

CUTS CCIER ACTIVITIES REPORT



APRIL-JUNE
2023

Future of Work in India

Why and how labour and technology can gainfully coexist

CUTS International organised a webinar on “Future of Work in India: Why and how labour and technology can gainfully coexist” on May 01, 2023. This webinar was conducted on Labour Day to understand how the future of work will be in relation to advancement in technology.

Experts from different backgrounds who have knowledge related to present working conditions and transitions due to upcoming technology with the influence of AI and automation of work participated as panellists in the webinar and provided their insights on the topic.

The key issue of this webinar was related to the improvement of the productivity of the labour force which would be able to compete on a global scale. In India, manufacturing and Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) are the largest contributors to job creation. The Government of India and state governments must focus on these sectors for creating good and better jobs.

According to experts, there is a need for creating a system for direct benefit transfers which provides support to people in the period of transition by providing them with social welfare support and skills to work together.

The experts also emphasised on developing and executing the policy at the district level and then aggregating them. There is an urgent need to incorporate



circular thinking and transparency in public policies.

Bornali Bhandari, Professor, National Council of Applied Economic Research; Farzana Afridi, Professor, Indian Statistical Institute; Samar Verma, Programme Officer, Ford Foundation; C K Saji Narayanan, Former President, Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh; Amrat Singh, Director, CUTS International were speakers.

Aruna Sharma, former Secretary, Ministry of Steel and Distinguished Fellow, CUTS International; and A Didar Singh, former Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and Distinguished Fellow, CUTS International were moderators. Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International delivered opening remarks.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/future-of-work-in-india-why-and-how-labour-and-technology-can-gainfully-coexist/>



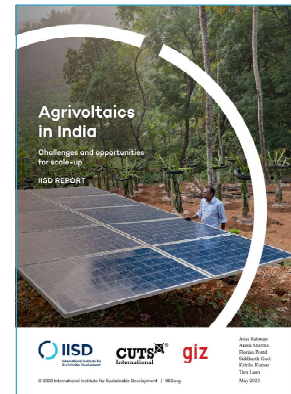
Publications

Research Report

Agrivoltaics in India *Challenges and Opportunities for Scale-up*

CUTS International in consortium with International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), The Energy & Resources Institute (TERI), and GIZ India released a guidebook for state policymakers on implementing decentralised solar power plants through PM-KUSUM components A and C (feeder-level solarisation) and a background paper on Agrivoltaics in India.

This guidebook provides recommendations to state policymakers on how they can implement solar irrigation models effectively and sustainably by setting up small-scale solar power plants at the substation level to power rural feeders. Solarising agricultural feeders can improve the quality, timing, duration, and predictability of power supply for farmers. It can also reduce power purchase costs for states and distribution companies, help create green jobs, and improve power grid stability in the long term.



<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/agrivoltaics-in-india.pdf>

Understanding Consumer Perspectives on the 6 GHz Band *Key Findings and Recommendations for the Way Forward*

Wi-Fi has emerged as the preferred mode of connectivity, even in Tier-III and rural areas. However, there is room for improvement in Wi-Fi services' quality of experience through competition, standards, and consumer grievance resolution. To seize the future of Wi-Fi, a supportive ecosystem involving compatible devices and early adoption are vital. Enhancing awareness and security for public Wi-Fi and for the PM-Wani scheme is also important.



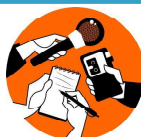
CUTS findings from the nationwide in-depth interaction-based study from the project 'Understanding Consumer Perspectives on the 6 GHz Band' aimed to comprehend consumer perspectives, challenges and concerns regarding the current state of internet connectivity as well as their expectations for future technologies.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/findings-recommendations-understanding-consumer-perspectives-on-6ghz-band.pdf>



Representations

- **Akash Sharma** and **Sanobar Imam** participated in the Round Table on Recalibrating Governments Support to Agriculture in Rajasthan, organised by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water in Jaipur on June 13, 2023.
- **Amol Kulkarni** was one of the speakers at the National Workshop on the Planning of 6GHz Band in India, organised by the International Telecommunication Union-Asia Pacific Telecommunity (ITU-APT) Foundation of India in New Delhi on June 07, 2023.
- **Amol Kulkarni** participated in the workshop on Regulatory Governance of Firms and Markets, organised by Trust Bridge in Mumbai on May 25, 2023.
- **Ujjwal Kumar** was one of the speakers at the event National Conference on 6G Spectrum, Technologies, and Standardisation, organised by ITU-APT Foundation of India in Bangalore on April 19, 2023.
- **Amol Kulkarni** was one of the speakers at the Conference on Wi-Fi and Delicensing of 6 GHz: The Driving Force of Broadband for All, organised by Broadband India Forum and Wireless Broadband Alliance in New Delhi on April 11, 2023.



Advocacy through Media

Why it's time to reform the appellate institutions

The Economic Times, June 06, 2023

By Vijay L Kelkar and Pradeep S Mehta

An integral but often ignored aspect of the regulatory framework is tribunals and appellate bodies. These institutions are one of the three pillars of the regulatory framework, which include the governing law, an empowered regulator and a fair appeals mechanism. However, it is a travesty that the reformation of these appellate institutions has been slow and lopsided in keeping pace with dynamic market changes. This, then, creates a gap in the administration of justice and its ill effects on economic governance.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/why-its-time-to-reform-the-appellate-institutions/>

Gig Workers' Welfare: Rajasthan shows the way by proposing a law

Moneycontrol, May 25, 2023

By Pradeep S Mehta and Yatika Agarwal

Rajasthan has become the pioneer as the first state to propose a law to protect the rights of gig workers and make them beneficiaries of various state welfare schemes. Gig workers are occupations such as app-based taxi drivers, food delivery agents, courier boys and so on. They are not formally employed by any firm hence their legal status as labour is also quite ambiguous. It is, therefore, that the proposed law in Rajasthan can be a good template across the country.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/gig-workers-welfare-rajasthan-shows-the-way-by-proposing-a-law/>

Need to prepare the workforce for the future of jobs

The Economic Times, May 24, 2023

By Pradeep S Mehta and Palashka Jha

India has a large youth population, one of the highest in the world. We need to find gainful employment for them, which requires developing new skills as job profiles are also changing rapidly. These skills are dynamic, so how are we going to cope with the development? If the youth is not well prepared for the changing scenario of the skills required for future jobs, there is a danger of them becoming a social liability. No one wants such a situation so what should be done?

<https://cuts-ccier.org/need-to-prepare-the-workforce-for-the-future-of-jobs/>



Advocacy through Media

Companies, government need to focus on 'S' in ESG to build human capital

Moneycontrol, May 18, 2023

By Pradeep S Mehta and Yatika Agarwal

India is at a critical juncture in its economic development path, which has the potential to lay the foundation for good and better job creation. However, it has been observed that India is facing the problem of jobless growth. The GDP growth rate so far in 2023 is 6 percent but the unemployment growth is also 8.11 percent. Thus, it becomes pertinent to prepare our people for new jobs by investing in skilling, re-skilling, and upskilling, and thus shore up our human capital.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/companies-government-need-to-focus-on-s-in-esg-to-build-human-capital/>

Should India go TRIPs-Plus?

The Business Line, May 05, 2023

By Ujjwal Kumar

There are murmurs that India is considering changes in its patent law as also in the existing mechanism of 'data protection' under its drug regulation regime. There's nothing unusual in this, though. Whenever India enters into bilateral trade negotiations with developed nations such as speculations get amplified, as intellectual property rights (IPRs) remain one of the most contentious issues.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/should-india-go-trips-plus/>

Consumers cannot be the collateral in OTT tussle

The Economic Times, April 25, 2023

By Pradeep S Mehta and Shiksha Srivastava

Lately, the Over the Top (OTT) audio-visual entertainment has become the flavour of the day with huge choices before consumers who can watch movies and serials anytime. Peculiarly, a debate is ongoing between telecom (internet) service providers (TSPs) and the OTT service providers on the regulation of OTT services. However, in this debate, the *raison de'tre* of the system, consumers, are missing. The risks intended to be addressed by subjecting OTT service providers to additional regulations similar to TSPs are also not clear.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/consumers-cannot-be-the-collateral-in-ott-tussle/>

A soft law approach can regulate Big Tech well enough

Livemint, April 04, 2023

By Pradeep S Mehta

As a standard practice, competition enforcement is an *ex-post* activity, except in cases of merger regulation. However, in the case of Big Tech, following a Parliamentary Committee's report, it is being proposed that enforcement can be done *ex-ante*: i.e. before a violation takes place. There is a global debate on this and we too need to take note of it to ensure that we have economic democracy in our tech markets.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/a-soft-law-approach-can-regulate-big-tech-well-enough/>