

BEYOND EASE OF DOING BUSINESS RANKINGS

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(KEYNOTE SPEAKER)



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The Government of India has wholeheartedly adopted the World Bank's approach to rank countries on its Ease of Doing Business indicators. It has aimed improvements on rankings with a single-minded pursuit. The Government has even launched the Business Reform Action Plan to rank states on business reforms they claim to have implemented, and promoted competitive federalism.

Despite benefits and shortcomings of rankings, it is becoming evident that climbing charts cannot become an end in itself and much more efforts are required on the ground to make life easier for entrepreneurs, both small and large, each facing their unique sets of challenges.

These challenges can be broadly categorised into stock and flow of regulatory requirements. The former relates to existing requirements, and their implementation, and the latter with the manner in which such requirements are changed.

Subjecting the existing requirements to a three-step test of legality, necessity, and proportionality, and the proposals to a cost-benefit analysis would be necessary to address such challenges. This will require institutionalising reforms such as regulatory impact assessment.

The focus of the online panel discussion will be the reforms necessary to take ease of doing business efforts by the government to the next level, beyond existing rankings. The discussion will focus on following questions:

1. Is the government right in spending its precious resources and capacity on ease of doing business rankings, or such rankings should be discarded in favour of other result-oriented measures?
2. What reforms should government adopt to take its ease of doing business efforts to the next level, and is there something we can learn from other successful countries?
3. How to overcome bureaucratic preference to status-quoism and apathy to change, and what incentives are needed to ensure effective adoption and implementation of such new sets of reforms?

The discussion is likely to attract participation from diverse stakeholders and foster engaging conversations. The details of previous discussions on this theme by CUTS and SKOCH can be accessed at <https://cuts-ccier.org/>

