

CUTS INTERNATIONAL

NATIONAL AFFAIRS



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Consensus Key to India's Growth with 'Ram Rajya'

Celebrating the 40th anniversary of CUTS International, Nripendra Misra, Chairman of the Ram Janmabhoomi Trust and former Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister of India, delivered a lecture on "Lessons from the Ram Lalla Temple." Despite some finding it odd for an apolitical organisation to host a talk on a religious matter, we saw it as a civilisational issue. The talk emphasised that Ram belongs to the whole society and not just Hindus. We highlighted the aspiration for a holistic Ram Rajya rather than a divisive agenda.

Mahatma Gandhi's concept of "Ram Rajya," as defined in his 1929 book Hind Swaraj, represents a kingdom of justice, equality, and truth, akin to "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam." Vice-president Jagdeep Dhankhar, who has served on the CUTS board in the past, echoed this spirit, noting its enshrinement in the Constitution. The new National Democratic Alliance government is urged to embrace Ram Rajya principles in governance, focusing on the happiness of all people.

Key issues include addressing unemployment and low wages, requiring a collaborative effort from society, government, and the market. While Niti Aayog is well-manned by sound policy practitioners, it should be led by an experienced non-partisan business leader, like Ratan Tata or Narayan Murthy, to rope in our disparate States. To achieve national progress, the states should play a larger role with adequate central funding for healthcare, education, and skilling. Additionally, financial management, particularly rationalising GST rates, is crucial. A national compact promoting growth, jobs, and happiness is essential, reflecting true cooperative federalism.

Pradeep S. Mehta
Editor

Message for our Readers

This is the third edition of the National Affairs Monthly Brief, which carries select published news or comments on trade, regulatory and governance issues.

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India Retains 8th in Global Agriculture Exports in 2023

In 2023, India maintained its position as the eighth-largest exporter of agricultural products globally, according to a WTO report. This ranking reflects India's strong presence in the global agricultural market and its ongoing role as a significant player in international trade for agricultural commodities.



Why India Needs to Reset its Trade Policy?



India needs to reconsider and update its trade policy to better address contemporary economic challenges. In the global context, the current global trade environment has evolved, and India's trade policies need to adapt to new dynamics, including changes in international trade agreements and geopolitical shifts

- [India's Trade Deficit with China Narrowing](#) | Business Standard, July 26, 2024
- [Tripura's Boxanagar to Get Border Haat](#) | Tripura Times, July 06, 2024
- [Chabahar Port: Southeast Asia's Gateway to Central Asia](#) | Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury, Economic Times, July 05, 2024
- [How to Deal with China: Dialogue, Deterrence and Trade](#) | Ajit Ranade, Mint, July 01, 2024



India's Digital Competition Bill: Better Alternatives Exist

Countries around the world are looking to address the challenge of competition in the digital world. India has recently initiated a consultation on a new draft of legislation that aims to remedy this. The draft Digital Competition Bill will identify systemically significant digital enterprises and regulate the core digital services that they provide.



[**AERA Hikes User Development Fee at Jaipur Airport**](#)



Flying in and out of Jaipur is set to get more expensive as the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India has hiked the user development fee at the Jaipur Airport by more than double to Rs 805 per passenger, while a charge of Rs 345 has been imposed on arriving visitors. The fee hikes have been updated based on proposals for development worth Rs 6,000 crore submitted by the Jaipur International Airport Ltd.

- [Ultratech Cement Approves India Cements Acquisition](#) | India Today, July 29, 2024
- [Bring back voice and SMS-only packs](#) | Economic Times, July 27, 2024
- [IBC Offers Impetus to Recovery Segment of Financial Markets](#) | Insolvency Tracker, July 22, 2024
- [Indian Agrochemical Sector Seeks Hike in Import Duties](#) | Economic Times, July 17, 2024



[**New Labelling Rules for Bulk Goods**](#)

To establish uniformity for packaged commodities, the Department of Consumer Affairs has proposed a change to the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011. The proposed amendment makes it compulsory to display key information on pre-packaged items weighing over 25 kg or measuring more than 25 litres when meant for retail sale.



National Policy for Cheaper Loans to FPOs



A national policy on farmer producer organisations (FPOs) has proposed a slew of measures, including providing cheaper institutional loans and a three-tier Amul-like model, to help and benefit millions of farmers. The draft national policy advocates a special sub-set within primary sector lending norms of banks to make lending to FPOs easier.

- [FSSAI and the Path Ahead for Food Safety Regulation](#) | JP Nadda, Hindustan Times, July 25, 2024
- [Philanthropy in India Seeks to Offer the Right Solutions](#) | Economic Times, July 19, 2024
- [Nine in 10 Mobile Subscribers Face Call Drops Even as Tariffs Rise](#) | Gulveen Aulakh, Mint, July 15, 2024
- [India Integrates SDGs into National Strategies](#) | Yoshita Singh, The Print, July 09, 2024

Event

- AI and the Future of Work in India | July 26, 2024
(<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/summary-report-ai-and-future-of-work-in-india.pdf>)

Articles

- [Rajasthan Needs Power Reforms](#)
By VP Singh and Pradeep S Mehta, Financial Express, July 31, 2024
- [Modi 3.0: India's Strategic Manoeuvring on the World Stage](#)
Akshay Sharma, Policy Circle, July 22, 2024