Health Organisation, India is home to nine of the ten most polluted cities worldwide. CUTS International undertook a project entitled, 'Accelerating Electric Vehicle Adoption in Rajasthan' to conduct state-level research, advocacy, networking and capacity-building on the prospects of an actionable policy roadmap for the state to enhance the uptake of EVs in Rajasthan.

A research report has been prepared under this project to identify current supply and demand side gaps impeding the transition to EVs in Rajasthan and subsequently suggests a policy roadmap for addressing these gaps.

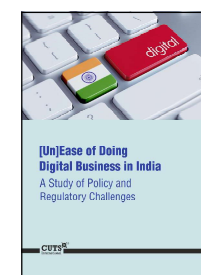
<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/accelerating-ev-adoption-in-rajasthan-report.pdf>



[Un]Ease of Doing Digital Business in India *A Study of Policy and Regulatory Challenges*

Ease of Doing Business in India has been picking pace with the government-led and industry-sought initiatives of decriminalisation, reducing compliance burdens, developing public infrastructure, removing regulatory uncertainty etc. This study takes a deep dive into these initiatives, among others, from the perspective of Ease of Doing Digital Business in India (EoDDb).

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/a-study-of-policy-and-regulatory-challenges-eoddb.pdf>



Non-Personal Data 2.0: Mapping the way forward for optimal regulation of Non-Personal Data

The Joint Parliamentary Committee's (JPC) Report on the Personal Data Protection Bill 2019 (PDPB) recommended widening the scope of the PDPB to include aspects of non-personal data (NPD). However, the move was considered fraught with lacunas and posed unintended challenges/adverse consequences for stakeholders.

This study brought forth a multi-stakeholder perspective on the concerns arising to ensure a whole-of-government approach to data governance.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/report-non-personal-data-2-0.pdf>

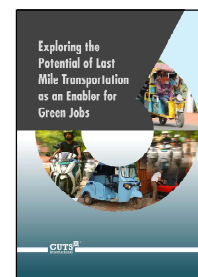


Exploring the Potential of Last Mile Transportation as an Enabler for Green Jobs

The study explores the potential of decarbonisation last-mile connectivity on the local economy and livelihood opportunities. This includes gender and skill inclusivity, reduced environmental pollution, and standard of living from a 'just transition' point of view.

The overarching aim was to explore the connectivity practices in two Tier 1 (Delhi & Bengaluru) and two Tier 2 (Jaipur & Lucknow) cities of India and construct a comparative map regarding the preferable modes and strategies for electrification for last-mile delivery and last-mile connectivity of passengers.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/exploring-the-potential-of-last-mile-transportation-as-an-enabler-for-green-jobs.pdf>

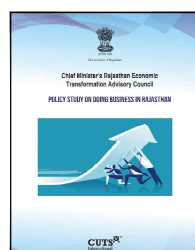


Policy Study on Doing Business in Rajasthan

The CM Rajasthan Economic Transformation Advisory Council (CMRETAC) tasked CUTS International to design a framework to reduce the state's compliance burden to a significant extent. Upon review of frameworks adopted by different countries to enhance ease of doing business and reduce compliance burden, CUTS zeroed in on the globally recognised Regulatory Guillotine (RG) framework to design a framework for Rajasthan.

The RG framework rapidly reviews compliances through a consultative mechanism, reverses the burden of proof, and requires clearances to pass the tests of legality, necessity, and proportionality, to be retained. Based on the framework, a three-step framework was designed to reduce the compliance burden in Rajasthan.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/cuts-project-on-eodb-final-report.pdf>



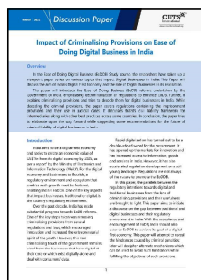
DISCUSSION PAPERS

Impact of Criminalising Provisions on Ease of Doing Digital Business in India

In furtherance of its efforts in promoting a digital economy for consumer welfare, CUTS has undertaken a study titled 'Ease of doing Digital Business in India.' CUTS is releasing a discussion paper series, and the first paper in this series is titled 'Impact of Criminalising Provisions on Ease of Doing Digital Business in India.'

To promote EoDB, the Government of India has decriminalised various laws and regulations for traditional businesses, and this is not the case for digital businesses. Through this paper, CUTS has assessed various regulations and laws targeted toward digital businesses which contain criminalising provisions.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/dp-impact-of-criminalising-provisions-on-ease-of-doing-digital-business-in-india.pdf>



Facilitating a Transition Away from Coal in India

The Indian government is currently trying to facilitate a shift from a conventional to an alternative energy base. However, while reducing our reliance on fossil fuels like coal, several challenging questions emerge: Who is bearing the brunt of this process that will inevitably induce structural shifts in the Indian economy?

While this transition mentioned above sound promising on paper, in reality, would they prove to be just as promising for those on the lowest rungs of the socioeconomic ladder? Will the entire process be inclusive enough to ensure their distributive justice in terms of potential gains resulting from reduced electricity bills, improved environmental balance, and climatic conditions? This CUTS Discussion Paper deliberates upon these challenges.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/discussion-paper-enabling-just-transition-in-indias-power-generation-sector.pdf>



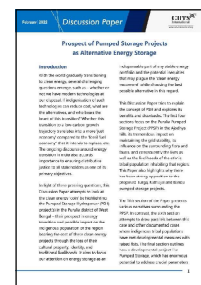
Prospect of Pumped Storage Projects as Alternative Energy Storage

With the world gradually transitioning to clean energy, several challenging questions emerge, such as – whether or not we have modern technologies at our disposal. If indigenisation of such technologies can reduce cost, what are the alternatives, and who bears the brunt of this transition? Whether this transition to a low-carbon growth trajectory translates into a more 'just economy' compared to the 'fossil fuel economy' that it intends to replace, etc.

The ongoing discourse around energy transition in India also accords importance to ensuring distributive justice to all stakeholders as one of its primary objectives.

In light of these pressing questions, this Discussion Paper attempts to look at the clean energy 'coin' by highlighting the Pumped Storage Hydropower (PSH) project(s) in the Purulia district of West Bengal – their prospect in energy transition and possible impact on the indigenous population of the region bearing the cost of these clean energy projects through the loss of their cultural property, identity, and traditional livelihoods.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/discussion-paper-on-prospects-of-pumped-storage-in-energy-transition.pdf>

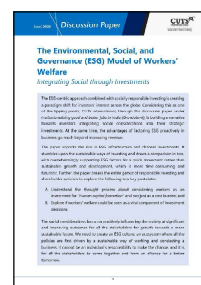


The Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Model of Workers' Welfare

The ESG-centric approach combined with socially responsible investing is creating a paradigm shift for investors' interest across the globe.

CUTS International, through this Discussion Paper under 'Institutionalising good and better jobs in India' (GrowJobs-II), is building a narrative towards investors integrating social considerations into their strategic investments. The paper unpacks the rise in ESG infrastructure and channel investments.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/dp-the-environmental-social-and-governance-model-of-workers-welfare.pdf>



Impact of Regulatory Uncertainty on Ease of Doing Digital Business in India

Regulating the digital economy becomes tougher due to its cross-cutting nature, which causes regulatory overlaps. Further, the difficulty intensifies due to the lack of regulatory procedures.

The Discussion Paper highlights several reasons that cause regulatory uncertainty for digital businesses, including lack of regulatory framework, excessive delay in enacting regulations, the arbitrary approach of regulators, suboptimal or ambiguous design, incorrect interpretation and failure in effective and efficient implementation.

The paper analyses how regulatory uncertainty caused due to these factors affects the digital business from different sectors such as ecommerce, online gaming, ed-tech and fintech.

https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/dp-impact_of_regulatory_uncertainty_on_ease_of_doing_digital_business.pdf

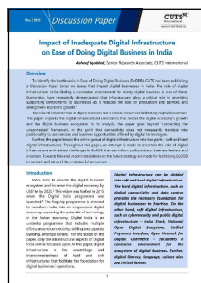


Impact of Inadequate Digital Infrastructure on Ease of Doing Digital Business in India

The Discussion Paper unpacks the digital infrastructural constraints that hinder the digital economy's growth and the digital business ecosystem. In its analysis, the paper goes beyond 'connecting the unconnected' framework, in the spirit that connectivity does not necessarily translate into positionality to use services and business opportunities offered by digital technologies.

Further, the paper breaks the entire gamut of digital infrastructure into two parts – soft and hard digital infrastructures. Throughout this paper, an attempt is made to ascertain the role of digital infrastructure and related challenges in Ease of Doing Digital Business in India that can inform policymakers, business leaders and investors.

https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/discussion-paper-on_impact_of_inadequate_digital_infrastructure_on_ease_of_doing_digital_business_in_india.pdf

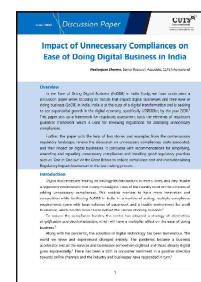


Impact of Unnecessary Compliances on Ease of Doing Digital Business in India

The Discussion Paper distinguishes between necessary and unnecessary compliances by using elements of the regulatory guillotine framework and expands upon the core principles of 'legality', 'necessity', and 'business friendliness'.

Further, the paper renews the discussion on unnecessary compliances, costs associated, and their impact on digital businesses. It concludes with recommendations for simplifying, amending and repealing unnecessary compliances and installing good regulatory practices.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/dp-on-impact-of-unnecessary-compliances-ease-of-doing-digital-business-in-india.pdf>

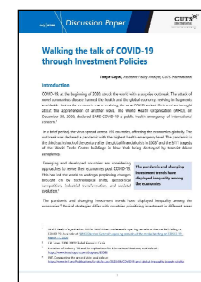


Walking the talk of COVID-19 through Investment Policies

The paper looks into the historical shift from mid-2021 in foreign direct investment (FDI) and other investment policies in the host countries, considering the similarities and differences in light of COVID-19. It argues that global adverse events lead to convergence in the investment policy response of the countries, for example, Australia, India, P.R, China, and the USA. It further discusses the shift in policy implications for such countries.

Towards the end, it recommends ways for the economies to work together to reach a shared objective of recovery post-COVID-19 and also looks domestically for the recovery.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/dp-walking-the-talk-of-covid.pdf>



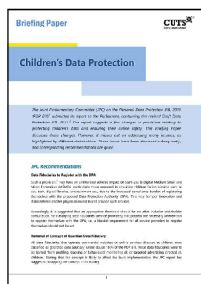
BRIEFS

Children's Data Protection

The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019 (PDP Bill) submitted its report to the Parliament, containing the revised Draft Data Protection Bill, 2021. The report suggests a few changes in provisions relating to protecting children's data and ensuring their online safety.

This Briefing Paper discusses those changes. However, it misses addressing many lacunas, as highlighted by different stakeholders. These issues have been discussed subsequently, and corresponding recommendations are given.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/bp-childrens-data-protection.pdf>

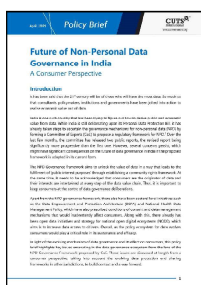


Future of Non-Personal Data Governance in India

The Non-Personal Data (NPD) governance framework aims to unlock the value of data in a way that leads to the fulfilment of 'public interest purposes' through establishing a community rights framework. Apart from the NPD governance framework, sectoral-level initiatives include the Data Empowerment and Protection Architecture and National Health Data Management Policy. These have also prescribed conditions of consent and data management mechanisms that would inadvertently affect consumers.

This Policy Brief highlights key issues in the data governance ecosystem from the lens of the NPD Governance Framework proposed by the Committee of Experts.

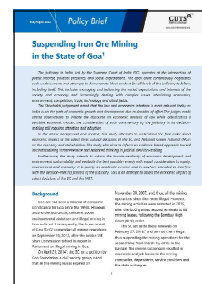
<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/policy-brief-future-of-npd-governance-in-india.pdf>



Suspending Iron Ore Mining in the State of Goa

The purpose of the study was to understand the economic impact of the mining suspension on the Goan economy and relevant stakeholders of the iron ore mining sector using primary and secondary research methodologies. The Assessment Period of the impact was March 2018-January 2021. The study also tries to identify the best possible remedy that would have been benign to the environment.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/policy-brief-go-mining-case.pdf>

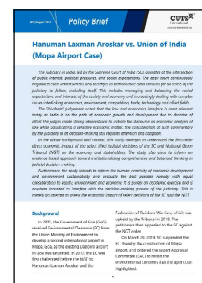


Hanuman Laxman Aroskar vs. Union of India (Mopa Airport Case)

The study aimed to understand the economic impact of the stoppage of Mopa airport construction in Goa, if any, on its project cost and timeline, including first-order impact on key stakeholders. The delay in the construction of the Mopa airport and suspension of EC was avoidable had the GoG made all relevant and necessary disclosures in Form-1 as provided in EIA Notification, 2006.

Thus, it is imperative to fix the accountability of agencies/officials involved in the EIA process. An accountable, transparent and effective governance structure would reduce such avoidable litigations.

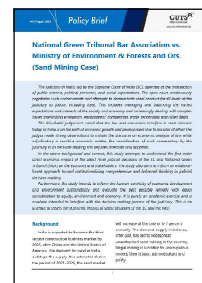
<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/policy-brief-mopa-airport-case.pdf>



National Green Tribunal Bar Association vs. Ministry of Environment & Forests and Ors. (Sand Mining Case)

This study aims to analyse the economic impact of the sand mining stoppage in Gautam Buddha Nagar, if any, on relevant stakeholders. The period of the study is from August 2013 to September 2017. The study takes a bottom-up approach to understand only the first order's direct impact on key stakeholders such as the government, mining lease holders, associated businesses and labourers/workers, among others.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/policy-brief-sand-mining-case.pdf>

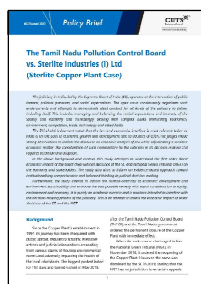


The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board vs. Sterlite Industries (I) Ltd (Sterlite Copper Plant Case)

The closure of the Sterlite Copper Plant in Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, in 2018 (Copper Plant) – the manufacturing plant of Vedanta Limited – typifies the debate of balancing human rights and economic rights. Various economic and social models have evolved to understand and recognise human-centricity at all fronts, environment and development. However, a balanced approach is missing in viewing these domains holistically and collectively.

While various reports and studies have established the environmental concerns leading to health harm, there is limited secondary literature analysing the economic impact. Therefore, the results and findings of this assessment of the economic impact of the Copper Plant closure have highlighted certain crucial learnings.

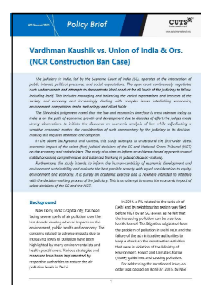
<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/policy-brief-sterlite-copper-plant-case.pdf>



Vardhman Kaushik vs. Union of India & Ors. (NCR Construction Ban Case)

The objective of this study was to assess the first-order economic impact of the said order, if any, on concerned stakeholders. During the field visit to Delhi NCR for data collection for the case, the team met several different categories of stakeholders ranging from the Development Authorities [NOIDA and Haryana Shehri Vikas Pradhikaran (earlier known as HUDA)], Pollution Control Boards (UP and Haryana), Real Estate Companies, Labour Associations, and Homebuyer's Associations.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/policy-brief-ncr-construction-ban-case.pdf>



Buttressing Competitiveness to Create Jobs

India is quite low on the Global Competitiveness Index published by the Institute for Management Development, Lausanne. It rose to the 28th position in 2022 from a low of 37 in 2021. However, for the competitiveness of firms to improve, various other things need to be done.

This Briefing Paper has examined measures taken by three developing countries Vietnam, Chile and Thailand to improve their competitiveness. There are various issues and this paper lays out some of them. It also advocates for a Competitiveness Law which can bind all branches of the government at the Central, state and local levels to work purposively and coherently to improve our competitiveness.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/bp-buttressing-indias-competitiveness-to-create-jobs.pdf>



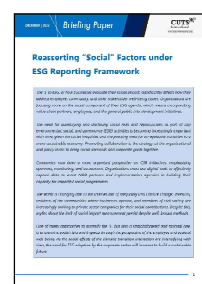
Reasserting "Social" Factors under ESG Reporting Framework

The 'S' in ESG, or how businesses evaluate their social impact, significantly affects how they address employee, community, and other stakeholder well-being issues. Organisations are focusing more on the social component of their environmental, social, and governance (ESG) agenda, which means incorporating value chain partners, employees, and the general public into development initiatives.

The need for quantifying and disclosing social risks and repercussions as part of any ESG activities is becoming increasingly important with time, given the social inequities and the pressing need for an equitable transition to a more sustainable economy.

Promoting collaboration is the strategy at the organisational and policy levels to bring social demands and corporate goals together. One of many approaches to quantify the 'S', but also a straightforward and rational one, is to examine social risks and impacts through the perspective of the employee and societal well-being.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/bp-on-reasserting-social-factors-under-esg-reporting-framework.pdf>

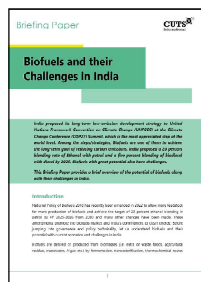


Biofuels and their Challenges in India

India proposed its long-term low-emission development strategy to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at the Climate Change Conference (COP27) Summit, which is the most appreciated step at the world level. Among the steps/strategies, Biofuels are one of them to achieve the long-term goal of reducing carbon emissions. Biofuels with incredible potential also have challenges, such as food security, deforestation, research and policy gaps.

CUTS International released a Briefing Paper on “Biofuels and their Challenges in India”. The Paper provides a brief overview of Biofuels’ potential and their challenges in India.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/bp-biofuels-and-their-challenges-in-india.pdf>



SLIDE DECKS

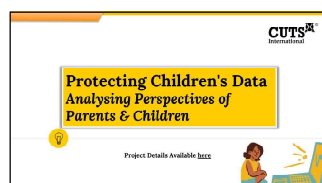
Protecting Children’s Data Analysing Perspectives of Parents & Children

Digital technology-driven data-based services have become a part of the daily lives of most consumers. However, digital services also pose risks to consumers, especially children, on various issues, including inadequate privacy and data protection.

Accordingly, protecting children’s data has rightly been given special attention under the Personal Data Protection Bill 2019 (PDP Bill). However, despite having the right intention, select provisions are believed to have the potential to do more harm than good. These have been discussed in the next slide.

In this regard, CUTS International has undertaken a study titled ‘Highlighting Inclusive and Practical Mechanisms to Protect Children’s Data,’ which aims to highlight the perspectives of parents and young users on such select provisions of the PDP Bill. For the same, CUTS conducted a pan-India survey of 600 young users (16 and 17-year-olds), and 600 parents had a child aged between 13 to 17 years of age.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/slide-deck-protecting-childrens-data-analysing-perspectives-of-parents-children.pdf>



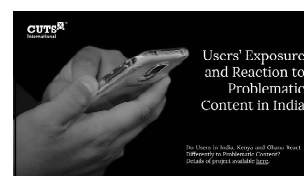
Users’ Exposure and Reaction to Problematic Content in India

Social media platforms have the potential to become a vehicle for inclusive, democratic, and free expression. However, their misuse by circulating allegedly incorrect, sensational, divisive, hateful, and misleading information (problematic content) causes significant harm to users. CUTS International’s study titled ‘Understanding Users’ Exposure and Reaction to Problematic Content in India’ explores this through a pan-India survey of over 2000 social media users.

Among other things, it finds that most users consider the source of the content as a factor for trust. Compared to users with low exposure, a greater percent of users with high exposure to problematic content react to it. Most users want social media platforms to be held accountable.

To curb the adverse impacts, raising awareness amongst users and building their capacity to identify and appropriately deal with such content is necessary. Social media platforms need to be made more accountable towards problematic content being spread on their platforms.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/slide-deck-users-exposure-and-reaction-to-problematic-content-in-india.pdf>



PRESENTATION

Doing Business Study for CM Rajasthan Economic Transformation Advisory Council

CUTS International has undertaken a study titled 'Reducing Regulatory Compliances in Rajasthan', which aims to foster ease of doing business for industries within Rajasthan by reducing the regulatory compliance burden under the state laws. To set up a Regulatory Guillotine Unit in the Industries Department by building the capacity of select officers also to configure the Data Management team to tabulate, analyse, and internally disseminate stakeholder feedback.

Through this presentation, CUTS encourages stakeholders to provide feedback on existing and proposed compliances.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/cuts-presentation-on-eodb-final-report.pdf>



DIGITAL STORY

According to the World Health Organisation, India is home to nine of the ten most polluted cities worldwide. A significant contributor to air pollution is the transport sector, in which road transport is the main sub-sector accounting for over 95 percent of the total transport sector's emissions.

In this regard, CUTS International has undertaken a study, 'Accelerating Electric Vehicle Adoption in Rajasthan,' to identify current supply and demand side gaps and various policy practices. These could be undertaken by the state-level authorities to ease the transition to electric vehicles in Rajasthan. Under this project, a series of digital stories in five cities of Rajasthan: Jodhpur, Udaipur, Kota, Jaipur and Alwar were released.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/ev-olution-in-rajasthan/>



NEWSLETTERS

Spotlight

Spotlight provides a snap analysis on topical policy issues of general interest, with the objective of keeping the readers informed and igniting conversation. It covers a wide and crosscutting range of subjects including competition law and policy, economic regulation, data governance, future of jobs, energy, and urban mobility, among others.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/spotlight/>

CUTS CCIER Activity Report

This quarterly report summarises major activities undertaken by the Centre during the period. It provides a quick overview of various operations of the Centre and corresponding outputs.

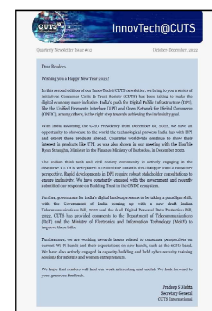
<https://cuts-ccier.org/ccier-activity-reports/>



InnovTech@CUTS

This quarterly newsletter covers CUTS' work on the digital economy, technology policy and innovation including research reports, papers, comments, and events, among other things.

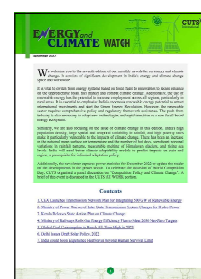
<https://cuts-ccier.org/innovtechcuts/>



Energy and Climate Watch

This monthly newsletter consists of some significant development in India's energy and climate change field and worldwide. It also captures monthly power statistics to update the reader on the developments in the power sector.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/energy-and-climate-watch/>



DOSSIERS

Competition Distortions in India

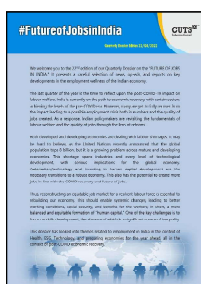
This quarterly dossier looks at the interface of policy issues which have an impact on competition in India and which can be both negative and positive. The purpose is to flag issues to the layman as well as to the policymakers and regulators, rather than being judgmental.



www.cuts-ccier.org/Competition_Distortions_India.htm

Future of Jobs in India

This quarterly dossier provides readers with important information and trends on the topic through carefully selected news reports, articles, op-eds, reports and other relevant content. The need for this dossier has risen in the wake of challenges in jobless growth and the imminent threat of increased automation and digitisation on job creation. Therefore, it is imperative for us to not only take stock of the situation but also act accordingly



<http://cuts-ccier.org/future-of-jobs-in-india-resources/>

E-FORUMS

Funcomp Forum

The forum serves as a platform to exchange and communicate news and views, focussing on Competition & Economic Regulation in India.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/towards-a-functional-national-competition-policy-for-india-funcomp/>

CompetitionOnlineForum

The forum serves as a platform to exchange and communicate news and views on Competition & Economic Regulation at international level.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/competitiononlineforum/>

WEBINARS

In 2022, CUTS International successfully organised a series of webinars that provided a dynamic, engaging and informative platform for discussions and deliberations by experts on topical and thought-provoking issues.

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