

Consumer Dialogue

Volume VIII, Issue 1, January-April, 2017

E-newsletter

Demand for Early Passage of Motor Vehicle Amendment Bill, 2016

Every month around 12000 people are dying on Indian roads out of which 25 percent are two-wheeler riders and most of them are youngsters. There is dire need to pass the Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Bill, 2016, at the earliest, as demanded by the government officials, road safety activists, experts and Non-government Organisations (NGOs) of four states in Regional Advocacy Meeting held in Jaipur.

Rajasthan has good laws but it should focus on the effective implementation of road safety initiatives, said Dr B L Soni Additional Director of General Police, State Disaster Action Force. He further stated that Rajasthan is lacking in emergency care, as a result road injuries are turning into deaths. There is need to advocate for setting up more and more trauma centres. He emphasised on executing *E-challan* everywhere and its authenticity should not be questioned by legal authorities. He recommended introducing modern technologies in vehicles like *Global Positioning System* (GPS) etc. to track a vehicle's record.

One of the road safety expert also spoke in the inaugural session and presented an overview of road safety scenario in India. He said that there are three things involved in the road accident The **Driver**, **Road** and the **Vehicles**. Everyday 407 people die in road accidents. Around 43.7 percent deaths

are caused due to over speeding followed by overloading of vehicles accounting at 31.4 percent.

George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS in his opening remarks stated that while India has only 2 percent of motor vehicles population, however, it accounts for more than 10 percent of road accidents of the world. Consequently, on an average, more than 400 people are dying almost every day on Indian roads.



There is 4.6 percent of increase in deaths in 2015 from 2014, which is an alarming situation. Every hour, 57 accidents occur on Indian roads and 17 people lose their lives.

In the technical session on Road Safety, Maya Tandon, Chief Executive Officer, *Sahayata Sanstha*; Yatendra Kumar Gupta, a leading Legal Expert; and Anil Jain, Regional Transport Officer, Government of Rajasthan expressed their views and threw light on the recent initiatives taken by their organisations and at state government level by various NGOs and Governmental Organisations. In this reference, Rajiv Kumar, Anti-Human Trafficking (ADG), Rajasthan Police also shared his experiences related to the road safety in the State.

While speaking about the amendments of the MVA Bill, CUTS representative discussed about the key proposed amendments in the Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) Bill, 2016, especially related to High Speed, Drink and Driving, Use of Helmets and Seat Belts and Child Restraint System and other major risk factors leading to road accidents. Around 89 amendments have been done so far in the MVA Bill, 2016.

During the discussion, Dr Ashwini Bagga warned that there is a dire need to make the common people aware to achieve the target of reducing the road accidents to 50 percent by 2020. Victims of road accidents Dr Varsha Pradhan and Lakshmi Kant Sharma also shared their unfortunate experiences and urged the audience to wear seat belts and helmets while driving their four-wheelers and two-wheelers respectively.

Deepak Saxena, Assistant Director, CUTS welcomed the participants and the eminent guests, facilitated the event, summarised the proceedings of the event and in the end, conveyed vote of thanks to all the participants.

To advocate the early enactment of the MVA Bill, 2016 the 'Regional Advocacy Meeting on Road Safety' was organised by CUTS, a leading consumer organisation in Jaipur. About 70 participants including consumer activists; representatives from other organisations working on road safety, legal experts, transport engineers, traffic police, NGOs, media and other stakeholders attended the meeting.

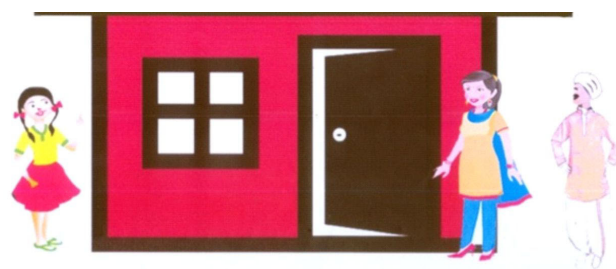
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CUTS CART



Grahak Suvidha Kendra, Jaipur

The Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India sponsored *Grahak Suvidha Kendra* (GSK), which was formally launched on September 15, 2015. GSK Jaipur provides services, such as advice on consumer protection related issues, addresses complaints, 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 redressal. GSK activities formally completed on December 31, 2016. At present, GSK is allowed to function, without any funding till March 31, 2017.

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/14B78zgXN1cQa61MTuZSPtcrF6rEoUBTkTYeL4ajXx0/viewform?c=0&w=1>

[14B78zgXN1cQa61MTuZSPtcrF6rEoUBTkTYeL4ajXx0/viewform?c=0&w=1](https://docs.google.com/a/cuts.org/forms/d/14B78zgXN1cQa61MTuZSPtcrF6rEoUBTkTYeL4ajXx0/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>

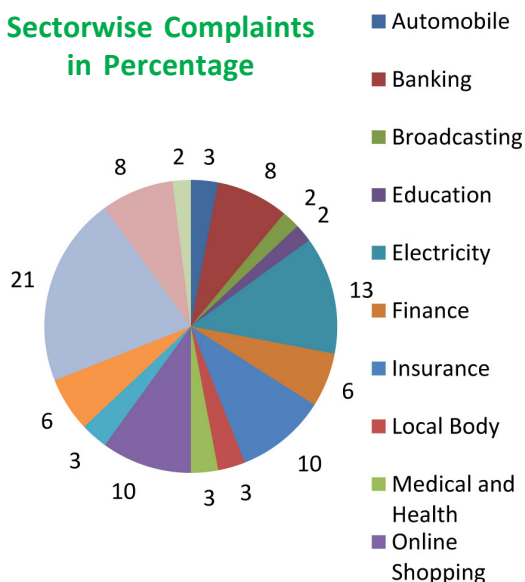
The online system of complaint submission for GSK is functional in bilingual and is available at CUTS CART page:

<https://docs.google.com/a/cuts.org/forms/d/14B78zgXN1cQa61MTuZSPtcrF6rEoUBTkTYeL4ajXx0/viewform?c=0&w=1>

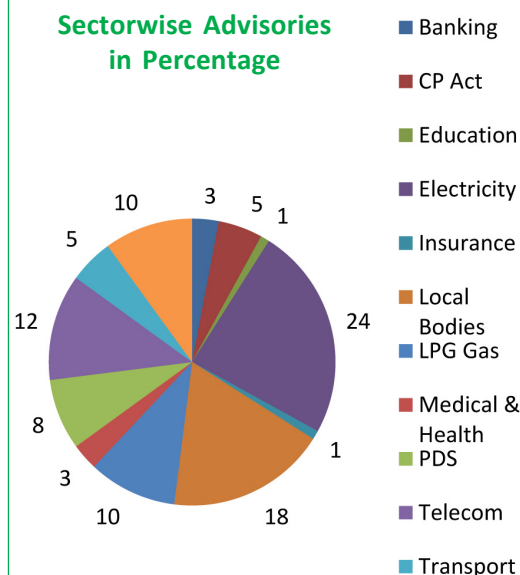
[14B78zgXN1cQa61MTuZSPtcrF6rEoUBTkTYeL4ajXx0/viewform?c=0&w=1](https://docs.google.com/a/cuts.org/forms/d/14B78zgXN1cQa61MTuZSPtcrF6rEoUBTkTYeL4ajXx0/viewform?c=0&w=1)

Complaint Analysis of GSK, Jaipur (January-April 2017)

Sectorwise Complaints in Percentage



Sectorwise Advisories in Percentage



Need to Protect the Rights of Consumers in Digital World

World Consumer Rights Day, 2017 was commemorated on March 16, 2017 under the banner *Grahak Suvridha Kendra*, Jaipur by organising an interface. This year's theme 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 (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 the event. There were around 25 participants. Deepak Saxena, Assistant Director of CUTS welcomed the guests and participants, whereas George Cheriyan rendered introductory remarks.

ACTIVITIES



Kisaan Ayog Chairman Pitches for Organic Farming

“There should be mechanism to aware the consumer about organic products. The awareness will create a demand and ultimately trigger the supply”, Sanwar Lal Jat, Chairman *Rajasthan Kisaan Ayog* said this while addressing the State Level Advocacy Meeting organised by CUTS at Jaipur on February 23, 2017. CUTS has been working to promote organic consumption in Rajasthan by creating awareness among consumers as well as the farmers. George Cheriyan, Director CUTS in his opening remarks highlighted various initiatives undertaken by CUTS for promoting 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 added 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 being implemented in six districts: Jaipur, Dausa, Chittorhgarh, Kota, Udaipur and Pratapgarh. J S Bhandari discussed the significance 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 effectively the current scenario through their presentations.



Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transportation

The report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee (PSC) on Transport, on the Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Bill 2016, was tabled in Parliament on February 08, 2017. Almost all suggestions made by CUTS during the submission before the Parliamentary Standing Committee were incorporated in the report. In fact, CUTS was the only organisation that advocated for defining accountability for flaws in road designs, resulting in frequent accidents. This is also incorporated in the final report. CUTS Bill Blow-up/submission was several times referred by the Committee.

Even in the final drafting stage of the report, CUTS was involved and it provided useful inputs. The Legislative Department of Ministry of Law and Justice and the Ministry of State, Ministry of Commerce forwarded CUTS' representation to the Ministry of Road and Transport (MoRTH), asking to take necessary action. Abhay Damle, Joint Secretary, MoRTH, appreciated CUTS advocacy efforts and provided an inclusive response to the given suggestions in the Bill Blow-up in the National Advocacy Meeting on Road Safety held in Delhi on February 02, 2017. Member of Parliaments and Global Road Safety Partnerships (GRSP) also conveyed their appreciation in CUTS advocacy efforts. CUTS is the only organisation mentioned/referred in the Parliamentary Standing Committee (PSC) report. A letter of thanks was also sent to all members of PSC on February 13, 2017. George Cheriyan also attended a Joint Conference Call with GRSP Partners on February 09, 2017.



National Advocacy Meeting on Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Bill, 2016

National Advocacy Meeting (NAM) on Road Safety was organised on February 02, 2017 at India International Centre (IIC), in New Delhi. About 100 participants representing more than 20 states consisting of consumer activists, representatives from organisations working on road safety, legal



experts, transport engineers, traffic police and other stakeholders attended the meeting. The main objective of the meeting was to advocate for the early enactment of the Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Bill, 2016. Following the NAM, Road Safety Advocacy Project (ROSA) under which the activity was done will be followed by Regional Advocacy Meetings (RAM) in four States namely Rajasthan, Gujarat, Kolkata, Kerala and Divisional Advocacy Meetings (DAM) in different cities of Rajasthan and few school level activities in Jaipur.

Road Safety Week 2017

Farak Toh Padhta Hai Bhai

CUTS organised six *Nukkad Nataks* (Street Plays) at different places in Jaipur on February 04-05, 2017, which were part of the 'Road Safety Week' activities and these were supported by the Department of Transport, Government of Rajasthan. The enacted Street Plays were based on the script *Farak Toh Padhta Hai Bhai* (Makes a Difference Men). Importance of road safety messages was delivered to the masses. More than 2,000 people showed keen interest to watch *Nukkad Nataks*. Good Samaritan and Trauma Care guidelines of Supreme Court were also shared with the audience present during the enactment of Street Plays.



Institutional and Legislative Assessment of Road Safety in States/UTs

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has granted a project to CUTS on March 11, 2017 for Institutional and Legislative Assessment of the Road Safety in four States and two Union Territories (UTs) which are Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Rajasthan and Telangana and Puducherry and Delhi respectively.



The Project Partner for the study in Tamil Nadu is Consumer Action Group; for West Bengal, it is CUTS Calcutta Resource Centre and for Telangana, it is ESKI.

Initially, CUTS prepared an outline for institutional assessment, which has been shared with the partners. During the project visits, the project team visited all the targeted states and in Puducherry specially could able to interact with Chief Minister V. Narayanaswamy, Chief Secretary, Manoj Kumar Parida etc. of the Union Territory. Similarly, in other states as well, the team interacted with senior government officials.

Service Charges by Hotels/Restaurants not Mandatory



If you dine out and are not satisfied with the services offered, you can refuse to pay the service fee that's automatically tacked on to your bill by many restaurants. The Department of Consumer Affairs of Government of India has clarified that the service charge, which ranges from 5 to 20 percent and is added to bills instead of tips cannot be mandatorily applied by restaurants. The Department of Consumer Affairs said that the automatic applying for a service fee violates fair trade practices.

(India News, January 02, 2017)

<http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/restaurants-service-fee-you-can-now-refuse-to-pay-if-youre-not-happy-1644229?pfom=home-topstories>

IMPORTANT JUDGEMENTS/ DECISIONS/ NEWS



Consumer Court Directs Airline to Pay ₹90,000

The Rangareddy District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum has directed private airlines to pay ₹90,000 as compensation to a passenger for misplacing his luggage. B Praveen Kumar was travelling with his wife and child from Hyderabad to Raipur on January 22, 2016 in Indigo flight, which was scheduled to start at 5.15pm and reach Raipur by 6.25pm. Due to some reason, the passengers were issued boarding passes twice and even had to undergo security check two times.

(The Times of India, January 03, 2017).

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/consumer-court-directs-airline-to-pay-rs-90k/articleshow/56302334.cms>



Death Caused by a Mosquito Bite is an Accident, Insurer must Pay: NCDRC



In an exclusive case, the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) has held that a death caused by a mosquito bite and causing malaria is an accident, and directed the insurer to honour its policy to a wife of the deceased. An accident is something that happens unexpectedly and is not planned", mentioned the Commission.

(Times of India, January 03, 2017).

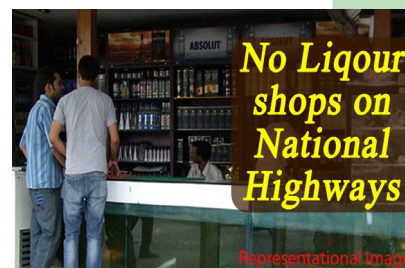
<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/death-by-mosquito-bite-an-accident-insurer-must-pay-up/articleshow/56283584.cms>

Liquor Shops Ban on Highways: Judiciary Takes the Wheel for Road Safety

'Human life is Precious'. This is what the Supreme Court said on December 15, 2016 while banning liquor shops along highways across India. This motive was to bring down road accidents. But there is no comprehensive legal framework yet in place to make the country's roads safer. Government statistics show that a road accident takes place every four minutes in India.

(Hindustan Times, January 10, 2017)

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/liquor-shops-ban-on-highway-judiciary-takes-the-wheel-for-road-safety/story-STDmHCCXQgAvL0oxNY7OVM.html>



Representational Image

Builder Defies Forum Order to Hand Over Flat, Gets 2 Years Jail



In a significant ruling, a Thane Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum has held a builder guilty of non-compliance of the decision give nine years ago and sentenced him to two-year's simple imprisonment. The Forum has also imposed a fine of ₹10,000 on the builder, R D Mishra for failing to hand over a Navi Mumbai flat along with ₹50,000 as damage charges to a buyer, as per the order issued by the Forum in April 2008.

(The Times of India, January 13, 2017)

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/builder-defies-forum-order-to-hand-over-flat-gets-2-years-jail/articleshow/56509575.cms>



Vegetables to Stents Overcharging – Part of Indian Business Model?

It would appear that Indian business models are based on a system of conning the clientele. Right from the short weighing of vegetables at the grocer who had cut his capital asset costs by encroaching on a footpath to hospitals that are not making profits but profiteer. The Ease of doing Business in India is because the consumer does not protest, and if he starts doing so, then it could really make a big difference.

(First Post, January 20, 2017)

<http://www.firstpost.com/business/from-vegetables-to-stents-has-overcharging-become-part-and-parcel-of-indian-business-model-3210016.html>



Complaint against INOX Movies Filed



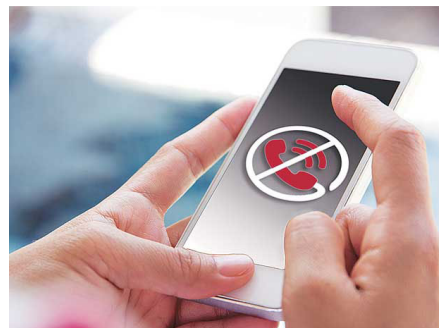
On June 25, 2016, Vijay Gopal, a resident of Hyderabad was stopped from carrying a water bottle inside INOX, GVK Mall, Hyderabad. Gopal had bought the bottle from a retail store and was carrying it with him inside the theatre when INOX security personnel confiscated it and issued him a cloakroom token to collect the bottle before going home. When Gopal questioned the Operations Manager the reason for not allowing water bottles inside the multiplex, he was conveyed that it was taken for security reasons as water can be used as an ingredient for making explosives.

(The Logical Indian, April 24, 2017)

<https://thelogicalindian.com/story-feed/awareness/complaint-against-inox/>

Telecom Firms to Assist TRAI in Call Drop Audits

TRAII will now conduct operator-assisted audits of networks across India to ensure that they meet quality of service parameters, including the vexed problem of call drops. The assisted audits will be in addition to independent tests that TRAI conducts to measure quality of service. "We have introduced operator-assisted test drives along with conducting independent test drives and we have now requested telecom operators to assist us", stated a senior official of telecom regulator, requesting anonymity.



(Mint, February 06, 2017)

http://www.livemint.com/Industry/Ukt7cQQNKBFMMuyXKxpzGM/Telecom-firms-to-assist-Trai-in-call-drop-audits.html?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter

410 Deaths on Indian Roads



Nearly 410 people lost their lives daily in road accidents across India in 2016 compared to 400 lives in 2015. On the other hand, the rate of rise in fatalities came down in 2016 compared to the previous year. Data accessed by The Times of India showed nearly 1.5 lakh people were killed in accidents in the previous year as compared to 1.46 lakh in 2015. India has recorded the maximum deaths in road accidents.

(The Times of India, April 24, 2017)

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/410-people-died-on-indian-roads-every-day-last-year/articleshow/58333548.cms>

Hotel Pays ₹20,000 Fine for Overcharging ₹20 on a Water Bottle

When a restaurant overcharges you on maximum retail price (MRP) for a water bottle or a soft drink, keep the bill safe with you so that you could drag them to the consumer court. Few might consider this a pun, but this recent incident of Hyderabad State sets as a reminder that overcharging on water bottles is, in fact, an 'unfair trade practice'. On account of unfair trade practice, Sarvi Hotel in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad was ordered to pay 20,000 to a customer by the District Consumer District Redressal Forum-II for charging double rates for a bottle of mineral water on MRP.

(The Logical Indian, February 14, 2017)

<https://thelogicalindian.com/story-feed/awareness/overcharging-on-water-bottle/>



Uber Refutes Allegation of Unfair Practice and Predatory Pricing in SC



Multinational cab aggregator Uber refuted the allegations levelled by its Indian rival Meru for resorting to unfair trade practices including predatory pricing and pleaded the Supreme Court (SC) recently to quash Competition Appellate Tribunal (COMPAT) order directing a probe against it. Appearing before a bench of Justices, Dipak Misra, A M Khanwilkar and M M Shantanagoudar, Uber's counsellor Kapil Sibal contended that the company was not a dominant player in online transportation network sector and there was no possibility of the company misusing its position as a market leader.

(The Times of India, March 1, 2017)

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/uber-refutes-allegation-of-unfair-practice-and-predatory-pricing-in-supreme-court/articleshow/57414891.cms>

Supreme Court Bans Sales of BS-III Vehicles

In a major setback to auto manufacturers, the Supreme Court recently restrained them from selling BS-III vehicles from April 01, 2017 when BS IV emission norms would come in force. A bench of justices comprising Madan B Lokur and Deepak Gupta said that health of millions of citizens was more important than commercial interests of manufacturers and directed the Government not allow registration of polluting BS III vehicles after March 31, 2017.

(Times of India, March 29, 2017)

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/auto/miscellaneous/supreme-court-bans-sale-of-bs-iii-vehicles-from-april-1/articleshow/57891089.cms>



Karnataka Doctor's Card Swiped for ₹4 Lakh Instead of ₹40 at Toll Booth



A groggy toll attendant swiped ₹4 lakh instead of ₹40 from a doctor's debit card at Gundmi toll gate on the Kochi-Mumbai National Highway near city in Karnataka – Udupi around 10.30pm in the recent past. The toll gate is 18 km from Udupi.

The Mysuru-based doctor, who cops could identify only as Dr Rao, was travelling in his chauffeur-driven car to Mumbai via the coast. Around 10.30pm, he gave his debit card to pay the ₹40 toll. The attendant, after swapping the card, gave the point of sale (POS) and toll receipt to the doctor.

(The Times of India, March 14, 2017)

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mangaluru/karnataka-doctors-card-swiped-for-rs-4-lakh-instead-of-rs-40-at-toll-booth/articleshow/57622466.cms>

To motivate producers and consumers about the importance of organic food consumption, six organic fairs were organised in Dausa, Kota, Pratapgarh, Chhittorgarh Udaipur and Jaipur districts under the project entitled, 'Promoting Organic Consumption in Rajasthan' (ProOrganic) on different dates. An organic fair at Jaipur was organised on January 28, 2017. There were 19 stalls (6 retailer's outlets and 13 farmer producers). Cultural activities like folk dances with songs, *kacchi ghodi*, and bamboo man were organised to entertain the participants who also displayed messages of organic farming and products for a safer life.

There was also a technical session. Sheetal Prasad Sharma, Director, State Institute of Agriculture Management (SIAM), V S Yadav, Professor, Horticulture, *Rajasthan Agricultural Research Institute (RARI)*; and S S Rathore, Project Officer, *Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)*, Jaipur were the key speakers.

The fairs witnessed participation of stakeholders, including district administration officials, experts, farmers and consumers. Resource persons from different parts of the state delivered their messages on importance and requirement of organic farming. These resource persons were of the opinion that there is huge untapped potential of organic farming and modern agriculture methods are one of the major causes of environmental degradation.



Depositor Education and Awareness Fund (DEAF) Scheme of RBI

In the second pilot phase sanctioned to conduct two back to back programmes in the two districts of Rajasthan. First one is urban programme in Dausa and second is rural in Jaipur (Rajasthan). The first programme was conducted at Jobner in Jaipur district as part of rural based programme on April 25, 2017.



In the programme, Leena J Sharma, Assistant General Manager of Financial Inclusion and Development Department (FIDD) of Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Jaipur region was the Chief Speaker. Munish P Kothari, Chief Counsellor of Disha Trust-FLCC; Branch Managers Subhash Saini from ICICI; Suraj Raj from State Bank of India and K L Pankaj from PNB were other speakers in the programme who all spoke on various other issues of depositor's education and awareness. In the programme, almost 82 participants were present comprising adequate women candidates.

'Giving Poorer Consumers Greater Voice in India' (ProVoice)

KEA Foundation has approved the Consumers International (CI) project, "Giving Poorer Consumers Greater Voice in India, Bangladesh and Indonesia". The CI has invited CUTS to work in collaboration as local delivery partners on the delivery of the first phase of the project in communities in India. George Cheriyan and Madhusudan Sharma visited Chennai from April 03-04, 2017 to attend the training programme organised by CI. Madhusudan Sharma, Amardeep Singh and Nimisha Gaur of CUTS CART visited Chittorgarh on April 18-20, 2017 to orient and conduct (FGDs) Focussed Group Discussions (FDGs) and In-depth Interviews in both the selected *gram panchayats* of Netawalgarh and Eral. The team members conducted series of FDGs including women, children and men. About Six FDGs and Four IDIs were conducted to know about sustainable consumption patterns among men, women and children.

ProOrganic Bridge Year 2016-17 Activities Accomplished

The project was implemented in six project districts of Rajasthan: Jaipur, Dausa, Udaipur, Chittorgarh, Pratapgarh and Kota. Among the activities under the phase during January-April, 2017, one district level awareness programme was conducted in Kota district. A Farmer's Training and Exposure visits was also held at Jaipur. Besides, two Organic Fairs at Udaipur and Jaipur were also organised during the period. In addition, State Level Advocacy Meeting was organised at Jaipur. The Chief Guest of the programme was Sanwar Lal Jat (Chairman, Rajasthan Kisan Ayog) and Dr J S Bhandari (Chairman, Rajasthan Gow Sewa Sangh).

Glimpses of
some more
ACTIVITIES





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 Cheriyan, Deepak Saxena, Dharmendra Chaturvedi, Rajdeep Pareek, Renu Beniwal, Nimisha Gaur, along with 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 the 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 the Sikkim government officials at the farm itself. The team then visited *Krishi Bhawan* and met Khorlo Bhutia, Principal Director-cum-Secretary, Department of Horticulture, Government of Sikkim; S Anbalagan, IFS, Former Director Sikkim Organic Mission; P D Lajja, Additional Former 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 Tuls. It also visited the organic tea garden in Temi and few organic outlets in the State.

ProOrganic II Takes Off

Scoping Visits

Ten districts have been finalised for phase 2017-21 and scoping visit of Nagaur, Jhalawar, Sawai Madhopur, Udaipur and Jodhpur has been done during the period of January-April 2017.

Partner's Orientation Meeting

On 26 April, 2017, 'Partner's Orientation Meeting' was organised at Jaipur as the first activity of this new phase of the project 'ProOrganic II'. The purpose of the Partner's Orientation meeting was to discuss the way forward of the project "Developing a Culture of Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyle through Organic Production and Consumption in the State of Rajasthan". In addition, the meeting was also held to discuss the objectives of the project and to discuss agenda to initiate the project activities with proper planning.



Announcing Gram Gadar Award 2016

The award for *Gram Gadar* 2016 was given to Giriraj Sharma of 'Daily News' of Jaipur during Regional Advocacy Meeting under Road Safety and Advocacy Project (ROSA) on March 30, 2017. The award was given by B L Soni, Additional Director General, Rajasthan Police for the best write up on *Swachh Bharat Abhiyan* (Clean India Campaign).





- Satyapal Singh was part of a scoping visit to Udaipur District under 'Green Growth and Energy Transformation Project', on January 19-21, 2017 along with other CART team members. The team visited solar powered households in *Khajuri* village, Udaipur.
- Satyapal Singh of CUTS CART represented CUTS at Consumer Outreach Programme organised by TRAI Regional Office, Jaipur at Dholpur, Rajasthan on 27 January, 2017.
- George Cheriyan and Satyapal Singh attended a day's training programme on 'Train the Trainer Depositor Education and Awareness' programme organised by RBI at College of Agriculture Banking (CAB) Pune, on February 27, 2017.
- George Cheriyan and Madhu Sudan Sharma visited Delhi on March 07, 2017 and gave a presentation at World Health Organisation (WHO) about the submitted proposal on conducting Institutional and Legislative Assessment of Road Safety in Selected States/Union Territories.
- Pradeep Singh Mehta, Secretary General, George Cheriyan, Madhu Sudan Sharma and Rahul Singh from CUTS attended the 'World Consumer Rights Day' event on March 15, 2017 in which 'State of Consumer Safety Report 2016' was also launched by Ram Vilas Paswan, Minister for Consumer Affairs; C R Chaudhary, Minister of State for Consumer Affairs; Government of India, Ravi Shankar Prasad; and I T Minister, Government of India. George Cheriyan also visited the Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA) and met with the concerned officials to review state of preparations for 'World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD)' on March 14, 2017.
- George Cheriyan visited Washington DC from April 17-21, 2017 mainly to attend a workshop on 'Digital Financial Services and Financial Inclusion' held on April 19, 2017, as a panellist, organised by International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in partnership with the World Bank (WB) and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Cheriyan also attended few meetings of the Civil Society Policy Forum (CSPF) as part of the WB/International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings. Besides, he also had numerous one to one meetings with WB officials and representatives of other donor agencies.
- George Cheriyan, Madhu Sudan Sharma and Jeetali Agnani of CUTS CART attended the workshop for GRSP partners in New Delhi, which was held at Hotel Taj Mahal on April 12-13, 2017.
- Jeetali and Dharmendra Chaturvedi visited Rajasthan Patrika's Office, Jagatpura on being invited to talk about the Consumer Protection Bill, 2015 in light of E-Commerce on April 18, 2017. In addition, current status and future of the consumer was also discussed. Clippings are available at: YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5dYEI7lIf4&feature=em-comments>
- Deepak Saxena attended the 31st Central Consumer Protection Council meeting at New Delhi on April 17, 2017 organised by the DoCA (Government of India).

Upcoming Events

- Partner's Orientation Meeting for Jaipur District Partner under ProOrganic II project on May 01, 2017 (FY 2017-2021)
- ProOrganic II Baseline Survey: Training to Surveyors and field visit during survey
- RBI-Depositor Education and Awareness Fund Workshop for Urban Consumers in Dausa on May 05, 2017
- Divisional Advocacy Meeting on Road Safety under ROSA project in Chittorgarh on May 09, 2017
- Regional Advocacy Meeting on Road Safety under ROSA in Ahmedabad on May 26, 2017 and in Trivandrum on July 14, 2017 respectively
- Baseline Survey under ProVoice Project 'Giving the Poorer Consumer Greater Voice of India (ProVoice)' in May-June, 2017
- Institutional Assessment of Road Safety in four states and two Union Territories from supported by World Health Organisation April to May, 2017
- ProOrganic II Project Baseline Survey from May to June, 2017
- ProOrganic II Project Launch Meeting on June 22, 2017
- Divisional Advocacy Meetings (DAM) on Road Safety under ROSA in Dholpur on June 26, 2017 and in Kota on July 07, 2017 respectively and
- Inter School Poster Competition on Road Safety at Jaipur in mid of July 2017



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