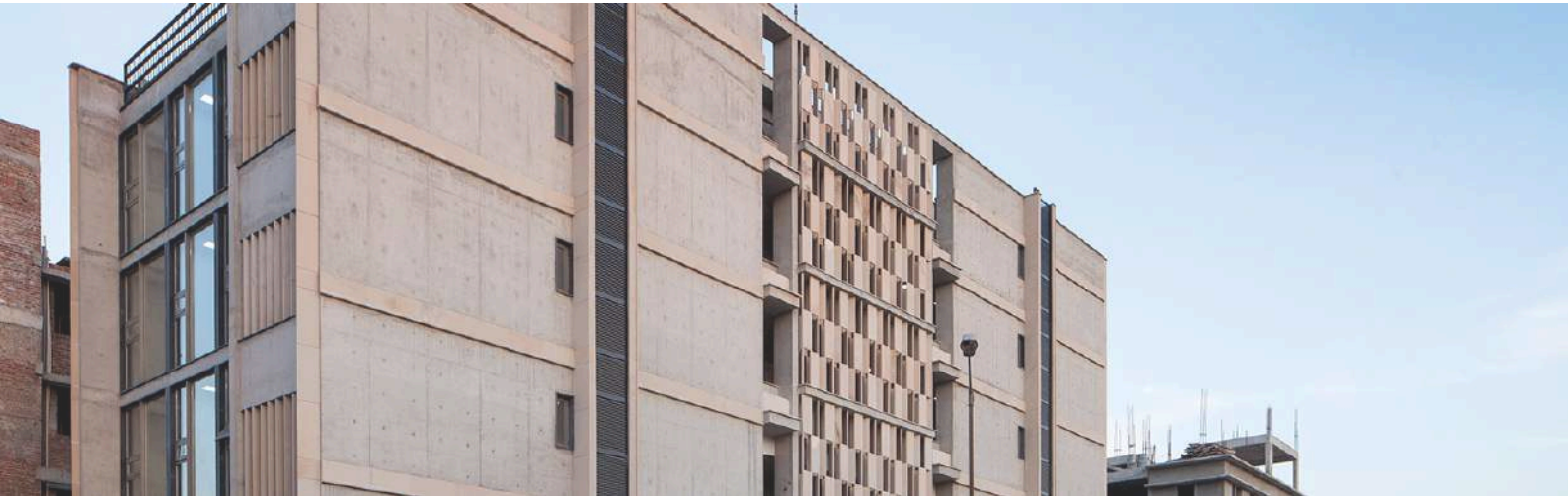




Message from the Leadership

Amidst rising global geopolitical tensions, India is pursuing a proactive trade strategy with a focus on achieving the target of \$2 trillion in exports by 2030. On the trade and investment front, our study *“Calibrating India's Economic Engagement Strategy with China Amidst the Changing Geopolitical Landscape”* analyses economic imbalances between India and China and identifies policy pathways to enhance India's exports to China, reduce vulnerabilities from concentrated imports, and channel FDI with appropriate guardrails. The attention the study has received has been deeply encouraging.

A particularly proud moment for us was the signing of an MoU between ICRIER and the Land Ports Authority of India to partner in strengthening India's land border trade infrastructure, grounded in evidence, policy research, and data-driven insights.

The Gender and Trade Initiative is now well established, and its Policy Brief, *“Gender Provisions in India's Free Trade Agreements: A Work in Progress,”* analyses India's FTAs concluded over the last ten years through a gender lens. While recognising the progress made, the study identifies areas where current approaches remain limited and offers recommendations to make India's future FTAs more gender-affirmative.

Across these efforts, we remain committed to evidence-based research for more informed policy making, both in India's international economic relations and in the wider set of issues shaping the country's growth trajectory.

Dr. Nisha Taneja

Senior Visiting Professor, ICRIER



POLICY IN ACTION

Promoting Diversification for Higher Incomes and Sustainable Agriculture in Punjab and Haryana

02 Apr, 2026 | Chandigarh

ICRIER hosted a colloquium at CRRID, Chandigarh, bringing together policymakers, academics, and farmers to chart a path for crop diversification in Punjab and Haryana. ICRIER's report on *"Diversification to Augment Farmers' Incomes and Promote Sustainable Agriculture in Punjab and Haryana"* was released. Vini Mahajan (IAS, Retd.; Member, Governing Body, CRRID; Vice President, CCF) delivered the welcome remarks, followed by two panel discussions.



Policy Dialogue on Evidence-Led Food Systems Transformation Policies in the Context of Viksit Bharat

07 Apr, 2026 | New Delhi

Ashok Gulati (Distinguished Professor, ICRIER) gave remarks in a policy dialogue convened by ICRISAT and IFPRI, which also marked the launch of the CGIAR Policy Innovation Hub for India. Discussions covered food system prioritisation under Viksit Bharat, price policies, crop diversification, repurposing of agricultural subsidies, and political economy analysis.



Navigating India's Platform Economy: A Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

15 Apr, 2026 | New Delhi

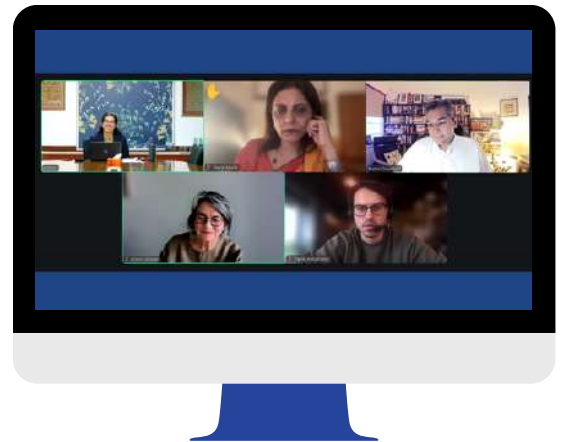
ICRIER, in collaboration with The Dialogue, convened a high-level dialogue on India's evolving platform economy, bringing together voices across policy, industry, and academia. Discussions centred on accountability, worker participation, and market fairness, with panellists calling for structured, collaborative, and forward-looking approaches to platform governance.



CoP DPI4D 17: DPI Diffusion & Optionality as a Sovereign Choice

16 Apr, 2026 | **Virtual**

As part of the continuing CoP DPI4D webinar series, ICRIER organised a session examining how countries can exercise sovereign choice in adopting and diffusing Digital Public Infrastructure. Rudra Chaudhuri (Vice President, ORF) joined as the speaker, with Shailly Gupta (Fellow, ICRIER) moderating the discussions.



5G and Beyond: Rewiring Telecom Regulation

23 Apr, 2026 | **New Delhi**

ICRIER and Vodafone Idea Centre for Telecom (InViCT) hosted a book launch on the future of telecom regulation in India. V. Sridhar (Professor, IIIT Bangalore) and Rohit Prasad (Professor, MDI, Gurgaon) presented the key arguments of the book, followed by a broader panel discussion on regulatory frameworks needed to support 5G rollout and next-generation telecom infrastructure.



Protected Cultivation as a Strategy for Crop Diversification and Income Growth

27 Apr, 2026 | **New Delhi**

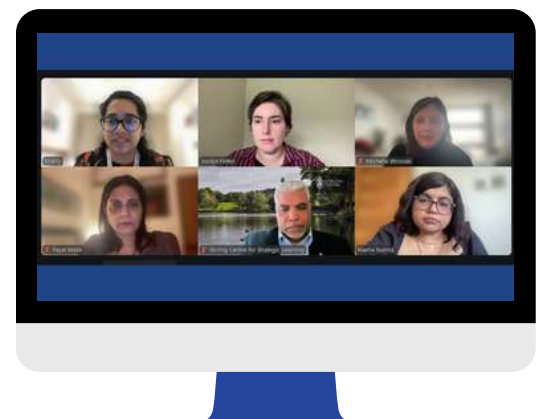
ICRIER organised a round table discussion and report launch on protected cultivation as a driver of farmer income and crop diversification. Shekhar Aiyar (Director & CE, ICRIER) delivered the welcome remarks, with a keynote by Sanjeev Chopra (Former Mission Director, NHM) and a special address by Pramod Kumar Joshi (Former Director, IFPRI). Two panel discussions examining institutional roles and value chain strengthening followed.



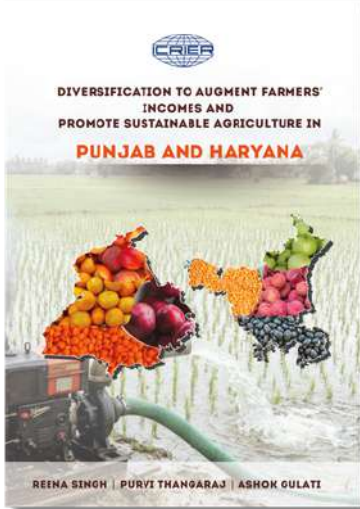
CoP DPI4D 18: The State of DPI in 2025: Global Prevalence and the Measurement Challenge

27 Apr, 2026 | **Virtual**

ICRIER organised a webinar examining the global prevalence and the measurement challenge with DPI. Speakers from the UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose including Jordyn Fetter, Naeha Rashid, and Michelle Wronski led the discussion, moderated by Shailly Gupta (Fellow, ICRIER).



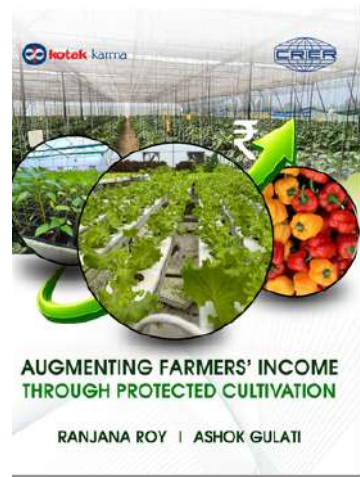
SPOTLIGHT: NEW RESEARCH



Diversification to Augment Farmers' Incomes and Promote Sustainable Agriculture in Punjab and Haryana

Authors: *Reena Singh, Purvi Thangaraj, Ashok Gulati*

This report examines the deep structural dependence on paddy-wheat systems in Punjab and Haryana and the environmental costs this dependence has imposed. The analysis reveals stark subsidy skews: paddy receives up to ₹52,000/hectare in Haryana versus under ₹10,000 for oilseeds or pulses. The report proposes crop-neutral incentives of ~₹35,000/hectare plus carbon credits to encourage a shift to alternative kharif crops, alongside assured MSP procurement and high-yielding variety availability.



Augmenting Farmers' Income through Protected Cultivation

Authors: *Ranjana Roy, Ashok Gulati*

Drawing on field evidence from Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, this report finds that polyhouse-based protected cultivation, particularly capsicum, delivers substantially higher yields and returns than traditional paddy-wheat systems. Despite high upfront costs, financial analysis shows strong profitability under supported conditions. The report calls for coordinated policy support, improved credit access, stronger extension services, and post-harvest infrastructure investment to scale adoption.



Re-Evaluating Spectrum Regulation: 5G and Beyond

Authors: *V Sridhar, Rohit Prasad*

This report, published by ICRIER and Vodafone Idea Centre for Telecom (InViCT), examines India's spectrum allocation framework amid demands posed by 5G rollout and emerging technologies like IoT and Industry 4.0. While India's approach has evolved since 1994, challenges persist, including high reserve prices, unsold spectrum, fragmentation, and limited enterprise flexibility. The report argues that allocation frameworks must accommodate spectrum co-existence and prepare for 6G standardisation by 2030.



The Fiscal Cost of Holding Down Fuel Prices in India After the Middle East War

Authors: *Sanjeev Gupta, Pratik Tiwary*

This policy brief examines the macroeconomic and fiscal implications of the Middle East conflict-induced surge in global oil prices for India, a highly import-dependent energy economy. It estimates that shielding consumers through tax reductions, subsidies, and constrained price pass-through has provided short-term relief but carries a fiscal cost of about 0.6% of GDP annually, while weakening price signals, encouraging inefficient energy use, and disproportionately benefiting higher-income households. Arguing that current pricing policies are unsustainable if high oil prices persist, the authors call for a gradual restoration of price pass-through, targeted support for vulnerable households, expanded strategic reserves, and accelerated diversification away from imported fossil fuels.



A Difficult Ministerial: Negotiations, Outcomes, and Strategic Implications from WTO MC14

Authors: *Rajesh Aggarwal, Shekhar Aiyar, Arpita Mukherjee, Nisha Taneja*

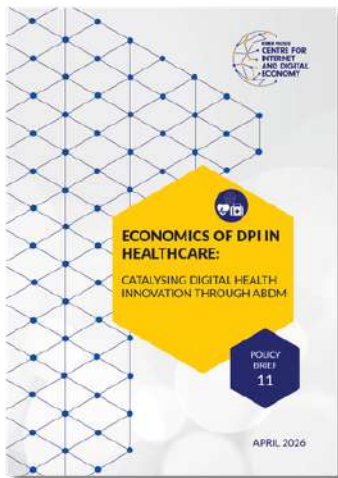
This policy brief reviews the fourteenth WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14) held in Cameroon in 2026, against a backdrop of a weakened dispute resolution system, stalemate in multilateral negotiations, and divisions over plurilateral initiatives. While expectations going in were limited, the conference retained symbolic significance by reaffirming the WTO's emphasis on development and inclusivity. The brief offers a clear overview of the principal areas of disagreement among member states across fisheries subsidies, investment facilitation, digital trade, agriculture, development priorities, and the broader WTO reform agenda, and examines India's approach on each of these issues.



Sanitation Improvement in Indore: A Case Study in Effective Public Management

Authors: *Rashmi Sharma, Bishwapriya Sanyal, Arkaja Singh, Mekhala Krishnamurthy*

This case study analyses the Indore Municipal Corporation's (IMC) remarkable transformation under the Swachh Bharat Mission, covering door-to-door garbage collection, citizen-level waste segregation, street cleanliness, and stray animal removal. It also identifies the enabling conditions: shielding sanitation from corruption, strong political backing for capable commissioners, rigorous but supportive supervision, and NGO-private collaboration.



Economics of DPI in Healthcare: Catalysing Digital Health Innovation Through ABDM

Authors: Bhargavee Das, Maria Khan

This policy brief explores how India's Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) functions as a market-shaping Digital Public Infrastructure for Health (DPI-H), replacing fragmented digital health solutions with an integrated and interoperable ecosystem. Drawing on perspectives from health-tech entrepreneurs and startups, it highlights synergies between ABDM and the health-tech market, identifies emerging opportunities and challenges, and recommends pathways to deepen adoption and sustain participation across the healthcare ecosystem.

IN THE NEWS

Unlocking \$161 billion: What India must do to boost China exports

Author: Nisha Taneja | 01 Apr, 2026
Economic Times

Govt extends support for textile exporters as global uncertainty persists

ICRIER report cited | 01 Apr, 2026 | Mint

India's Healthcare Budget 2026-27: A Critical Assessment of Hits & Misses Amid Rising Disease Burden & Digital Expansion

Authors: Arpita Mukherjee, Eshana Mukherjee | 01 Apr, 2026 | Digital Health News

India's Clean Energy Shift To Create 5 Million Jobs By 2030, Says ICRIER

ICRIER report cited | 06 Apr, 2026 | KNN

India bets on 'trust' to unlock China's pharma and engineering markets, experts warn of 'carrots'

Nisha Taneja quoted | 09 Apr, 2026 | Wion

Agriphotovoltaics as a dual-use solution for India's energy transition and rural livelihoods

Authors: Subhdeep Basu, Laxmi Sharma, Bidisha Banerjee & Ashok Gulati
11 Apr, 2026 | Hindustan Times

VOICES FROM ICRIER



Why Punjab, Haryana need another Green Revolution, diversify & reduce area under rice | The Tribune

Ashok Gulati (Distinguished Professor, ICRIER) and Ramesh Chand (NITI Aayog) make the case for a second Green Revolution in Punjab and Haryana, one centred on crop diversification away from paddy. The discussion examines the role of power subsidies in locking farmers into water-intensive rice cultivation, the economic and environmental costs of the status quo, and the policy levers from MSP reform to high-value crop promotion that could help transition farmers towards more sustainable and profitable alternatives.

IN THE NEWS

To ensure food security amid war clouds, government must reform fertiliser policy

Author: Ashok Gulati | 13 Apr, 2026 | Indian Express

Farming Under Solar: How Agriphotovoltaics Can Transform Rural Livelihoods in India

Authors: Laxmi Sharma, Bidisha Banerjee, Subhdeep Basu & Ashok Gulati | 13 Apr, 2026
NextBillion

Europe's open door: Why Indian exporters can't afford to miss the moment

Authors: Arpita Mukherjee & Latika Khatwani | 14 Apr, 2026 | Economic Times

Augmenting income of farmers in India

Authors: Ranjana Roy, Raya Das & Ashok Gulati | 14 Apr, 2026 | Hindustan Times

Women in the workforce: Moving the dialogue from centre to states

Authors: Cledwyn Fernandez, Shabana Mitra & Nancy Agrawal | 14 Apr, 2026 | Hindustan Times

Rural development needs a boost: India must step up efforts to take prosperity far and wide

Authors: Angana Parashar Sarma, Puja Mehra & Arpita Mukherjee | 15 Apr, 2026
Mint

Transformation of health systems through digital public infrastructure

Authors: Shailly Gupta & Mehak Aggarwal
21 Apr, 2026 | Hindustan Times

Clean energy employment in India

Authors: Amrita Goldar, Somit Dasgupta, Sajal Jain & Diya Dasgupta | 21 Apr, 2026
HT Insight

For true nari shakti, take jobs where women workers are

Authors: Ashok Gulati, Ayushi Gupta & Bidisha Chanda | 27 Apr, 2026 | Indian Express

Skill women for empowerment

Authors: Ashok Gulati, Ayushi Gupta & Bidisha Chanda | 27 Apr, 2026 | Financial Express



Book Spotlight: Saon Ray | A Primer on Electric Vehicles in India | India Program at Mercatus

In the latest episode of the Book Spotlight series, Saon Ray (Senior Visiting Professor, ICRIER) discusses her co-authored publication, "A Primer on Electric Vehicles in India: A Machine-Generated Literature Overview," which examines India's EV ecosystem through a value chain lens that bridges economic and technological perspectives. The discussion explores the shift from ICE to EVs and the central role of batteries, the bottlenecks and policy questions shaping the transition, and common misconceptions about electric mobility.

TEAM SPOTLIGHT



Shiva Kanwar is a Fellow in the Digital Economy Startups and Innovation (DESI) team at ICRIER. She is a lawyer and researcher specialising in digital technology policy, artificial intelligence, internet governance, and digital equity. Her work focuses on contemporary issues in digital policy, including AI and emerging technologies, data protection, and digital public infrastructure.