

CUTS INTERNATIONAL NATIONAL AFFAIRS



Monthly Brief #1, May 2024

Surat's Industrial Renaissance: A Model for India's Growth

India aims to be a US\$30tn economy in 23 years and has identified cities like Surat as key growth centres. Surat's industrial success story offers a blueprint for India's economic growth. Hosting over 6,000 industrial units and contributing 20 percent to Gujarat's GDP, Surat's journey from a 1994 plague disaster to becoming a megacity exemplifies resilience and strategic development.

Surat's transformation began in 2004, overcoming setbacks like the 1994 plague that caused significant economic losses and global disruptions. Key to its revival were its robust textile, diamond, and Hazira industrial sectors, alongside effective governance by the Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation and municipal leaders. Surat processes nearly 90 percent of the world's diamonds and boasts vibrant textile markets.

Infrastructure advancements in transportation, real estate, and urban planning have bolstered Surat's economic activity. The Hazira port and numerous Special Economic Zones have also attracted investments in chemicals, petrochemicals, engineering, and IT. Surrounding agricultural regions add to its economic diversity.

Surat's growth illustrates the importance of resilience, entrepreneurial spirit, and strategic government support. By adopting Surat's model, other Indian cities can drive economic growth through industrial investment, infrastructure development, and enhancing human capital. Surat's success underscores that achieving India's vision of "Viksit Bharat" by 2047 is possible.

Pradeep S. Mehta
Editor

P.S.: We are now publishing two newsletters. This one is on national affairs and the second is on [global affairs](#), covering mainly the Indo-Pacific region.

Message for our Readers

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

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Readers are encouraged to send their own views and suggestions at: cuts1@cuts.org



India Faces WTO Scrutiny for Rice Export Ban

The export of commodities like rice, wheat, sugar, and onions is typically permitted when there is surplus production. Therefore, an export ban on these commodities is deemed essential to ensure the nation's food security.



India-Iran Chabahar Port Pact



Iran has signed a 10-year contract for managing the Chabahar Port, with India Ports Global Ltd. committing US\$120mn for development and US\$250mn for infrastructure projects. The Chabahar Port provides India a crucial route to Afghanistan via Iran, bypassing Pakistan.

- [India-Bhutan to Boost Bilateral Ties](#) | DD News, May 07, 2024
 - [Trade Policy: The Way Ahead](#) | Amitendu Palit, Financial Express May 16, 2024
 - [Guidelines to Prevent Spice Contamination](#) | May 20, 2024
 - [BIMSTEC Gains Legal Status with New Charter](#) | Kallol Bhattacharjee, May 22, 2024
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CCI Plans New Merger Regulations

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) will roll out new merger regulations, enhancing oversight over mergers and acquisitions. These regulations aim to address concerns about competition in the Indian market, particularly regarding potential monopolistic practices.



TRAI to Tighten Norms for 5G Disruptions



India's 5G services are expected to see strict benchmarks for call disruptions and interruptions in video streaming and calling, along with other critical metrics, in the forthcoming telecom regulations. The telecom regulator will also revise the current quality standards for 4G services.

- [How Interoperability Oiled the Wheels of Mobile Payments](#) | Pratik Bhakta, Economic Times, April 01, 2024
 - [Big 4's Dominance: Local Companies Call for Level Playing Field](#) | Vinod Mahanta, Economic Times, May 06, 2024
 - [Tax Issues May Force Airlines to Exit India](#) | Anu Sharma, Livemint, June 04, 2024
 - [UPI Integration Gives a Fillip to RuPay Credit Cards Distribution](#) | Ajay Rag, Economic Times, June 14, 2024
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India's Governance: A Global Model

Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted India's governance achievements over the last decade, emphasizing that the country has become a global example. He noted that India has lifted 25 crore people out of poverty, implemented innovative governance practices, and worked for the welfare of the poorest without discrimination.



Enhancing Road Safety in India



India wishes to be a prosperous developed country by 2047, when it completes 100 years. As India transitions from an emerging economy, to a developed nation, a massive upgrade is essential to improve the safety on Indian roads.

- [Govt. Issues New Guidelines to Make Indian Highways Safer](#) | Subhash Narayan, Livemint, May 27, 2024
 - [Roadmap for a Healthier India](#) | Financial Express, May 31, 2024
 - [Greenwashing Storm: FSSAI Under Fire for Consumer Safety Concerns](#) | Dr. Sakshi Arora and Poonam Gulati, The Wire, May 28, 2024
 - [Changes to the Common Agricultural Policy](#) | Federico Baccini, EU News, May 13, 2024
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Publication

- Briefing Paper on 'Empowering Consumers for Sustainable Development: Exploring the Link Between UNGCP and SDG' (<https://cuts-cart.org/pdf/bp-empowering-consumers-for-sustainable-development-exploring-the-link-between-ungcp-and-sdgs.pdf>)

New Project

- **Grassroots Philanthropy Project**
Supported by the Ford Foundation, CUTS has launched the Grassroots Philanthropy Project in Rajasthan to understand the local philanthropic landscape, identify key stakeholders, and gain insights into prevalent philanthropic motivations and types in the region.

Articles of the Month

- [Court Vacations in India Need a Rethink: The Delivery of Justice Should not Suffer](#)
Livemint, May 26, 2024, By Vijay L. Kelkar and Pradeep S. Mehta
- [Why are Indian Spices Facing the Heat?](#)
The Hindu, May 03, 2024, By Saptaparno Ghosh and Saumya Kalia