

## **Panel: Access to Healthcare and Competition**

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has made healthcare a top public policy priority the world over, where public health interests prevailed over national economic interests when widescale lockdowns were announced. The pandemic has also triggered policy thinking towards self-sufficiency in healthcare, including having a domestic base for local production of pharmaceuticals.

Like many other policy tools, competition policy also responded to the extraordinary situation created by the pandemic lockdown. In general, the responses are/were two-pronged – one for smooth supply of essential items like healthcare and food items; and the other with respect to post-lockdown economic recovery. More so, healthcare now features as one of the top priorities of competition agencies. The theme of the World Competition Day (5 December) is also access to healthcare and competition.

It is widely believed that the *ex ante* competition policy (pro-competition government policies) and then *ex post* competition law enforcement can be used as tools to enhance access to healthcare. This webinar is being organised to deliberate upon the roles that competition policy and law can play in enhancing access to healthcare, understanding that access is largely dependent on its ‘availability’ and ‘affordability’.

### **Panel Organisers**

Mr Udai S Mehta, Deputy Executive Director, CUTS International, Jaipur, India

Email: [usm@cuts.org](mailto:usm@cuts.org)

Mr Mobeen Ali Khan, Project Assistant, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan

Email: [mobeenali@sdpi.org](mailto:mobeenali@sdpi.org)