

Consumer Dialogue

Volume IX, Issue 2, May-August, 2018

E-newsletter

FSSAI Ropes in Expert Panel to Look into Draft Labelling Regulations: CUTS Consultation

“The front-of-package labels are required for people to be aware of healthy and unhealthy food”, said Pawan Agarwal, CEO, Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), while addressing the National Consultation on Food Labelling Regulation for Safe and Healthy Food, organised by CUTS International in participation with FSSAI, on August 17, 2018 at New Delhi. Agarwal announced that FSSAI has decided to form an expert panel to look into draft Food Safety and Standards (Labelling & Display) Regulations, 2018, which were announced in April, 2018 by FSSAI. The members of the expert panel are Dr Sesikeran, Former Director & Scientist, NIN; Dr Nikhil Tandon, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (IIMS) and Dr Hemalatha, Director, National Institute of Nutrition (NIN).

The regulations are under consideration by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. India is still at a stage, where it can control the menace of unhealthy eating by working on public policy unlike countries like the US, where the huge amount of money is spent just on tackling diseases like Obesity in public health.

George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS International, said how Front-of-Pack Labelling (FoPL) designs, which are clear and impactful, play an important role in increasing awareness and shifting food-eating norms. Mandatory FoPLs are considered by governments around the globe as an effective and evidence-based way to improve diets. At least 16 FoPL systems are operating in 23 countries, with another 14 schemes proposed.

As an initiative to make people adopt safe and healthy food options, FSSAI has already initiated campaigns like *Aaj Se Thoda Kam* and Eat Right Movement. The panelists and participants present in the consultation put forward various recommendations on how the final regulations shall look like considering the interest of the consumers.

Other panelist in the consultation were: Anil Kumar, Advisor (Standards) & Dr N Bhaskar, Advisor from FSSAI; Dr Satish Kulkarni, Former Head, National Dairy Institute, Bangalore; Dr Nikhil Tandon, HoD, Department of Endocrinology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences; Dr GM Subha Rao, Scientist E and Deputy Director, NIN (Indian Council for Medical Research), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; Vandana Shah, Director, Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids; Kanchan Zutshi, Secretary, Federation of Biscuit Manufacturers of India; Amit Khurana, Centre for Science and Environment and Raj Kapoor, Managing Director, Assocom Institute of Bakery Technology & Management.

More details:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/fssai-sets-up-expert-panel-to-look-into-draft-labelling-regulations/article24719223.ece>

CUTS has signed an agreement with Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHA) for implementing a project, which aimed to support strong and effective formulation of the “Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2018 and promote elimination of industrially produced trans-fat in India as part of ‘REPLACE’ technical package. CUTS, in collaboration with a group of international experts on health and food safety has reviewed the draft regulations and submitted a detailed note with suggestions and improvements required for the strong final set of regulations keeping the consumers at priority. As part of its advocacy, in June 2018, FSSAI was urged by CUTS to introduce mandatory Front-of-Package Warning Labels on foods and beverages to curb the growing epidemic of heart disease and cardiovascular deaths.

(Business Standard: https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/ensure-front-of-pack-warning-labels-health-experts-urge-fssai-118062500654_1.html)



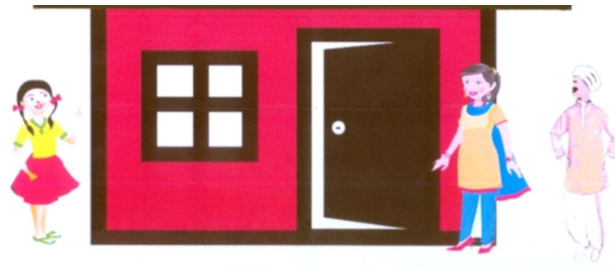
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CUTS CART



Grahak Sahayta Kendra, Jaipur

From January onwards, the name of 'Grahak Suvidha Kendra' has formally been changed to 'Grahak Sahayta Kendra'. GSK provides services, such as advice on consumer protection related issues, addresses complaints; and publishes books, pamphlets, magazines and other relevant materials on consumer related issues. Besides, GSK centre also handles consumer complaints through counselling and conciliation for quick and easy redress.

GSK details can be accessed at:

http://www.cuts-international.org/CART/Grahak_Suvidha_Kendra.htm

For being a part of GSK family visit:

<https://www.facebook.com/Grahak-Suvidha-Kendra-GSK-Jaipur-1459230614407574/?fref=ts>

Online Submission of Complaints:

Online consumer complaints for GSK can be registered at:

[https://docs.google.com/a/cuts.org/forms/d/](https://docs.google.com/a/cuts.org/forms/d/14B78zgXN1cQa61MTuZSPtcrF6rEoUBTKbTYeL4ajXx0/viewform?c=0&w=1)

[14B78zgXN1cQa61MTuZSPtcrF6rEoUBTKbTYeL4ajXx0/viewform?c=0&w=1](https://docs.google.com/a/cuts.org/forms/d/14B78zgXN1cQa61MTuZSPtcrF6rEoUBTKbTYeL4ajXx0/viewform?c=0&w=1)

For online registration of consumer complaints against misleading advertisements, Ministry of Consumer Affairs of Government of India has developed the web portal:

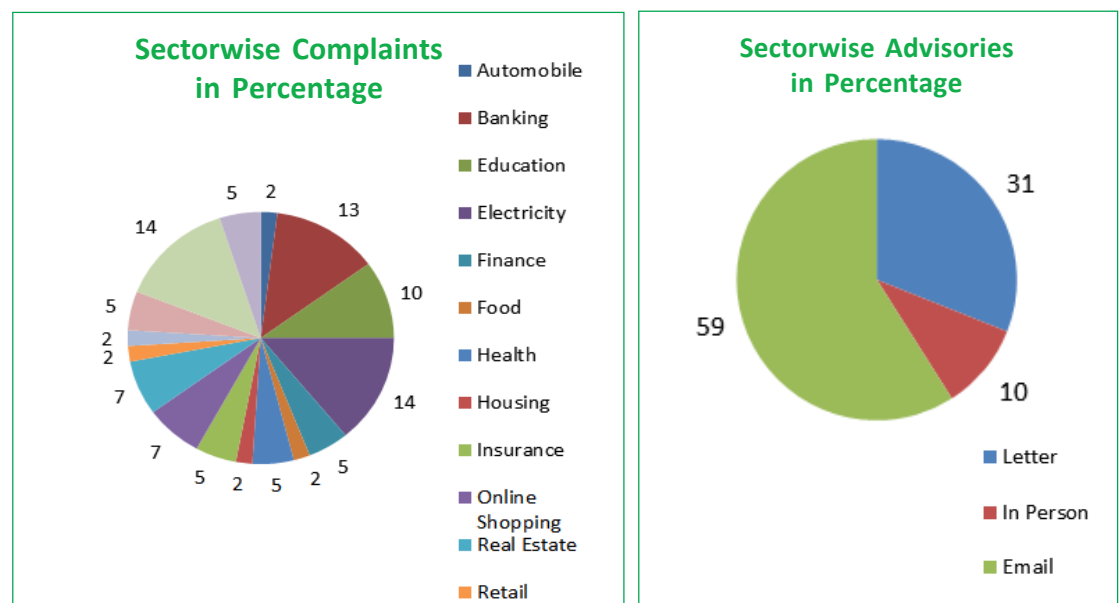
<http://gama.gov.in/Default.aspx> / <http://gama.gov.in/Secure/Login.aspx>

The online system of complaint submission for GSK is functional in bilingual and is available at CUTS CART page:

[https://docs.google.com/a/cuts.org/forms/d/](https://docs.google.com/a/cuts.org/forms/d/14B78zgXN1cQa61MTuZSPtcrF6rEoUBTKbTYeL4ajXx0/viewform?c=0&w=1)

[14B78zgXN1cQa61MTuZSPtcrF6rEoUBTKbTYeL4ajXx0/viewform?c=0&w=1](https://docs.google.com/a/cuts.org/forms/d/14B78zgXN1cQa61MTuZSPtcrF6rEoUBTKbTYeL4ajXx0/viewform?c=0&w=1)

From May to August 2018, the status of complaints received and consultation rendered at GSK is shown in the below given figures:





CUTS International Re-elected in Central Consumer Protection Council

In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (I) of Section 4 of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 (68 of 1986) read with sub-rule (1) of rule 3 of the Consumer Protection Rules, 1987, the Central Government re-constituted the Central Consumer Protection Council, consisting of the members like ministers of few select states, Karnataka, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Assam, MP and Manipur under clause (c) of sub-rule (1) of rule 3; Chairpersons of TRAI, FSSAI and Railway Board; Secretary of Electronics and Information and Technology of Govt. of India and Director General of Bureau of Indian Standards under clause (f) of sub-rule (1) of rule 3 and consumer organisations. Besides, the council also had nominated Secretaries of Consumer Affairs of three states, Rajasthan, Telangana and Gujarat as members under clause (j) of sub-rule (1) of rule 3 of the Act as mentioned above.

This Committee, which is re-constituted once in three years under the Chairmanship of Minister of Food and Consumer Affairs of Govt. of India and Minister of State as its Vice Chairman functions with an object to discuss, analyse and formulate or suggest required amendments in the policies under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, which can promote and protect various rights of the consumers as enshrined under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.

For more details, please access: <https://consumeraffairs.nic.in/forms/contentpage.aspx?lid=581>

Pradeep S Mehta Nominated in a Think Tank of 'Framework for a National Policy on E-Commerce'

Pradeep S. Mehta, founder Secretary General of CUTS International has been nominated as a member of the Think Tank to finalise 'Framework for a National Policy on E-commerce' by Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. He is the only non-government non-industry representative on the Think Tank and serves in similar capacity as a member of the Better Regulatory Advisory Group, recently constituted by the Government of India to suggest regulatory reforms for fast tracking investments in the country.



CUTS Again in Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission's State Advisory Committee

In pursuance to the powers conferred by Section 87 of the Electricity Act, 2003, after a gap of almost three years, CUTS has again been included in the State Advisory Committee of Rajasthan Electricity Committee (RERC). The said committee has been re-constituted by a notification vide their Order 2018/02 dated July 26, 2018.



INTERNSHIP AT CART

- Udit Sharma from Institution-National Law School, Cuttack, Odisha during 14 May to 13 June, 2018
- Arena Ali from Seedling School of Law & Governance, Jaipur National University, Jaipur during 02 July to 31 July, 2018



Automakers Asked to Bring in Safer Designs to Curb Road Accidents

Union Minister, Nitin Gadkari called for concerted efforts to minimise accidents on the pattern of South Korea, which has successfully reduced the number of accidents to 213 from 13,000 (annually) five years back. 'Automobile makers should come forward in the initiative for reducing road crashes. There should be research and innovation,' he said. 'They can also explore the possibility of using silicon, if feasible, in tyres to minimise incidents like tyre bursts on highways like Yamuna Expressway due to increase in temperature'.



(ToI, April 26, 2018)

<http://snip.ly/joflv>

<http://snip.ly/e2yl1>

National Digital Communications Policy 2018: Aims 50 mbps Broadband Speed

With the promise of rationalising levies including spectrum charges to rejuvenate the debt-ridden telecom sector, the draft of the new telecom policy proposes broadband access for all with 50 mbps speed +, 5G services and 40 lakh new jobs in the sector by 2022. The draft policy branded as 'National Digital Communications Policy 2018' was unveiled by the government also aims to attract \$100 billion in the digital communications sector by 2022 with the help of regulatory reforms. The draft also proposes to address woes of the sector by reviewing license fees, spectrum usage charges, universal service obligation fund levy - all of which add to cost of telecom services.



(ToI, May 2, 2018)

<http://snip.ly/hlr9i>

Railways Must Compensate, If One Dies Getting On or Off Train: Supreme Court

The Supreme Court ruled that the railways would be liable to pay compensation to passengers in case of death or injury while boarding and de-boarding trains and said it cannot deny such claims citing negligence on the part of passengers. A bench of Justices A. K. Goel and RF Nariman held that death or injury during boarding or de-boarding a train will be an 'untoward incident' entitling the victim to compensation. As per Section 124A of the Railways Act, 1989, no compensation shall be payable by the railway administration, if the passenger dies or suffers injury due to suicide or attempted suicide by him, self-inflicted injury, his own criminal act or any act committed by him in a state of intoxication or insanity. Different high courts have given contradictory verdicts as some of them held that injury or death during boarding and de-boarding because of negligence of the victim was at par with self-inflicted injury.



(ToI, May 10, 2018)

<http://snip.ly/1fkb8>

Public Sector Banks Lost ₹9 Crore Every Hour in Fiscal Year 2017-18

Government-owned banks are busy cleaning their books and the dirt that's coming off them is enough to swallow thousands of houses and bury dreams of smarter cities. Losses of public sector banks (PSBs) add up to over ₹79,000 crore and bad loans to a whopping ₹8.6 lakh crore for the fiscal year 2017-18 - both highest ever in the country's banking history. Size of the 2017-18 annual budget was ₹24.4 lakh crore. Giving free LPG connections required just ₹13,000 crore. The entire annual budget for agriculture is ₹58,000 crore.

(ToI, May 30, 2018)

<http://snip.ly/pp3y1>





Consumer Body Wants Repeal of State Housing Act

A national consumer rights' forum in housing that was part of the consultative process for the Real Estate (Regulation & Development) Act, 2016 (RERA), has decided to move the Central Advisory Council on RERA for repealing the West Bengal Housing Industry Regulation Act, 2017 (HIRA). Citing the Bengal government's attempt to dilute RERA, Forum for People's Collective Efforts (FPCE) President Abhay Upadhyay said HIRA defeats the very objective of ushering transparency into housing sector. 'We have found two major dilutions in key provisions of RERA in HIRA, which was notified on June 1. The first is on force majeure or unforeseen circumstances that prevents a builder from fulfilling his contract. RERA has clearly stated the circumstances: war, flood, drought, fire, cyclone, earthquake or any other calamity caused by nature. HIRA, on the other hand, makes a significant addition to the clause - "...or any other circumstances as may be prescribed" — that dilutes it,' he pointed out. Prior to the notification of RERA, builders had moved court against the act defining force majeure. But the Bombay High Court had cleared it, ignoring the objections from developers. 'By adding one phrase, HIRA has obliterated the clarity of RERA and made the clause on force majeure vague. This defeats the very purpose of the act. One of the main reasons behind the enactment of RERA was to ensure that developers complete and hand over projects on time instead of making excuses for non-compliance to delivery schedules,' said Upadhyay. The second major deviation is on garage. While RERA clearly states that it needs to have a roof and walls on three sides for parking of vehicle, but does not include unenclosed or uncovered parking space, HIRA has removed the clause altogether and defined garage as any parking space sanctioned by the government authority.

(Tol, June 6, 2018)

<http://snip.ly/ql3vew>

The Riddle of Greening Indian Transport



The increasing amount of oil import bill and pollution created by the transport sector has forced the country to think and redesign the transportation system. Electric vehicles (EVs) seem to be India's missing piece in the jigsaw puzzle of green mobility. And automakers are more than willing to press the e-button. The biggest challenge for mass adoption of EVs isn't only the upfront cost as much as the lack of public awareness concerning the importance of shifting to eco-friendly transportation. Countries like Sweden have included

passenger and goods transport in its eco-labelling programme and subsequently witnessed a surge in demand for both eco-friendly vehicles and transportation. Certification and eco-labelling will encourage the adoption of sustainable transport services by delivering transparency in the market and help consumers to relate to healthier green options.

(TAA, June 20, 2018)

<http://snip.ly/fzii25>

Surat's Underground Garbage System Shows Way to Delhi and Other Big Cities

Surat is showing the way to Delhi and other big cities that are struggling to manage garbage spilling out of 'dhalaos' and filling the air with foul smell. The city's municipal body has installed 43 underground garbage bins, each of which can contain up to 1.5 tonnes of waste as a part of the Smart City Mission and these are fitted with sensors to send alerts to the control room as soon as 70 per cent of the container is full. These underground bins have been placed on footpaths and each of them have two inlets for throwing waste—one for individuals and the other for municipal carts bringing collected waste—to help people avoid littering.



(Tol, July 2, 2018)

<http://snip.ly/6772zb>

Government Rushes to Insure Half a Billion Indians Before National Polls

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's plan to provide health insurance to half a billion Indians, a mass of people larger than the entire population of South. It aims to cover the poorest 40 percent in a country, where a 2017 World Health Organisation report found spending on health pushed more than 52 million people below the poverty line.

(The Quint, July 10, 2018)

https://www.bloombergquint.com/business/2018/07/04/modi-rushes-to-insure-half-a-billion-indians-before-election?utm_campaign=website&utm_source=sendgrid&utm_medium=newsletter



After 25 Years of 74th CAA, only 11 States Have Managed to Devolve Municipal Functions to ULBs

'74th Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA) was historic and landmark, however still not properly implemented in India even after 25 years of its enactment. Municipal governments feel dependent on state, even for funds and decisions making.' The issue was raised during the '*National Conference on 25 Years of 74th Constitutional Amendment Act*' organised by CUTS International in association with NITI Aayog on July 10, 2018, in Jaipur.

Sanjay Kumar Singh, Director NITI Aayog, New Delhi highlighted the sad state of 74th CAA in India where only total 11 states and UTs have devolved the functions to Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and Rajasthan is not amongst them. Debolina Kundu from National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), New Delhi highlighted that there should be financial autonomy to ULBs, and methods of revenue generation to make ULBs self-sufficient.

George Cheriyan, Director CUTS International, reminded the important provisions of the 74th CAA, which made it an historic amendment and said that today even after 25 years of its enactment, it has not implemented in letter and spirit and on analysing the state of urban self-governance, it has not proved as fortunate as rural self-governance in India.

Other speakers in the technical session were Purushottam Biyani, IAS (retd.), former director, Dept. of Local Self Governance, Govt. of Rajasthan; Milind Mhaske, Director, Praja foundation, Mumbai; Vivek Nair, Jaanagraha, Bengaluru; and Himani Tiwari, Dept. of Local Self Governance, Govt. of Rajasthan.

A total of about 60 participants attended the event which included elected representatives from Rajasthan, govt. officials, CSO and RWA representatives.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/jaipur/govts-fail-to-devolve-power-fund-to-urban-local-bodies/articleshow/64938480.cms>



Sustainable Culture and Lifestyles in India



required support, exposure and more research. The practices documented covered areas of Sustainable Habitat, Alternative of Air Conditioners, Low Cost and Compostable Sanitary Napkins, Eco-Friendly Banana Fibre Textiles, Coir Industry of India, Bamboo and *Lantana camara* as an alternative to Timber, Sharing Economy (existing since ages), Biodegradable Areca Leaf Sheath Cutlery and learning Waste Segregation and Management at source from Alapuzha.

'Documenting Practices of Sustainable Culture and Lifestyles in India' is a project supported by SSNC and implemented by CUTS International. The objective is to regain and retain traditional and cultural practices in relation to Sustainable Culture practiced in India since ages and establish a clear context of their use in urban modern day settings and to put these practices on a global platform for wider outreach and dissemination to suggests ways and ideas to the world to turn to a sustainable lifestyle. The team documented targeted 15 practices from all regions of India with potential of replication at an urban level with



ProOrganic Activities Enters into Second Year



District partner's orientation meeting was organised on May 3, 2018 with all district partners at Jaipur. Discussion was held on the timeline and budget part and suggestions incorporated by the partners. Partners were explained about proper implementation of all the activities. Similarly, partner's orientation meeting for Jaipur block partners was organized on 4 May, 2018 at Jaipur. A total 8 partners attended the meeting.

ProOrganic Voice Reaching at the Grassroots

To bring forward the whole movement down the line, several activities like gram panchayat level awareness campaigns, inception meetings for developing kitchen gardens and clubs in selected schools of each district and this year's farmer's trainings and field exposure were conducted in each of the target district. All these activities have been important, which were initiated in July 2017.



During the period of May-August, 2018, a total of 84 gram panchayat level; 13 inception meetings and two farmer's trainings and exposure visits got accomplished successfully. The purpose was to make consumers and farmers aware of organic products and to influence their buying/farming habits. Various modes to create awareness were organised. For example, street plays, showing a movie on organic farming and local cultural programmes; fixing, displaying posters and distributing hand-outs. Besides, other local and traditional activities like *Chaupal Baithaks* (village meetings) and puppet

shows, etc. were also organised. The first farmer training and exposure visit of the year 2018 was organized on August 7-8, 2018 at Bhilwara. Exposure Visit was made at Agrawal farm, Bhilwara and KVK Bhilwara. Similarly, the second was on August 24-25, 2018 at Dausa. Similarly the third in series was organized on August 28-29, 2018 at Pratapgarh. Exposure visit was done at KVK, Pratapgarh and at the farm of Jamna Lal Gurjar, where farmers visited organic farming of Maize, Guava, Vermi Compost Unit and Azola Unit.



Educating Bank Depositors

In continuation of the efforts to educate and make bank depositors aware of their rights and new technologies and safeguards, CUTS started its second quarter of Phase II with the support of Reserve Bank of India. The first Depositors Education and Awareness Programme got conducted at Gangrar, Chittorgarh on August 24, the next one was organised in Mevda Colony, Kapasan, Chittorgarh on August 30, 2018 and the third in series was at Mandalgarh, Bhilwara on August 31, 2018. Pukhraj Nahar, Financial Literacy Counsellor of Bank of Baroda was the key resource person in all the three along local bankers. The programme witnessed the participation of consumers from rural as well urban, representatives from the RBI along with different banks and media. Various bank officials served as resource persons and provided valuable information and important guidelines regarding safe and secured banking. All the programmes drew adequate participation from customers, bankers and media as well.



Campaign on 'Organic Clubs & Garden in School Programmes' Takes Off

State Level Launch of 'Organic Clubs & Garden in Schools Programme' was organised at St. Paul's Mar Thoma School, Mundiya Ramsar, Jaipur. As part of ProOrganic II, organic gardens will be developed in schools in 10 target districts of Rajasthan. The purpose of the organic clubs is to inculcate a culture of sustainable consumption and to contribute towards safe and sustainable

food systems. Rev. Samson Samuel, Director of St. Paul's Mar Thoma School, Jaipur was the Chief Guest. Principal, teaching and non-teaching faculty members and about 30 selected students attended the event along with some parents. After the meeting, saplings were planted to mark the formal launch of the organic garden.



Glimpses of some more ACTIVITIES



Glimpses of some more ACTIVITIES



Advocating for Road Safety

In continuation of our efforts to advocate for immediate enactment of new Motor Vehicle Act, 2017 and ensuring better road safety in the country, CUTS organised several campaigns and activities during the period:

- A Facebook campaign for earliest passage of Motor Vehicle Bill (MVB), 2017 in Rajya Sabha went on and around 80 road safety and MV Bill, 2017 related news, views, analysis and other related postings were made.
- Madhu Sudan Sharma represented CUTS in the meeting of Global Road Safety Programme (GRSP) partnering with Ms Kelly Larson, Executive Director, Bloomberg Philanthropies in Delhi on June 18, 2018 mainly to discuss three points, outreach to parliamentarians, engagement with Rajya Sabha Select Committee and engagement with some selected State Governments especially Govt. of Kerala. In the meeting along with Ms. Larson, representatives of all GRSP partners from India participated. Dr. Fikru Tullu, Dr. Gaurav Gupta and Ravitej Prasad from World Health Organisation (WHO) and Amit Bhatt from WRI, New Delhi were present. From GRSP, Taifur Tehman and from GHAI, Nalin Sinha and Mena Elturky were also present.
- Jeetali Agnani attended the workshop organised by Consumer VOICE, New Delhi in collation with other partners. In the workshop, victims from Delhi and other states shared their experience. Participants of the workshop were mainly victims, representatives from NGO/CSO's, individuals working for road safety as a social cause and media persons.
- An open letter was sent to Prime Minister with signatures of prominent names as signatory urging him to initiate earliest passage of the MVB 2017.
- George, Madhu Sudan and Jeetali participated in two joint GRSP conference calls during this period.
- George and Madhusudan authored two op-eds in *Asian Age* dated August 07, 2018, depicting on showing serious concern over unfortunate delay in passage of the MVA Bill, 2017 in Rajya Sabha. (<http://www.asianage.com/india/all-india/070818/earliest-passage-of-motor-vehicles-bill-is-crucial-to-saving-thousands-of-lives.html>)

Beat the Plastic Pollution World Environment Day

Session in Manipal University, Jaipur

To address the issue and commemorate this year's World Environment Day, two back to back events were organised on June 5, 2018. The first one was an event organised for students of Manipal University, Jaipur Campus, a session was organised for 200 students presenting the importance and need of the issue of plastic waste disposal. A pledge was also taken on the occasion.



An Event at Rajasthan Gau Sewa Sangh, Jaipur

An event was organised at Gau Sewa Sangh on the same day for representatives of NGOs and volunteers. Jyoti Khandelwal, former Mayor of Jaipur and Ramcharan Bohra, Member of Parliament were the special guests on the event. Around 30 participants from different organisations participated in the event. The cows were garlanded with placards depicting slogans on 'Beat the Plastic Pollution'. Cows have been the sufferers of plastic pollution because they end up consuming non-degradable plastic with food.



Potholes More Deadly than Terrorist Activities



Potholes took a deadly toll in 2017, claiming almost 10 lives daily with annual fatalities in the country adding up to 3,597—a more than 50% rise over the toll for 2016. Maharashtra recorded a doubling of deaths at 726 year on year — disheartening evidence that road safety remains a casualty in India.

https://www.indiatimes.com/news/india/deadly-potholes-claimed-3-597-lives-across-india-in-2017-terrorist-activities-803_-349391.html

MORE NEWS



Small Farmers Upset Over Stricter FSSAI Regulations for Organic Tag

Sujatha Rajeswaran made the kind of career shift those stuck in the corporate rat race tend to wistfully talk about, around the office water cooler. Eight years ago, she and her husband quit their IT jobs in Chennai and began farming on a three-acre plot near Puducherry, where they grow paddy, millets, pulses and sesame free of chemicals and pesticides. The switch meant losing a steady monthly income but Rajeswaran says they enjoy other luxuries, such as eating fruit plucked fresh from the garden. Some of the crops they grow, such as traditional varieties of rice, are sold directly to customers, while others are sold to a few retail outlets in Puducherry.

<http://snip.ly/ow7i31>



TRAI Penalises Telcos with ₹80 Cr in 3 Months for QoS Issues

Sector regulator TRAI has placed a penalty of Rs 80 crore on various telecom operators for failing to provide optimum quality of services. Service providers of all sort – cellular, fixed line broadband – have been penalized by the regulator. Interestingly this penalty amount is for the operators' service failure in last three months ended June, 2018, Telecom Minister, Manoj Sinha said in a written reply in Lok Sabha. He responded to a specific question on whether the TRAI has imposed any penalty on telecom operators for failing to meet various quality of service benchmarks.

(Communication Today, July 27, 2018) <http://snip.ly/dzwf65>

Homebuyers Beware: Incomplete Projects Still Getting Delayed

One of the main reasons why there is a lull in the real estate industry is delayed projects—the experience of several homebuyers in terms of long delays and bad quality of construction discouraged buyers, old and new, from investing in this sector. However, developers do not seem to have realised the damage delayed projects can do to their businesses, and are still not sticking to their construction deadlines. According to a report by PropEquity, a Gurgaon-based real estate data, research and analytics firm, “Over 4.65 lakh units of housing projects across India are significantly behind their delivery deadlines with daunting construction delays.”

(Live Mint, August 23, 2018)



<https://www.livemint.com/Money/610C6456GF4wFvIWWgBkzL/Homebuyers-beware-Incomplete-projects-still-getting-delayed.html>

Good Initiative: Publishes Draft on Standards for Medical Devices

In the first of its kind document to spell out standards for medical devices in the country, the Union Health Ministry has come out with an exhaustive draft, covering simple items such as ice-bags and tongue-depressors on one end of the continuum and very sophisticated items such as cardiac-pacemakers and proton-therapy devices on the other end. The 241-page guidance document describes fundamental design and manufacturing requirements for up to 594 medical devices, referred to as “Essential Principles for Safety and Performance” that when met, indicate a medical device is safe and performs to its specification. The enlisted medical devices are classified into categories A, B, C, D: A being the most low-risk device, B (low-moderate high risk), C (moderate high risk) and D (high-risk) and elaborated on management of quality.

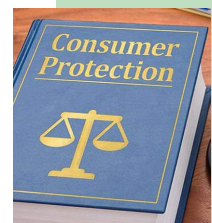
(Business Line, August 23, 2018)

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/policy/health-ministry-publishes-draft-on-standards-for-medical-devices/article24697860.ece>

BIS to Set Standards for the Services Sector Too

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has kicked off the process to set new standards to measure quality of services offered to consumers across different sectors, including telecom, aviation, e-commerce and healthcare. The BIS, which sets the quality regulations for various products from gold to bottled water, on Friday called a meeting of industry bodies to “persuade them to be part of the process and give their inputs. ‘Service sector is one of the key sectors of the Indian economy with a huge potential to grow into one of the largest markets of the world. Standards can play a major facilitative role in this regard.

(The Hindu, August 25, 2018) <http://snip.ly/ow7i31>





• **Telecom Consumer Outreach Programmes**

Dharmendra Chaturvedi attended TRAI Consumer Outreach Programme at Baran and Sirohi in Rajasthan on May 03 & 24, 2018 respectively. Dharmendra also attended TRAI Consumer Outreach Programme on May 25, 2018 at Internal Security Academy Central Reserve Police Force, Mount Abu, Sirohi, Rajasthan. He then attended Consumer Outreach Programme on July 26, 2018 in Jalore, Rajasthan. Kunwar Dheer Singh also attended the Consumer Education Workshop/Open Session conducted by Airtel at Jaipur on May 25, 2018.

• **Consumer Rights and Awareness Programmes**

Dharmendra and Jeetali Agnani attended the workshop on “Consumer Rights, Complaint and Dismissal” at HCM RIPA, Jaipur organised by Department of Consumer Affairs of Govt. of Rajasthan on May 7, 2018. Deepak Saxena, Dharmendra and Jeetali attended the meeting organised by Department of Consumer Affairs of Govt. of Rajasthan to discuss draft rules and regulations drafted by the department to set guidelines of Direct Selling on June 22, 2018. DC attended workshop on Consumer Protection and Welfare at Jaipur on August 30-31, 2018. The workshop was organised by Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi.

• **Food Safety Standards Programmes**

George Cheriyan attended the meeting of Central Advisory Committee of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) at New Delhi on May 15, 2018. He also attended an event to launch ‘Safe and Nutritious Food at Workplace’. Madhu Sudan Sharma and Satyapal Singh participated in a strategy meeting to reduce consumption of Trans Fats organised by FSSAI at New Delhi on May 31, 2018. George Cheriyan attended a Global Project Meeting organized by Consumers International (CI) and UN-FAO on ‘Making Food Systems More Sustainable: Role of Consumer Organisations’ on June 4-5, 2018 at Accra, Ghana. He made a presentation on ‘CUTS Work on Food Safety & Sustainability’. Madhu Sudan Sharma represented CUTS in a meeting called by India Medical Association (IMA) on IMA initiative on Food Safety for framing the IMA food safety policy for India at IMA conference hall at IMA Bhawan, New Delhi on July 29, 2018.

• **Private Business Action for Biodiversity**

Deepak Saxena attended a GIZ global project Launch Workshop on Private Business Action for Biodiversity at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on June 12, 2018.

• **Sustainable Consumption Programmes**

George Cheriyan and Aakansha Choudhary attended the International Conference on ‘People Powered Sustainable Consumption’ held in Accra, Ghana on June 6, 2018 organised by SSNC & IBON International jointly with CI. They also attended the second meeting of Think Tank on Sustainable Consumption held in Accra, Ghana on June 7-8, 2018.

• **Road Safety Programmes**

Jeetali Agnani participated in the fourth Global Road Safety Leadership Course, held at Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Campus at Baltimore in Maryland, USA, facilitated by Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit and supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies and Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP). The timeline of the course was from July 22, 2018 to August 03, 2018.

Upcoming Events

- Green Action Week (GAW) 2018, Jaipur from September to October, 2018 under ProOrganic II. The Green Action Week 2018 took off during the month. This year, the theme for Green Action Week is ‘Sharing Community’. The Stakeholder’s Consultation is on October 11, 2018 at Jaipur.
- Green Action Week (GAW) 2018, India from September to November, 2018. The process of selection has started and the activities have initiated from October, 2018.
- Remaining Farmer’s Trainings and Exposure Visits; inception meetings of kitchen gardens and clubs, their evaluation and village level meetings under ProOrganic II.
- Remaining seven, Depositor Education Awareness Programme with the support of Reserve Bank of India (DEAF).
- The second year’s activities of Financial Consumer Protection (FCP) with the support of Department of Consumer Affairs of Govt. of India.
- Second year’s activities under ROSA supported by Global Road Safety Programme.
- Remaining activities of RESOLVE supported by Global Health Advocacy Incubator.



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