

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.

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Country Loses ₹750bn Every Year due to Road Accidents

“**M**any international best practices have been incorporated in the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill 2016 and the much awaited bill is expected to be presented in the Parliament in the second half of the ongoing budget session”, said Abhay Damle, Joint Secretary (Transport), Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Government of India while speaking at the National Advocacy Meeting on Road Safety organised by CUTS at New Delhi on February 02, 2017.



The one point agenda of the meeting was to advocate for the early enactment of the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2016. About 100 participants representing more than 20 states comprising of consumer activists, representatives from organisations working on road safety, legal experts, transport engineers, traffic police and other stakeholders attended the meeting.

On this occasion, a booklet on ‘Guide to Buying Safer Car’ also was released by the chief guests. While addressing the session, Damle highlighted various provisions of the Bill, which address road safety issues. In response to queries raised by activists, he said that he will take into account suggestions that were invited regarding mandatory ISI marked helmets and installing speed governors at the time of vehicle manufacturing.

George Cherian, Director, CUTS International in his opening remarks highlighted that while India has only two percent of motor vehicles population, however it accounts for more than 10 percent of road accidents of the world which results in an average of more than 400 people dying each day on Indian roads. He also said, as per media reports, 1682 times more people died in roads in India in 2015, than the people died in terrorist strikes. He advocated for changes which can be made by educating the people and maintaining the discipline on roads.

Nalin Sinha, representative, Bloomberg Global Health Incubator and Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) also spoke in the inaugural session and presented an overview of road safety scenario in India. K K Kapila, Chairman, International Road Federation (IRF) also spoke in the inaugural session.

A technical session including Panel of Experts on Road Safety was also conducted which comprised eminent speakers, such as S S Jain, Professor, Transport Engineering, IIT Roorkee; P K Sarkar, Professor and Head of Department, School of Planning & Architecture, Ministry of HRD New Delhi; and S B S Tyagi, Additional Commissioner (Traffic) Delhi Police, New Delhi.

MPs presented their views on road safety in the session on ‘Law Makers Perspective on Road Safety’. N K Premachandran, MP said that there is an urgent need for passage of the Bill but at the same time discussion should be initiated on the same. Taking the discussion forward, he said that it should also be the duty of the government to bear the penalty if accidents are caused due to defaults in roads. Premachandran stated that the country loses ₹750bn every year because of road accidents.

Rangasayee Ramakrishna, MP Rajya Sabha and Member of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport said that a board should be formed on National Road Safety to ensure the participation of states in law making.

Consumers to Distinguish between Organic and Non-organic Products

“**T**here should be mechanism to aware the consumer about organic products. The awareness will create a demand and ultimately trigger the supply”, Sanwar Lal Jat said while addressing the State Level Advocacy Meeting organised by CUTS at Jaipur on February 23, 2017. CUTS is working to promote organic consumption in the state of Rajasthan by creating awareness among consumers as well as farmers.



George Cherian, Director CUTS in his opening remarks highlighted various initiatives undertaken by the organisation for promotion of organic farming and consumption. While referring to the report of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture he stated that only 0.4 percent of land is used for organic farming. He also said that there is no provision for periodic scientific evaluation of pesticides used in the country.

Deepak Saxena, Assistant Director, CUTS while delivering a presentation stated the objectives of the project. While speaking about the project area he mentioned that it is implemented in six districts: Jaipur, Dausa, Chittorgarh, Kota, Udaipur and Pratapgarh.

J S Bhandari discussed the importance of cow dung and urine in farming.

The technical session was headed by Hema Yadav Director, State Institute of Agriculture Management (SIAM), Government of Rajasthan; Mohan Kumar S, Associate Professor, Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur; and S Mukharejee, Professor, Department of Horticulture, Rajasthan Agricultural Research Institute (RARI) where they explained the scenario with the help of the presentation.

Organic Fair in Jaipur

CUTS organised an Organic Fair at Jaipur on January 28, 2017. There were in all 19 stalls (6 retailer's outlets and 13 farmer producers). There were cultural activities, such as folk dances with songs, *kacchi ghodi*, bamboo man to entertain participants, who also displayed messages of organic farming and products for a safe life.



There was also a technical session. Sheetal Prasad Sharma, Director, SIAM, V S Yadav, Professor, Horticulture, RARI; and S S Rathore, Project Officer, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Jaipur were key speakers. George Cherian in his opening remarks spoke about the objective of organic fair. He said there is a huge gap between demand and supply and the fair is an effort to bridge this gap.

There were more than 250 visitors comprising 40 percent of women.

Exposure Visit to Hyderabad for Mayors

The Exposure Visit to Hyderabad was organised for Mayors and Deputy Mayors of Rajasthan on February 15-17, 2017. Ghanshayam Ojha, Mayor Jodhpur; Shiv Singh Bhot, Mayor Bharatpur; Manoj Bhardwaj, Deputy Mayor Jaipur; Sampat Sankhla, Deputy Mayor Ajmer Indrapal Singh, Deputy Mayor Bharatpur and O P Kala, Executive Engineer, Department of Local Self Government, Rajasthan along with George Cherian, Amar Deep Singh, Madhu Sudan Sharma and Satyapal Singh were part of the visit.



Engineering Staff College of India (ESCI), a renowned institute was the local host and coordinated visits to different sites of best practices implemented by Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC). During this visit, best practices and innovative approaches adopted by GHMC to deal with domestic and industrial hazardous solid waste were shared by concerned officials through site visits of Jawahar Nagar and Hazardous Waste Management, Bachupally Plants.

Meetings were also held with Bonthu Rammohan, Mayor of Hyderabad; Baba Faisuddin, Deputy Mayor; B Janardhan Reddy (IAS) Commissioner and other senior officials of GHMC.

Exposure Visit to Sikkim

The Exposure Visit to Sikkim under the ProOrganic project was organised on March 20-23, 2017 for the project team members comprising George Cherian, Deepak Saxena, Dharmendra Chaturvedi, Rajdeep Pareek, Renu Beniwal, Nimisha Gaur and Madan Lal Keer and O P Pareek from Dausa.

The main purpose was to know how Sikkim became 100 percent organic, to understand the functioning of Sikkim organic mission, and to get acquainted with various working patterns adopted by farmers of Sikkim. The team visited CP Bhattarai Integrated Model Organic Farm KAMREY and observed vermin compost unit, *madhyam* compost, low cost vermi-wash production and vegetable garden.

An open discussion was also held between progressive farmers and government officials at farm itself. After that team visited *Krishi Bhawan* and met with Khorlo Bhutia, Principal Director-cum-Secretary, Department of Horticulture, Government of Sikkim; S. Anbalagan, IFS, Ex. Director Sikkim



Organic Mission; P D Lajja, Additional Ex. Director; and M K Pradhan, Joint Director and discussed promotion of organic production by the state government.

The team visited Shimkharka village of South Sikkim and observed agriculture farm of Tulsi. It also visited the organic tea garden in Temi and few organic outlets.

State of Consumer Safety in India

The State of Consumer Safety report, 2016 was formally released by the Department of Consumer Affairs through an e-launch in the World Consumer Rights Day function organised at New Delhi on March 15, 2017.

In the launch function Ram Vilas Paswan, Union Minister for Consumer Affairs; Ravi Shanker Prasad, Union Minister of IT and Law, Government of India; Hem Kumar Pandey, Secretary (Consumer Affairs); P V Ramashastri, Joint Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs; several representatives of consumer organisations, industry, IT start-up companies and media were present. Pradeep S. Mehta, George Cherian, Madhu Sudan Sharma and Rahul Singh from CUTS attended the event.

Gram Gadar Award 2016

The award was given to Giriraj Sharma of Daily News of Jaipur during the occasion of Regional Advocacy Meeting on March 30, 2017. The award was given by B L Soni, ADG, Rajasthan Police for the best write up on 'Swachch Bharat Abhiyan.'



World Consumer Rights Day

World Consumer Rights Day, 2015 was commemorated on March 16, 2017 under the banner of Grahak Suvidha Kendra, Jaipur by way of organising an interface. This year's issue was 'Building a Digital World Consumers Can Trust'. The meeting was attended by Bhavna Sharma, Senior Adviser,



Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Regional Office of Jaipur. Other participants included representatives from Tata Docomo, Vodafone, Reliance Com, MTS and Idea Cellular. Two joint advisers: Manish Saxena and Manish Lodha from TRAI were also present.

In all, there were around 25 participants. Deepak Saxena welcomed the guests and participants, whereas George Cherian delivered introductory remarks.

Regional Advocacy Meeting on Road Safety

Regional Advocacy meeting on Road Safety was organised at Jaipur on March 30, 2017. More than 75 participants attended the meeting, which included 15 NGO representatives from Jaipur; 28 from other districts of Rajasthan; seven from outside Rajasthan, which includes UP, Punjab, Haryana and MP; five from Traffic Department of Rajasthan; four from Transport Department of Rajasthan and three from media.

B L Soni Additional Director General of Rajasthan Police, along with Nalin Sinha, Consultant, Global Road Safety Partnership, New Delhi and George Cherian, Director CUTS



were present in the inaugural session, where World Bank Consultant for Transport Department, Ashwini Bagga also spoke on behalf of Transport Department of Rajasthan.

Dr Varsha Pradhan from Delhi and Laxmi Kant Sharma from Jaipur spoke as accident survivors. In the technical session, Rajeev Kumar Sharma, ADG, Anti Human Trafficking, Rajasthan Police along with Maya Tandon of *Sahayta* Trust; Y K Gupta, a legal person representing Rally Mark Legal Consultants and Advocates of Lucknow and Anil Jain, RTO, Jaipur spoke on the issue of Motor Vehicles Amendment Bill, 2016. George Cherian gave introductory remarks and Madhu Sudan Sharma presented a brief outline of the Motor Vehicles Amendment Bill, 2016..

