



Monthly Brief #8, December 2024

Judiciary Free from Overreach Better Serves Justice

The Indian judiciary's use of suo motu powers has become a topic of significant debate. Intended to protect public interest and address overlooked issues, these powers are now under scrutiny for potential misuse. Courts increasingly invoke suo motu in matters already under lower court jurisdiction, sometimes appearing politically motivated. These risks undermining the judicial process, causing delays and fostering public cynicism.

For instance, the Supreme Court's intervention in the tragic RG Kar Medical College rape and murder case came after significant steps by the Calcutta High Court, questioning the necessity of its involvement. Such actions can overshadow the work of high courts, which are better suited to handle region-specific issues.

While suo motu powers can highlight urgent issues, their impact is often diluted by ineffective follow-through. The Supreme Court's response to the COVID-19 crisis, for example, exposed systemic gaps despite raising attention to healthcare deficiencies. Similarly, the delay in addressing Yamuna River pollution illustrates the drawbacks of prolonged judicial engagement without concrete results.

The recent suo motu action on sexual violence in Manipur showed recognition of a crisis, but challenges in implementation left victims in prolonged distress. This highlights the need for robust mechanisms to ensure judicial directives are effectively enforced.

In conclusion, while suo motu powers are essential, they must be exercised judiciously. The Supreme Court should establish guidelines for effective use, ensuring justice is delivered efficiently and maintains public trust.

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Editor

Message for our Readers

The eighth edition of the National Affairs Monthly Brief contains selected published news or comments on trade, regulatory, and governance issues.

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Indo-US FTA: A Strategic Opportunity

How will the Trump presidency rock the global economy? Many kinds of turbulence will arise in international trade. India **will** face some unintended consequences of actions initiated by the major powers. India is a small player in global merchandise trade and does not have the leverage to materially shape the global story.



India's Indo-Pacific Strategy: Vision for Peace, Prosperity & Partnership



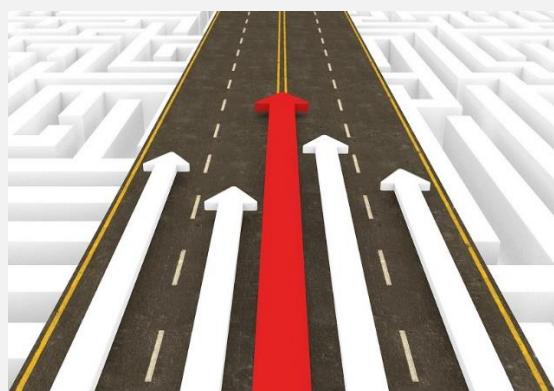
India aims to anchor its Indo-Pacific strategy around the 3 Ps—peace, prosperity, and partnership, prioritising cooperation over rivalry. This was the key focus of a webinar entitled "India's Indo-Pacific Strategy" hosted by CUTS International. The event discussed the approach and strategic importance for India to have an Indo-Pacific strategy laid out.

- [ADB Offers US\\$500mn Loan for Sustainable Infra in India](#) | Times of India, December 23, 2024
- [I2U2 & IMEEC: Shaping Global Economic Cooperation](#) | Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury, The Economic Times, December 22, 2024
- [India: FDI Inflows Surpass US\\$1tn Mark](#) | The Economic Times, December 08, 2024
- [India Rebuts US Claims of High Farm Support at WTO](#) | Mukesh Jagota, The Financial Express, November 30, 2024



Paradigm Shift in Indian Competition Law

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) had constituted a Committee on Digital Competition Law to examine the need for a separate competition law in digital markets. The Committee noted that the current ex-post framework does not facilitate timely redress of anti-competitive conduct by digital enterprises. Therefore, it proposed a separate digital competition legislation.



TRAI Urges Telcos to Publish Coverage Maps



The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has directed mobile carriers to publish geospatial coverage maps on their websites, showing areas where they provide wireless voice and broadband services. This key step in quality-of-service rules aims to empower users with better information to make informed decisions when selecting a telecom carrier.

- [India's Digital Transformation: MeitY's Strategic Charge](#) | Devdiscourse, December 31, 2024
- [AI Risks Cartelisation; Fair Competition Vital](#) | The Hindu, December 30, 2024
- [A GST-Like Body for Agri-Marketing Reforms](#) | Harikishan Sharma, Indian Express, December 06, 2024
- [IBC Reforms: Strengthening the Code for Growth](#) | Amitabh Kant and Richa Roy, Mint, December 04, 2024



India's Rough Road to Health Equity

On December 12, 2012, the UN adopted a resolution on Universal Health Coverage (UHC), envisioning accessible, affordable healthcare for all without financial hardship. UHC promotes health equity, economic growth, and well-being. Each year, UHC Day on December 12 highlights global efforts toward quality, inclusive healthcare for everyone.



Women Empowerment Key Focus for Rural Development in 2024



In 2024, the Rural Development Ministry focused on women empowerment, mobilizing 10.05 crore rural households into 90.87 lakh self-help groups. While criticised for halting MGNREGS funds to West Bengal and implementing APBS and NMMS, the Ministry defended these measures, citing technology as beneficial and attributing payment stoppages to West Bengal's 'non-compliance.'

- [National Farmers Day: Honouring Chaudhary Charan Singh's Legacy](#) | The Economic Times, December 23, 2024
- [Truck Fire on Jaipur-Ajmer Highway: Experts Call for Road Safety Plan](#) | The Hindu, December 21, 2024
- [FSSAI Requires Quarterly Reports on Rejected, Expired Food Disposal](#) | Meenakshi Verma Ambwani, The Hindu Business Line, December 20, 2024
- [AI Key to Achieving Sustainable Development Goals](#) | The Economic Times, December 18, 2024

Event

- [Roundtable on Advancing Low-Carbon, Inclusive Transport in Peri-urban and Rural Areas](#) | Jaipur, December 18, 2024

Publications

- Social Protection Measures for Gig Workers and Inclusive Economic Growth in India
<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/research-report-social-protection-measures-of-gig-workers-and-inclusive-economic-growth-in-india.pdf>
- Supporting the Transition to a Low-carbon, Affordable and Inclusive Transport System in Peri-urban and Rural Districts of Rajasthan
<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/report-sustainable-mobility-in-peri-urban-and-rural-areas-in-rajasthan.pdf>