

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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Making Digital Marketplaces Fairer

About 96 percent consumers shop online at least once in their lifetime. Out of those, 70 percent found online shopping safe, and 63 percent prefer cash on delivery. 56 percent online consumers face problem post purchase. Findings of the survey on 'Digital Consumer Satisfaction' conducted by CUTS were released on 'World Consumer Rights Day, 2018' observed by the organisation in Jaipur. This year, the day was observed worldwide on the theme 'Making Digital Marketplaces More Fairer'.

"We live in a country, where 65 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) comes through selling services, which makes the consumer a king in a true sense but now-a-days living in the world of gadgets. Digitisation has taken over our subconscious." said Mugdha Sinha, Secretary, Consumer Affairs, Food and Civil Supplies of Government of Rajasthan, while addressing the



event as the Chief Guest. Sinha appealed for 'Minimum Government and Maximum Governance' through doorstep delivery of goods, services and knowledge to the consumer. She also assured an effective and efficient role of the government as a facilitator and enabler, which makes a bridge between the government and the consumer.

"Data is the new oil today" said Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS. He further stated that India is a unique country, where Consumer's Day is observed twice a year on March 15 as World Consumer Rights Day and on December 24 as National Consumers Day and despite the state of Indian consumer is not as good as expected. Mehta further pointed out that 'Consumer Protection' was a subject even in Twenty Point Programme initiated by the then Indira Gandhi government and it still remains a big challenge especially in two aspects, i.e. trustworthiness of e-platforms and determining their accountability towards consumers.

George Cherian while delivering his opening address said "India is one of the fastest growing e-commerce markets worldwide." He further stated that in 2016, an estimated 1.61 billion people worldwide purchased goods online. In 2016, global e-commerce sales amounted to US\$1.9tn and projections show a growth of up to US\$4.48tn to 2021. In Indian scenario, it amounted to US\$20.05bn in 2017. Therefore, safe and secure access to the internet is needed to increase the trustworthiness of online platforms and interest of consumers.

Manish Lodha, Joint Adviser, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Jaipur office threw light upon the enhanced role of TRAI as e-commerce is shifting to mobile commerce in India. Further, a panel discussion moderated by Bipul Chatterjee, Executive Director CUTS, was held followed by the inaugural session.

Vagish Kumar Singh, a Legal Professional; Harkishan Wadhwan, Manager, Axis Bank; Deepansh Sharma, Manager, Ola Cabs and Vishal Singhal, Manager, I Solution Microsystem Pvt Ltd spoke on different aspects of e-commerce from respective fields in consumer's perspective. Sanjay Kumar Mangla, Fellow, CUTS gave a presentation on 'E-Commerce in the Context of Trade, Competition and Consumer Protection in India.' More than 70 people from different fields participated.

Organic Farming: The Need of the Hour

86 percent consumers in the state are well aware about organic consumption and 91 percent farmers are aware of the ill effects of the chemical farming. Only 19 percent farmers are practicing organic farming in the state. These are some of the findings of the baseline survey conducted by CUTS International which revealed the organic scenario of the state. The mentioned survey was conducted amongst 1795 consumers, 644 farmers of 192 gram panchayats of selected 10 districts.

“Getting back to the Indian traditional organic farming in the interest of the coming generations is the need of the hour,” appealed Neelkamal Darbari, Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture, while speaking at the state-level stakeholder’s consultation, where she was addressing as the chief guest. She specifically said that the basic requirement is to observe the traditional Indian agriculture value system in co-ordination with modern technologies with a balanced approach. She identified a need to set up a synergy with farmers to frame more effective policies.

“The consumption of chemical fertiliser in the country has been increasing along with level of agriculture production. Agriculture production increased from 83 million tonnes in 1960s to 252 million tonnes in 2014-15. Use of chemical fertilisers increased from one million tonnes to 25.6 million tonnes in the same period,” stated George Cherian, Director, CUTS International. SJ Singh, Director, Rajasthan Agriculture Research Institute requested farmers to make a shift from conventional to organic farming.

During the technical session, AK Gupta, Dean, College of Agri-business Management Jobner; BD Yadav, Retd. Professor, Horticulture; Satbeer Beniwal, Deputy General Manager, Morarka Foundation; and Neeta Upadhyay from Orion Greens presented their views about the baseline survey conducted by CUTS.



Community Seed Banks in Uttarakhand

Rajdeep Pareek and Dharmendra Chaturvedi visited Tehri Garhwal to know about the functions of community seed banks. They met with Vijay Jardhari, who is a famous seed saver and environmentalist. He



was associated with *Chipko Movement* and after that initiated *Beej Bachao Andolan*. The team visited two community seed banks in Quanli and Khalpali villages which use traditional methods to store seeds. The team visited field office of Mount Valley Development Association at Pokhal village.

Giving Poorer Consumers Greater Voice

The project ‘Giving Poorer Consumers Greater Voice in India, Bangladesh and Indonesia’ supported by Consumers International (CI) and IKEA Foundation is implemented in Chittorgarh. During January-March 2018, George Cherian attended a ‘Partners Meeting and Communication Tools Workshop’ at New Delhi on January 22-23, 2018.

The workshop aimed at developing communication tools for behavioural change interventions towards improving knowledge of consumer rights among low-income economically active consumers in rural and urban India. 12 puppet shows and documentary on the subject was shown to participants of different age groups in both Eral and Netawalgarh communities.



Visit of Russian Delegates

The Rospotrebnadzor is the Federal Service for Control in the Sphere of Protection Consumers’ Rights and Well-Being of Humans in the Russian Federation. Rospotrebnadzor implemented ‘Financial Education and Literacy’ Project developed by the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation with the support of the World Bank.

As part of the project, a study visit of 17 officials from Rospotrebnadzor was organised to India and meeting with the relevant institutions to review the best international experience in the area of consumer protection in financial services. The team visited CUTS on February 07, 2018 which helped the group in organising meeting in India, with



institutions, such as Department of Consumer Affairs, Reserve Bank of India, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission etc.

Consumer Protection in Digital Era

The TRAI organised a Seminar on Consumer Protection in Digital Era in Jaipur on January 19, 2018. George Cherian along with Jeetali Agnani attended the seminar. Cherian made a presentation



on 'Protecting the Digital Consumer: Challenges and Possible Solutions' and responded to queries raised by participants.

Pre-budget Consultation with Chief Minister

George Cherian participated in the Pre-Budget Consultation meeting of Hon'ble Chief Minister of Rajasthan with NGOs, civil societies and consumer forums at Jaipur on January 17, 2018. He submitted a CUTS memorandum and also raised issues, such as rural distress and employment generation, agriculture market reforms etc.



Sustainable Culture and Lifestyles

As part of project 'Documenting Practices of Sustainable Culture and Lifestyles in India', eight case studies out of 15 were completed. With the aim to retain and regain the sustainable practices in India, the team visited Manufacturing Low-Cost Compostable Sanitary Napkins in Mumbai, Thrissur and Coimbatore with technical support of Aakar Innovations and 'Padman' fame Jayshree Industries by Arunanchalam Muruganatham.



Among other cases were Banana Fibre Textiles handmade by Shekhar from Chennai whose name is registered in Limca Book of World Records for his skills; Coir Craft Industry in Kerala providing livelihood to several people in the coastal region; Areca Leaf Plates and other utensils challenging the modern culture of use of plastic disposables; mud architecture by Shankar and Eugene inspired by traditional lifestyles of our ancestors and learning from Alappuzha how to handle the waste generated in homes within its boundaries. Aakansha Choudhary, Simi TB, Madhu Sudan Sharma and George Cherian were involved in the documentation.

Exposure Visit to Banswara and Dungarpur

George Cherian, Rajdeep Pareek, Aakansha Choudhary and Madan Lal Keer made an exposure visit to multiple districts and met with farmers in Rajasthan, who are either practicing organic farming or have recently switched to organic production. The team visited farmers and farmlands in Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Pratapgarh and Banswara respectively. The team also visited Dungarpur and interacted with officials of Agriculture Department and discussed the status and progress of 'Organic Dungarpur' which is declared as First Organic District of Rajasthan.



Visit to Shekhawati Festival

CART team visited Nawalgarh (Jhunjhunu) on February 17, 2018, witnessed Shekhawati Festival, visited the organic section managed by Morarka Foundation and interacted with senior management and staff. The purpose was to view and acquire organic culture being adopted in the region. The team also visited 'Kan Singh Ki Dhani', an alternate housing and way of living, and had detailed discussions from the perspective of sustainable consumption.

Third Global Road Safety Leadership Course



Deepak Saxena attended the third Global Road Safety Leadership Course facilitated by Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit and supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies and conducted by Global Road Safety Partnership at Nairobi, Kenya during March 04-16, 2018 and successfully completed the same.



REPRESENTATION IN MEETINGS/WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS ETC.

Promoting Preventive Health through Convergence

George Cherian attended a Conference of State Health Secretaries and Health Ministers respectively on 'Promoting Preventive Health through Convergence and Concrete Action', as a special invitee on January 08-09, 2018.

Forest Food Festival

Deepak Saxena and Dharmendra Chaturvedi attended a 'Forest Food Festival' jointly organised by Nature Club of Rajasthan and Department of Forest and Environment at 'Vishwa Vaniki Udyhan', Jaipur on January 28, 2018.

Meeting on Salt Iodisation

Jeetali Agnani attended Rajasthan State Level Stakeholder's Meeting on Salt Iodisation organised by Nutrition International at Jaipur on January 29, 2018.

Climate Change and Air Pollution

George Cherian attended a one-day workshop/interactions with NGOs, Citizens and Civil Society on 'Climate Change and Air Pollution' organised by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (EE Division), Government of India and United Nations Development Programme at Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, New Delhi on February 21, 2018.

Policy Consultation

Aakansha Choudhary attended Policy Consultation organised by Centre for Advocacy and Research on status of Sludge and Septage Management in 13 settlements of Jawahar Nagar belt under Single Window at Jaipur, on February 23, 2018.

Second Smart City Conclave

Amar Deep Singh attended 'Second Smart City Conclave' organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry, Jaipur Municipal Corporation and Department of Local Self Government, Rajasthan at Jaipur on March 16, 2018.



CART IN MEDIA

April 10, 2018
BW BUSINESSWORLD
HOME COLUMNS COMMUNITIES EVENTS BW TV SUBSCRIBE TO PRINT
Business News # StartUp-&Entrepreneur # Hospitality-Industry # Smartcities # Technology-Leaders # Advertising
Only 19% farmers practicing organic farming in R'than: Survey

जैविक पदार्थों के प्रति बढ़ रही जागरूकता

ऑनलाइन शॉपिंग में उपभोक्ता सशक्तिकरण की आवश्यकता

जैविक पदार्थों के प्रति बढ़ रही जागरूकता

इंटरनेट यूज ले, डिजिटल फुटप्रिंट्स नहीं छोड़े

VISITS

Sightsavers Board of Directors and Senior Management

George Cherian visited Bassi Block of Chittorgarh along with CHD team to be part of the visit of Sightsavers Board of Directors and Senior Management team and the meeting with Disabled Persons' Organisations under the Disability Social Inclusion Programme in partnership with Sightsavers International on March 05, 2018. He also received a Certificate of Appreciation from S Y Quraishi, Former Chief Election Commissioner and Chairperson of Sightsavers Board, and a Memento from Anju Kanwar, Sarpanch, Bassi GP, for CHD work for empowering networks of persons with disabilities.

Orion Greens, Kitchen Garden

CUTS team visited Orion Greens, a famous Kitchen Garden developed in Jaipur by Neeta Upadhyay on February 09, 2018. The team viewed and learnt various techniques of kitchen gardening.

Meeting with new Secretary, Consumer Affairs

George Cherian along with Deepak Saxena and Dharmendra Chaturvedi attended a meeting with Secretary, Consumer Affairs, Mugdha Sinha at Secretariat on January 15, 2018 to discuss some burning consumer issues at the state level.