



Welcome to the May 2024 edition of our newsletter, featuring events, publications, and op-eds from the previous month.

ICRIER continues to advance the Indian G20 Presidency's priority of reforming the MDBs by contributing to Independent Expert Group (IEG)'s latest report: "[Implementing MDB Reforms: A Stocktake](#)." The members of the IEG and core team (including ICRIER) met with the MDB Heads in the side line of the Annual Meetings in Washington DC and held several events to underscore the imperativeness of MDB reforms.

We published several important studies last month. Read our report on "[Reducing Post-Harvest Losses in India: Farmer-Level Interventions and Grain Management Strategies](#)" suggesting tailored market inquiries for Core Digital Services to ensure effective competition enforcement with minimal monitoring. Also check out our latest bulletin on "[Re-aligning Agri-food Policies for Protecting Soil, Water, Air & Biodiversity \(SWAB\)](#)". Read our working papers on "[Decommissioning of coal-based plants in India and its ramifications](#)," "[Regulating Competition in Digital Markets](#)", "[Regional value chains: Opportunities for India and ASEAN?](#)", "[Diffusion of Digital Payments in India – Insights based on data from PhonePe Pulse](#)" and policy briefs on "[Reducing Post-Harvest Losses in Indian Agriculture- A Case Study of Selected Crops](#)," "[Time for a Reset: Aligning India's Trade Negotiations Strategy with its 'Vikas Bharat' Vision](#)".

ICRIER organized a closed-door stakeholders' consultation to discuss the draft report titled: Role of ATMs in Financial Inclusion in India. Our faculty members wrote op-eds on a wide range of topics from "Unbundling carbon emissions of the EU" to "Healing the soil".

*To receive customized information, please click on the [subscribe](#) button and select your preferred themes of interest. To download the PDF file of the newsletter, [click here](#)*



## ICRIER continues to advance the Indian G20 Presidency's priority of reforming the MDBs

During the ongoing Annual Meetings in Washington DC, the Indian G20 Presidency appointed Independent Expert Group (IEG) met with the MDB Heads. All the MDBs i.e. African Development Bank Group, New Development Bank (NDB), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), Inter-American Development Bank, European Investment Bank (EIB), EBRD, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the World Bank were present and spoke at this meeting (see picture). Along with MDB work, ICRIER is working with the Department of Commerce in the implementation of "Jaipur Call of Action" to enhance MSMEs access to information, which was adopted during the Indian G20 Presidency.

In the News: [Hindustan Times](#)

## Consultation on Role of ATMs in Financial Inclusion

ICRIER organized a closed-door stakeholders' consultation to discuss the draft report titled: Role of ATMs in Financial Inclusion in India, authored by Arpita Mukherjee and Anupam Gaur. Over 35 people from policy making, academics, legal, banking and financial sector, ATM industry participated in the consultation and shared valuable inputs, which will help to strengthen the final report.

For more information, [click here](#).



## Implementing MDB Reforms: A Stocktake

**Author(s):** by the G-20 Independent Experts Group

We are pleased to share the G20 Independent Expert Group (IEG) note, "Implementing MDB Reforms: A Stocktake." ICRIER served as the Secretariat to the IEG established by the India G20 Presidency in 2023. ICRIER's work is being supported by various partners including Ministry of Finance (India), Gates Foundation and Ford Foundation. In this update, we take stock of what has happened since G20 Finance Ministers discussed our last report in Marrakech.

Click here to [download](#) the report.



## Decommissioning of coal-based plants in India and its ramifications

**Author(s):** Dr. Somit Dasgupta

The Indian power sector, the highest CO2 emitter, emitted 1104 MT of CO2 in 2021, comprising 45% of total emissions, with the iron and steel industry contributing 304 MT. To achieve net-zero by 2070, India must transition from coal to renewables like wind and solar, but challenges persist due to coal dependence and issues with gas, hydro, and nuclear power. This paper explores ideal parameters for decommissioning coal plants and India's path to net-zero by 2070.

Click here to [download](#) the working paper.

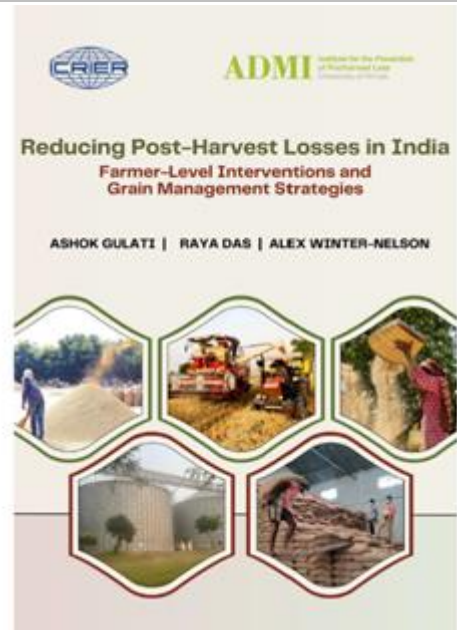


## Reducing Post-Harvest Losses in India: Farmer-Level Interventions and Grain Management Strategies

**Author(s):** Dr. Ashok Gulati, Dr. Raya Das , Dr. Alex Winter-Nelson

The global trend of enacting new legislation to regulate digital markets stems from antitrust cases and judicial decisions. This report explores debates on regulating digital markets, emphasizing unique challenges and diverse approaches adopted by jurisdictions worldwide. It highlights India's Draft Digital Competition Bill, 2024, proposing ex-ante regulations. While favoring such regulations, the report suggests tailored market inquiries for Core Digital Services to ensure effective competition enforcement with minimal monitoring.

Click here to [download](#) the report.



## Regulating Competition in Digital Markets

**Author(s):** Dr. Nikita Jain, Ms. Shiva Kanwar, Ms. Saloni Dhadwal

Globally, 30% of food is lost, impacting climate and food security. India's annual food loss amounts to Rs. 1.53 lakh crores. Part-1 of the report analyzes losses for paddy, wheat, maize, and soybean, identifying inefficiencies. Part-2 focuses on government grain management, offering insights into storage infrastructure and recommendations for improvement. This working paper aims to enhance India's grain management systems for better efficiency and sustainability.

Click here to [download](#) the working paper.

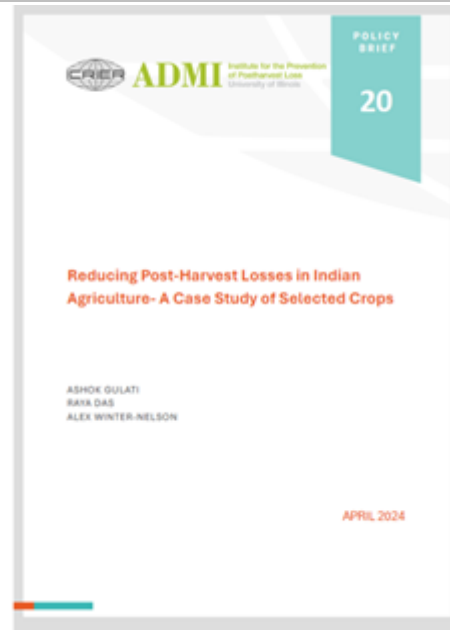


## Reducing Post-Harvest Losses in Indian Agriculture- A Case Study of Selected Crops

**Author(s):** Dr. Ashok Gulati, Dr. Raya Das, Dr. Alex Winter-Nelson

India faces a staggering annual food loss of Rs. 1.53 trillion (USD 18.5 billion), revealing the urgency of curbing post-harvest losses (PHL) for environmental and economic reasons. This policy brief pioneers efforts to estimate both quantitative and qualitative losses across various crops and regions. While farmer-level interventions like mechanization are crucial, government action is needed to reduce losses in grain management. The brief also scrutinizes factors affecting food grain management and advocates for private investment in storage infrastructure.

Click here to [download](#) the policy brief.



## Time for a Reset: Aligning India's Trade Negotiations Strategy with its 'Vikas Bharat' Vision

**Author(s):** Mr. Rajesh Aggarwal

India's WTO stance, historically cautious, avoids expanding the agenda, shying away from topics like e-commerce and climate change. This conservatism, often seen as obstructionist, contrasts with its ambition for a tech-driven economy under "Viksit Bharat 2047." While flexibility is vital for traditional sectors, India's global aspirations necessitate active engagement in WTO talks to leverage digital and high-tech sectors. A constructive role benefits India amid evolving global dynamics.

Click here to [download](#) the policy brief.



## Re-aligning Agri-food Policies for Protecting Soil, Water, Air & Biodiversity (SWAB)

**Author(s):** Dr. Ashok Gulati, Ms. Ritika Juneja, Dr. Reena Singh, Ms. Purvi Thangaraj

Amid climate change, agri-food policies play a pivotal role in shaping soil, water, air, and biodiversity. Soil degradation, water depletion, and greenhouse gas emissions challenge agricultural sustainability. Loss of biodiversity heightens vulnerability to pests and diseases. Addressing these issues is crucial for sustainable food systems. ICRIER's AF-TAB bulletin urges policymakers to realign policies for environmental protection, advocating for informed decisions and collaborative efforts to ensure food security while preserving the planet's health.

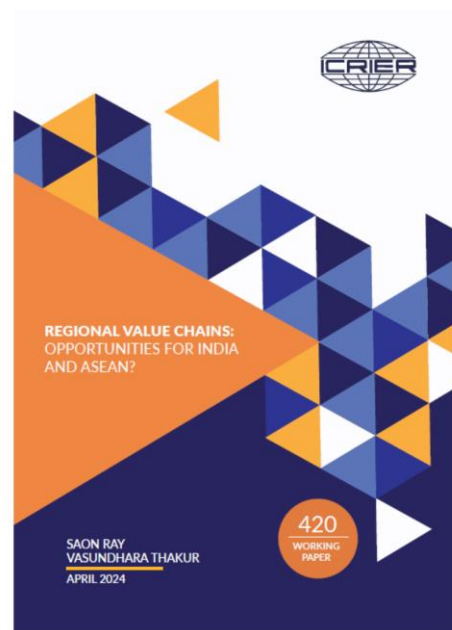
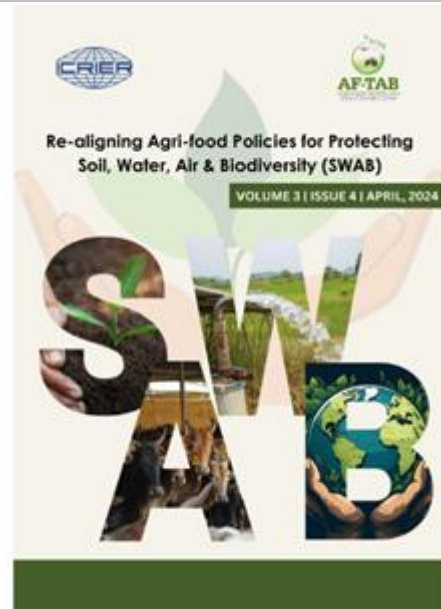
Click here to [download](#) the bulletin.

## Regional value chains: Opportunities for India and ASEAN?

**Author(s):** Dr. Saon Ray , Ms. Vasundhara Thakur

The study delves into global value chains (GVCs) and the often-overlooked role of imports in boosting exports. Analyzing Indian imports from ASEAN from 2011-12 Q1 to 2020-21 Q2 using the ARDL bounds test, results show a significant relationship. Positive long-run coefficients indicate favorable impacts on Indian imports from ASEAN, while negative COVID-19 dummy coefficients highlight pandemic-induced import setbacks.

Click here to [download](#) the working paper.

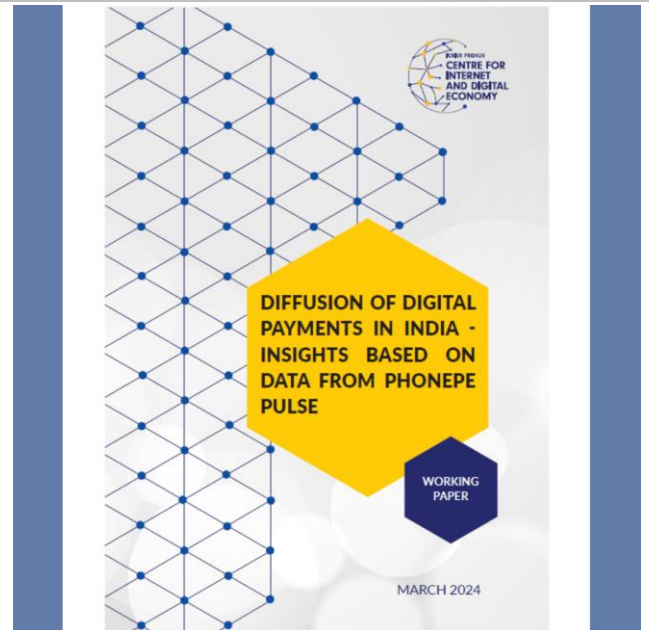


## Diffusion of Digital Payments in India – Insights based on data from PhonePe Pulse

**Author(s):** Dr. Aarti Reddy, Dr. Mansi Kedia, Ms. Sanjana Shukla

The study investigates the diffusion of India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) across states and districts, using PhonePe data and other sources. While early adoption in 2018 saw high penetration in select districts, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated nationwide adoption, reducing variation in user penetration. Socio-economic factors like income, education, and digital literacy correlate with adoption, necessitating a nuanced policy approach to promote inclusive digital payment adoption.

Click here to [download](#) the working paper.



## ICRIER Welcomes Dr. Shabana Mitra

We are delighted to welcome Dr. Shabana Mitra to ICRIER. Dr. Mitra joins us as a Senior Fellow in the Growth Employment and Macroeconomics (GEM) team. Her professional experience includes working with institutions such as Shiv Nadar University, IIM Bangalore, World Bank, and the Peace Research Institute, Oslo. She has also consulted for several global organizations like UNICEF, Asian Development Bank, OPHI, and the University of Oxford. Additionally, she held a visiting position at the University of Oslo, Norway. Dr. Mitra will be part of our Growth, Employment and Macroeconomy (GEM) team and will be co-leading several of our cross-thematic programs on employment, gender, and inclusive growth. To learn more about our faculty members, please [click here](#)





## GROWTH EMPLOYMENT AND MACROECONOMY (GEM)

Op-eds | Media appearances:

[Evaluating India's deal with the European Free Trade Association](#)

Arpita Mukherjee | Hinrich Foundation | 23 April, 2024



[Our forgotten neighbour](#)

Shankar Acharya | Business Standard | 17 April, 2024



[India-EFTA TEPA: Why FTA with 4-European nations is a breakthrough in trade and sustainability](#)

Tanu Goyal, Agneshwar Sen | ET Prime | 13 April, 2024



['Women entrepreneurship on the rise but challenges pushing founders into informal sector'](#)

Arpita Mukherjee | Financial Express | 7 April, 2024



## AGRICULTURE POLICY SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION (APSI)

Op-eds | Media appearances:

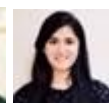
[Healing the soil](#)

Ashok Gulati | Indian Express | 8 April, 2024



[Food for reform](#)

Ashok Gulati, Ritika Juneja, Purvi Thangaraj | Indian Express | 15 April, 2024



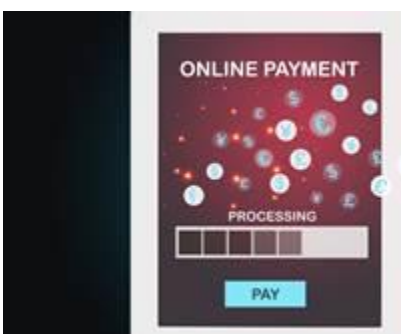
[A quandary called the MSP](#)

Raya Das and Ranjana Roy | The Telegraph Online | 2 April, 2024



[Viksit must be inclusive](#)

Ashok Gulati | Indian Express/Financial Express | 1 April, 2024



## DIGITAL ECONOMY STARTUPS AND INNOVATION (DESI)

Op-eds | Media appearances:

[How accurate are current global Indices in helping assess digitalisation?](#)

Deepak Mishra, Mansi Kedia | Hindu BusinessLine-Podcast | 13 April, 2024



Op-eds | Media appearances:

[Green hydrogen push needs to be substantive](#)

Somit Dasgupta | Hindustan Times | 9 April, 2024



[Unbundling carbon emissions of the EU](#)

Somit Dasgupta | ET Energy World | 8 April, 2024



Join the ICRIER community today! Stay informed about the latest research, policy insights, and events shaping India's economic landscape. [Subscribe](#) to our newsletter for exclusive content, expert opinions, and valuable resources. Don't miss out on the opportunity to engage with ICRIER's esteemed network and contribute to informed policy discussions. Sign up now and join the conversation!



**Deepak Mishra**  
Director & CE

[www.icrier.org](http://www.icrier.org)



**Our Offices:**

Core 6A, 4th Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003

Plot No. 16-17, Pushp Vihar, Institutional Area, Sector 6, New Delhi-110017

Ph: +91 11 43112400, E-mail: [info@icrier.res.in](mailto:info@icrier.res.in)

Website: [www.icrier.org](http://www.icrier.org)

**Disclaimer:**

Opinions and recommendations in the report are exclusively of the author(s) and not of any other individual or institution including ICRIER. This report has been prepared in good faith on the basis of information available at the date of publication. All interactions and transactions with industry sponsors and their representatives have been transparent and conducted in an open, honest and independent manner as enshrined in ICRIER Memorandum of Association. ICRIER does not accept any corporate funding that comes with a mandated research area which is not in line with ICRIER's research agenda. The corporate funding of an ICRIER activity does not, in any way, imply ICRIER's endorsement of the views of the sponsoring organization or its products or policies. ICRIER does not conduct research that is focused on any specific product or service provided by the corporate sponsor.

To unsubscribe please [click here](#)  
To unsubscribe All subscription please [click here](#)