

About CART

Established in 1983 as a small voluntary group of concerned citizens, Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) expanded its activities and CUTS CART was set up in 1996 as a programme centre to pursue the cause of common consumers, initially being undertaken by CUTS as the mandate.

The programmes of the Centre are primarily aimed at generating awareness, creating a more responsible society and encouraging changes at the policy level by advocating with the government machinery and sensitising it to the issues of concern of the common man. The Centre has spearheaded several campaigns and pioneered consumer empowerment.

INSIDE

- Projects and Programmes
- Representations
- Visits
- CART in Media



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Unlocking Consumer Power

A New Vision for the Global Marketplace

The 20th Consumers International (CI) World Congress took place in Brasilia, Brazil during November 18-21, 2015 under the theme 'Unlocking Consumer Power: A New Vision for the Global Marketplace'. The CI World Congress is held every four years and marks a seminal moment in the international consumer rights calendar. The CI World Congress brings together CI members and supporters from all around the globe and attracts leaders from the corporate sector, policymakers, funding bodies, academics and civil society groups.



Alongside the formal business of electing a new Council and President, the core aims of the World Congress are for delegates to build cross-border partnerships on consumer rights issues; network with CI Members, government agencies and other stakeholders; and hear from world-renowned speakers on major consumer concerns and emerging trends.

The 20th World Congress was co-hosted by CI with Brazil's National Secretariat for Consumers, SENACON. SENACON is the National Consumer Secretariat of the Ministry of Justice of Brazil. Brasília, the host city, is the federal capital of Brazil and seat of government of the Federal District. The Congress started with various side events which took place on November 18, 2015 organised by CI members and partners from across the world.

The event was formally opened by Her Excellency Dilma Rouseff, President of Brazil who warmly greeted over 700 delegates from all over the world. She was joined by CI Director General Amanda Long, CI President Jim Guest, Brazil's Minister of Justice, José Eduardo Cardozo; Juliana Pereira da Silva the National Secretary of Consumers for the Ministry of Justice in Brazil and Guillermo Valles, Director of the Division for International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities, UNCTAD who delivered a message from UN General Secretary Ban Ki-moon. Amanda Long in her opening speech called on the CI members to work together to be more impactful in our fast changing world.

George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS International represented CUTS in the World Congress. He was one of the speakers in the session on 'How do we root out bad practices and drive responsible lending' held on November 20, 2015. Kate McKee, Senior Adviser, Consultative Group to Assist the Poor, USA chaired the session. Dmitriy Yanin (Russia), Maria Inés Dolci (Brazil) and Norma P. Garcia (USA) were other speakers in the session. Cheriyan also spoke in two sessions in the side event organised by Swedish Society for Nature Conservation on the Green Action Week.

Representatives from all eight full members and one Associate member of CI from India along with the Department of Consumer Affairs (as member in the Government Supporter category) represented by C Vishwanath, Secretary to Government of India, DoCA participated in the congress and also actively participated in the proceedings and in the General Assembly.

Promoting Organic Farming in Rajasthan

A State Level Advocacy cum Dissemination Meeting of the ProOrganic project was conducted at Jaipur on October 28, 2015. More than 85 participants attended the meeting. Cheriyan stated that there is a need of integrated efforts from both the government and farmers side for promoting organic farming in Rajasthan.

Shital Prasad Sharma, Director, State Institute of Agriculture Management, Government of Rajasthan stressed on the need for development of climate smart villages in Rajasthan to promote organic farming. A K Gupta, Professor and Head, Department of Agronomy, SKNA University, Jobner pointed out that organic farming is the process wherein both consumers and producers can be benefited.

S Mukherjee, Professor and Head, Department of Horticulture, Rajasthan Agricultural Research Institute, Government of Rajasthan said that organic product hubs should be created for domestic and export purposes. Vardhaman Bapna, Director, Morarka Foundation, Jaipur said that organic vegetables shops should be established at the *Gram Panchayat* level.



Strategy Planning Meeting in Stockholm

George Cheriyan visited Stockholm for the strategy planning meeting of Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) during October 05-09, 2015. The meeting was attended by about 40 participants, 20 representatives of partner organisations and 20 staff members of SSNC.



The meeting commenced with Sustainable Consumption (SC) Group Discussions on October 05, 2015. The Strategy Planning meeting was held on October 06-08, 2015 and was an important part of the strategic planning of SSNC for the Global Programme 2017-2020. On October 09, 2015, SC group discussed the theme of Global Action Week for next phase. It was decided to take a final decision in Brasilia on November 15-17, 2015.

Public Procurement

Experiences and the Way Forward

A dissemination-cum training workshop with key stakeholders on 'Public Procurement Experiences, RTPP Act, Rules and Way Forward' was held at Jaipur on November 30, 2015. The meeting saw the participation of 130 Public Procuring officials of various government departments and agencies; entire State Procurement Facilitation Cell (SPFC) at Finance Department; officials from Asian Development Bank; resource persons from Competition Commission of India; and some other retired government officials as resource persons.



CUTS Elected to the CI Council (2015-19)



CUTS first time contested in the elections to the Governing Council of CI, got elected in the General Assembly held in Brasilia, Brazil on November 21, 2015 and is represented by George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS. He was nominated by all the CI full members from India as the unanimous candidate from India, supported by several other countries and is the only representative from South Asia in the CI Council.

Bart Combee was announced as CI's new President. He is also President of the Netherlands' consumer organisation, Consumentenbond. Gilly Wong, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Consumer Council, was appointed as the Vice President of CI.

In the inaugural session, observatory findings were shared with the SPFC and present stakeholders. Hiroyuki Maruyama, Principal Resident Procurement Specialist, India Resident Mission, Asian Development Bank, New Delhi shared his experiences on the need of public procurement reforms in South Asia. He appreciated the approach undertaken by the Rajasthan Procurement Observatory.

Arvind Deewan, Chief Accounts Officer and Yogendra Bagda, SPPP in-charge from SPFC team facilitated technical sessions on RTPP Act and Rules in an interactive manner. Several queries were raised from the participants, which were suitably answered.

Study Tour of Municipal Government Officials from Mongolia

15 officials from Municipal Government of Mongolia along with two representatives from The Asia Foundation (TAF), India visited Jaipur from December 07-11, 2015 on study tour on urban governance. The visit was organised by CUTS with the support of TAF, India.

This tour included in-house sessions on urban governance. Visits to Department of local bodies, Government of Rajasthan and Jaipur Municipal Corporation were also arranged to meet officials and understand the scenario of urban governance.

The group also participated in the international conference on Sustainable Habitat and Smart Cities (*Municipalika*) where they met with the Chief Minister of Rajasthan Vasundhara Raje. Field visit was organised at Ward-17, where members got an opportunity to attend an interface meeting and interact with ward-level officials, councillors and local citizens. Visit was made to Participatory Research in Asia office to know about another urban initiative at Jaipur. The group also visited CUTS to participate in de-briefing meeting and applauded the efforts of CUTS.



Celebrating National Consumer Day 2015

The DoCA, Ministry of Consumer Affairs Food and Public Distribution, Government of India organised the National Consumer Day 2015 with the theme 'Safe & Healthy Food: Combating Food Adulteration' at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi on December 22, 2015.



The programme was inaugurated by Ram Vilas Paswan, Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution. Justice D K Jain, President, National Consumer

Disputes Redressal Commission, New Delhi delivered the keynote address and Ashish Bahuguna, Chairman, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) delivered the theme address. C Viswanath, Secretary, DoCA, Government of India and Virdha Swarup, Secretary, Department of Food & Public Distribution was also present.

George Cheriyan and Dharmendra Chaturvedi participated in the event. Cheriyan was felicitated on the occasion on being elected as a member of Governing Council of CI. He spoke about CI and revision of United Nations Guidelines on Consumer Protection.

A State Level Function on National Consumer Day organised by the DoCA, Government of Rajasthan was held at Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj and Gramin Vikas Sansthan, Jawahar Nagar, Jaipur Rajasthan on December 24, 2015. The theme of the programme was 'Safe and Healthy Food: Combating Adulteration'. Hem Singh Bhadana, Hon'ble Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Civil Supplies was the Chief Guest. Hanuman Singh Bhati, Divisional Commissioner, Jaipur chaired the function. Cheriyan was one of the speakers and spoke briefly on the theme.

Global Green Action Week Partners' Meeting

George Cheriyan participated in the Global Green Action Week Partners' Meeting held at Brasilia during November 15-17, 2015. The objectives of the meeting were to evaluate GAW; thematic development of organic food production and marketing; jointly contribute to the development of future campaign; and add value to the thematic approach of GAW.

The meeting commenced with a field visit to the rural Brazil – interacting with groups and involving



in organic farming. Sara and Eva from SSNC facilitated the meeting and about 10 representatives from various partners attended it. Cheriyan delivered two presentations and actively participated in discussions and group activities.

महर्षि भूषण ने कहा कि राज्य सरकार को कार्रवाही के अधिकारों के संरक्षण लिए कारण कदम उठाने के लिए सज्ज रह है।

इन्दिरा गांधी पंचायतीराज संस्थान गाँव में राष्ट्रीय उपभोक्ता दिवस पर आयोजित समारोह में मुख्य अतिथि श्री जे.एन. लाल ने कहा कि उपभोक्ताओं की समस्याओं का निवारण करने के लिए एक एज्युटेड से उन आन्दोलन बनाने का कार्य प्रयास कर रहे हैं जो महत्वपूर्ण आवश्यकता है। अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय उपभोक्ता नीति विशेषज्ञ बिजोन कुमार मिश्रा ने कहा कि वर्तमान समय अर्थशास्त्र का युग है। मिलावट की रोकथाम के लिए हमें तत्पर रहना चाहिए।