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COMPETITION AND INVESTMENT



Competition Concern in the Fishery Sector in Cambodia

(C-CIER No 2/2007)

Fishery sector plays an important role in supporting rural livelihoods in Cambodia. About more than one million people depend on Cambodia's fish resource for employment, income, and food security. With a large surplus caught during the peak fishing season, fish trade and export is critical to income growth in the sector. Presently, fresh and processed fish are traded widely within Cambodia, exported in significant quantities to neighbouring countries, and in some cases, to more distant markets.

With an inland fish catch of more than 400,000 tonnes per year, the Government has identified Cambodia's fishery sector as important for export promotion. The development of the sector, despite its huge potential, is however being held back by some constraints in the competitive process therein, caused mainly due to the inappropriateness of the existing regulatory framework, and the bureaucratic and cumbersome governance structure, aggravated by corruption and other private rent-seeking behaviours.

This paper attempts to examine the competition concerns in the fishery sector in Cambodia. It mainly focuses on the competition concerns that affect two major parts of the industry: fishery catch and fishery trade (domestic and overseas trade).

<http://www.cuts-international.org/pdf/C-CIER-No-2-2007.pdf>

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D-217, Bhaskar Marg, Bani Park, Jaipur 302 016, India, Ph: 91.141.228 2821, Fx: 91.141.228 2485

Email: cuts@cuts.org, Website: www.cuts-international.org



Status of Competition and Regulation in India, 2007

(C-CIER No 3/2007)

In the pre-reform era, the Indian economy had been characterised by significant government involvement marked with the dominance of large state-owned public enterprises (SOEs). There existed lacunae in the older laws and policies, which needed corrections as India moved ahead in creating a sound economic regulatory regime aimed at delivering higher growth, creating more employment and ensuring distributional justice to all. In order to realise this, India embarked on the path of economic reforms during 1990s

by shifting to market driven economic policies.

This briefing paper brief evaluates the significance of competition policies and regulatory regimes, including the government policies that impede competition. It also examines the competition-related issues and sectoral dimensions citing examples of selected sectors. It recommends the adoption of a National Competition Policy, so that a better regulatory regime can be realised in the country.

<http://www.cuts-international.org/pdf/C-CIER-No-3-2007.pdf>



Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in India

(Issue Note No 2/2007)

SEZs have played a vital role in promoting exports, generating employment as well as ensuring overall development of an economy. Though known by different names, SEZs exist in many countries – not only in the developing world but also in rich countries.

During 2000-05, approvals were given to set up 26 SEZs. Interestingly, most of these SEZs were in the nature of a joint venture between State Government and a private party. In order to impart stability to the SEZ policy regime and to generate more economic activity and employment through exports, the Special Economic Zones Act, 2005 was enacted and associated rules and regulations were notified in February 2006.

Despite the fact that the objectives of creating SEZs in India are laudable, it has become a debatable issue in the domain of policy making and implementation. While fiscal incentive (and associated loss of possible government revenue) is an issue, there are other issues as well, such as methods and associated matters with land acquisition, the nature of land use pattern etc. In conclusion, the imperatives of SEZs in present context are hardly disfavoured but some caveats are to be well recognised.

<http://www.cuts-international.org/pdf/2-2007-SEZsinIndia.pdf>



Trade Capacity Building and Private Sector Development in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region

(HRC No 7/2007)

Trade capacity-building in developing and least developed countries (LDCs) is of prime importance in this era of globalisation. Trade is one of the means of achieving socio-economic development and bringing a country on the path towards growth. While the Government plays a very important role in formulating policies and creating a conducive environment, increasingly the private sector is also gaining importance.

This paper specifically looks at the trade capacity building in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), and elaborates the trade and investment environment, the role of private sector and analyses the challenges and opportunities that await the region.

<http://www.cuts-international.org/HRC/pdf/PB-7-07.pdf>



Agriculture and Rural Development in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region: *The Important Nexus*

(HRC No 8/2007)

The importance of agriculture cannot be emphasised enough in the GMS countries as nearly 80 percent of the region's population lives in rural areas where subsistence agriculture, fisheries, and forest extraction are the main economic activities. Despite the relatively strong economic performance and improved living conditions in the GMS countries over the last decade, 10-40 percent of the people still live below the poverty line. In view of the importance of the agriculture sector in the GMS, sustainable agricultural growth is crucial for reducing rural poverty. Given the large rural population, low farmer income and underdeveloped agriculture in the GMS countries, it is vitally important to develop agriculture and the rural areas.

This paper examines the relationship between agricultural and rural development and the role played by them in reducing poverty in the GMS countries.

<http://www.cuts-international.org/HRC/pdf/PB-8-07.pdf>



Banking and Financial System in GMS Countries: *Its Relationship to Economic Development*

(HRC No 9/2007)

In the context of regional and international integration, the development of the economy requires the acceleration of restructuring and modernisation of the banking system. Strictly following governance principles and enhancing banking governance efficiency is always banking sector's utmost concern and is considered a prerequisite for the sector's stability and growth. In general, this has a positive correlation with a stable development of enterprises. This also has positive impact on the economy as a whole. The governance system should be examined from various perspectives, including objective versus strategy, organisation versus operation, and systemic risk governance in particular.

Restructuring should be in line with establishing regulations in accordance with development and integration process. Building up concrete management regulations in compliance with international standards for basic operation of banks also contributes to the development of the financial system.

Besides these issues, the banking and financial system of these developing economies also need to put in place the mechanism to prevent new bad debts, accounting and financial management according to international standards. The government authorities need prompt, accurate, and comprehensive data in order to effectively monitor and supervise the system.

Since further economic development cannot be achieved in transitional economies without efficient and productive financial intermediary functions, each country should speed up its bank restructuring in a precise manner. Therefore, a conscious effort is being made to develop the banking and financial sector in the GMS economies.

<http://www.cuts-international.org/HRC/pdf/PB-9-07.pdf>



IT Trade, Technology Transfer and their Relationship with Economic Development in the GMS: *Ground Realities and Future Options*

(HRC No 10/2007)

The development and prosperity of the GMS will be a function of how well it can meet the business challenges of the 21st century. Overcoming the challenges requires the countries to address the critical needs for the business sector and economy, and adopt the available 'tools' to lift them into the realm of newly industrialised states.

The application of Information Technology (IT) could very well be the decisive factor in whether the GMS becomes the emerging economic frontier that many people believe is possible or whether most of its members will remain among the poorest countries in Asia. The transfer of technology is another important variable in the development equation.

The GMS countries must provide the conditions that will encourage technology transfer from abroad as they continually strive to create a semblance of a domestic technology base. With respect to trade in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) goods, the GMS countries have competitive wages, a surplus of employable people and an improving investment environment.

To reduce risks, most GMS countries could aim at attracting investment in electrical and electronics product segments, the technologies of which have matured and are slow in changing. In order to bridge this digital divide, a concerted effort must be made to provide the GMS countries with the means to develop a level of information technologies appropriate to their level of development so that they could benefit from the opportunities brought about by advanced technology.

<http://www.cuts-international.org/HRC/pdf/PB-10-07.pdf>

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