

Consumers in Action

No. 2/2010

Grassroots Reachout and Networking in Rajasthan through Consumer Action (GRANIRCA)

Only 25 percent of cases are being solved in stipulated time of 150 days in the district consumer forums in Rajasthan. Also only three percent of consumer cases are being represented by consumers themselves or by some consumer organisations. These results are amongst the few findings of the surveys conducted by CUTS in 12 districts of Rajasthan under the project entitled 'Grassroots Reachout & Networking in Rajasthan through Consumer Action' (GRANIRCA) to increase consumer awareness in rural areas of Rajasthan.

The survey further revealed that in 25 percent of districts only financial support was provided to the consumer clubs by the districts and the amount provided for free legal assistance to the consumers was only 17 percent. In most of the districts either the post of drug inspector was vacant or a single drug inspector was in-charge of more than one districts. Moreover, 58 percent of total complaints were disposed off by the Weights and Measures Department in the financial year.



The survey commenced after the launch meeting of the project in March 2010 and was extensively carried out in 12 districts of Rajasthan by the district partners. The survey aimed to unearth the status and functioning of six important governments departments, which deal with consumer issues in Rajasthan: District Collector Office, District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum, District Supply Office, Drug Inspectors Office, District Medical and Health Department and Legal Metrology Department.

After conducting the survey, a detailed analysis and documentation was done. Findings of the survey was shared with each of 12 districts in structured Public Interface Meetings (PIMs). The officials from the surveyed departments were invited to the PIMs. These PIMs witnessed the presence of public representatives in several districts, which added to the purpose of the meetings.

The survey will serve as an advocacy tool and help chalk out a future course of action and develop a strategy to improve the implementation of consumer friendly schemes in the targeted departments.



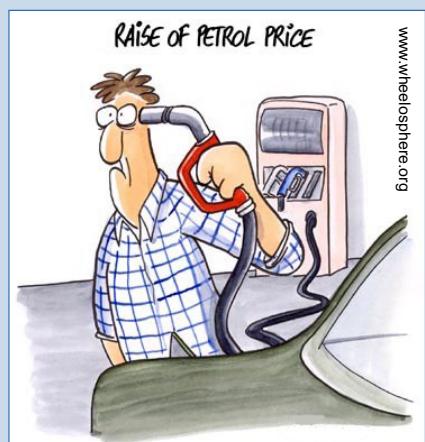
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Rise in Petrol Prices – Food items to follow... offcourse !

For citizens of India it has been a continuous rise in the petrol prices since last one year, after prices of petrol rising more than once in the past one year. This time in July, petrol became dearer by Rs 3.65 per litre, diesel by Rs 1.95 and cooking gas by Rs 36.40 per cylinder. Kerosene prices, too, have gone up after a gap of eight years by Rs 3 a litre in Calcutta.

This is a stringent measure that the government has taken, forgetting its earlier promises that it would try its best to bring down prices of essential goods. At a time when ordinary people are struggling to make ends meet, there are many alternative measures that could have been adopted by the government to cut costs. Instead, it chose to withdraw the subsidies on petroleum products and to let their prices be influenced by international rates. It seems that this price rise is not going to end in the near future and obviously the effects of the same would result into deprived, unfortunate and unprivileged future of only one class – the common man.



Public Interface Meetings

The first phase of Public Interface Meetings (PIMs) in collaboration with the district partners was held in 12 districts of Rajasthan: in Dausa, Chittorgarh, Alwar, Banaswara, Sikar, Jodhpur, Churu, Jalore, Bundi, Kota, Dholpur and Tonk in May 2010. Representatives from civil society, media, educational institutions, legal system and others were targeted in these PIMs. The main objective of PIMs was to share the findings of the survey conducted by CUTS and its partner organisations in 12 districts of Rajasthan. The findings were shared with the participants of these PIMs and an open house discussion was carried out based on its findings.



Another main objective of these PIMs was to serve as a platform for fruitful interaction between the common mass and government representatives from the districts. Representatives from the surveyed departments as well as other important officers participated and answered to the queries raised by the participants.

PIMs were successful in terms of participation. Details of these PIMs can be found further in this newsletter and the report uploaded on the website.

Mass awareness campaign is required at the grassroots on consumer issues. At the same time, project team noted that number of consumer forums to be increased in accordance with population and marketing activities.

Jago Yatri Jago

Railway Ministry's initiative to curtail overcharging while rail travel

The Railway Ministry has come up with a new initiative to keep a check on the overcharging by food suppliers on the food items supplied in trains. The initiative is called *Jago Yatri Jago*. It aims at keeping a check on the rates and quality offered by the food vendors in the trains, starting helpline numbers to deal with consumer complaints and creating mass awareness by IEC display at platforms and trains. The initiative is seen as an innovative beginning to fight against the prevailing monopoly of food vendors and suppliers in the train.



Types of Overcharging

- Overcharging on Tea & Coffee
- Overcharging on Meals
 - ◆ Adding extra dish without order of passengers
 - ◆ Charging on account of non availability of change
 - ◆ Charging extra for chilled PDW bottle
 - ◆ Adding items to combo meals without order of passengers and not as per
 - ◆ Prescribed menu
- Overcharging of PAD items over and above printed MRP

Actions to Curb Overcharging

- Drive on overcharging
- Pasting of Bilingual Menu Stickers in Mail/Express trains
- Letter issued to licensees to stop overcharging
- Instructions to QCPs to cover this particular aspect in their inspections
- Time to time counseling of licensees and their service staff
- Punitive action against licensee on overcharging.
- Rounding off to amount in Rupee

Suggestions to Passengers

- Carry change to avoid overcharging
- Demands bills/receipt, grammage
- Check MRP & date of expiry
- Buy food items only from stalls and not from unauthorised vendors either at platform or in train
- Check the brand of packed items
- Demand complaint book
- To lodge your complaint, suggestions and feedback[use Toll Free No. 1800-111-139 & SMS on 9971111139

ग्रेनिका परियोजना के अन्तर्गत सर्वे के प्रमुख निष्कर्ष

जिलाधीश कार्यालय

अधिकांश जिलों में जिला उपभोक्ता सुरक्षा सैल धन के अभाव में सुन्तु अवस्था में है। 12 जिलों में कुल 275 उपभोक्ता क्लब अस्तित्व में हैं मगर गत वर्षों में आर्थिक सहयोग के अभाव में यह निष्क्रिय है। प्राप्त आकंडो से पता चलता है कि मात्र गत वर्ष एक संस्था को राज्य उपभोक्ता कल्याण कोष से आर्थिक सहयोग प्राप्त हुआ है।

जिला रसद विभाग

- अधिकांश शिकायतें राशन से सम्बन्धित थीं और कार्यवाही के नाम पर राशन की डीलरशिप निरस्त कर दी गई। रसोई गैस एजेन्सियों पर भी कार्यवाही की गई।
- उपभोक्ता हितार्थ संगठनों को 300 रु० की राशि कानूनी सलाह और उपभोक्ता न्यायालय में फरियाद करने पर दी जाती है।

जिला उपभोक्ता विवाद निस्तारण मंच

12 जिलों में मात्र 7 मंच ही पूर्ण रूप से क्रियाशील हैं, जो दो मंचों एवं दो सदस्यों के बूते पर चल रहा है और अन्य पूर्ण रूप से निष्क्रिय हैं। 75 प्रतिशत से अधिक मामलों में निर्णय तय समय सीमा 90 से 150 दिनों में नहीं हो पाता है।

औषधि निरीक्षक विभाग

- अधिकांश जिलों में औषधि निरीक्षक पद रिक्त हैं और रिस्ति को अधिक विकट बनाने के लिए एक अधिकारी पर कई जिलों का कार्यभार सौंप दिया जाता है।
- निरीक्षकों के द्वारा लिये गये नमूने के मामलों में उचित कार्यवाही का अभाव भी देखा गया।
- अधिकांश जिलों में सरकारी परीक्षण लैब के उचित रख-रखाव व समय अनुरूप उन्नत नहीं किये गये हैं।
- अधिकांश निरीक्षकों ने सूचना देने से मना कर दिया, जिससे यह अंदाजा लगाया जा सकता है कि वे कार्य सही नहीं कर रहे हैं अथवा सूचनाओं का संग्रहण सही नहीं किया जा रहा है अथवा क्रियाकलाप पारदर्शी नहीं है।

जिला औषधि व स्वास्थ्य विभाग

सी.एम.एच.ओ. को भारी मात्रा में शिकायतें प्राप्त होती हैं। गत वर्ष 2083 नमूने लिये गये और 81 प्रतिशत मामलों में नमूने पैमानों पर खरे उतरे जोकि मीडिया के द्वारा प्रकाशित मामलों से ठीक उल्टे हैं।

जिला नाप-तौल विभाग

इस विभाग का बेहद कम शिकायते प्राप्त हुई हैं क्योंकि राज्य में नाप-तौल विभाग उद्योग विभाग के अधीन कार्यरत है, जिससे इस विभाग के क्रियाकलापों के विषय में भ्रम की स्थिति बनी रहती है।

जन संवाद कार्यक्रम के प्रमुख संदर्भ व्यक्ति

क्र.सं.	पी.आई.एम. तिथि व जिले	मुख्य वक्ता के नाम व पद
1	दौसा, 10 जून	राजेन्द्र जैन राजा बाबू, अधिवक्ता सत्य नारायण, अधिवक्ता प्रेम चन्द्र जैन, अधिवक्ता श्री राम दयाल शर्मा, अधिवक्ता
2	चितौड़गढ़, 10 जून	श्याम सुन्दर शर्मा, जिला रसद अधिकारी डी.सी.जैन, अतिरिक्त जिलाधीश सुशील जौंगर, जिला प्रमुख मुट्ठू लाल सावंत, उप जिला प्रमुख
3	अलवर, 11 जून	आलोक, जिला उद्योग अधिकारी एम.एल. शर्मा, जिला खाद्य विभाग संजय प्रधान, बाट-माप निरिक्षक
4	बांसवाड़ा, 11 जून	पी.एस. अमेटा, उप महाप्रबन्धक, बी.एस.एन.एल अर्यना दवे, सदस्य, जिला उपभोक्ता फोरम अजीत भाई, भूतपूर्व सदस्य, जिला उपभोगता फोरम
5	सीकर, 24 जून	रीता सिंह, जिला प्रमुख जे.डी. सैनी, जे.डी. कॉलेज राजकुमार पारीक, जन सम्पर्क निदेशक
6	जोधपुर, 24 जून	मुरारी लाल वैष्णव, जिला उपभोक्ता फोरम एस.आर. देवासीस, निरिक्षक, माप-तौल विभाग
7	चुरू, 25 जून	न्यायाधीश गिरिराज गुप्ता, जिला उपभोक्ता फोरम विनोद कुमार जांगिर, जिला उद्योग अधिकारी श्री धर्मन्द्र पुनिया, महाप्रबन्धक, जिला उद्योग केन्द्र
8	जालौर, 25 जून	पुष्प राज पालिवाल, कार्यकारी अधिकारी, माप-तौल विभाग मदन राज बोहरा, बोहरा इंजिनियरिंग कं.
9	बूंदी, 28 जून	राकेश बोयता, मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी, जिला परिषद राजकुमार दाधीच, अधिवक्ता व भूतपूर्व सदस्य, जिला उपभोक्ता फोरम
10	कोटा, 29 जून	राजकुमारी, सदस्य, जिला उपभोक्ता फोरम राकेश जैसवाल, जिला रसद अधिकारी हरी मोहन शर्मा, निरिक्षक, माप-तौल विभाग राम भरोसे, सदस्य, जिला उपभोक्ता फोरम
11	टोंक, 30 जून	आर.पी. मीना, सी.एच.एम.ओ. बी.एल. बैरवा, मुख्य योजना अधिकारी
12	धौलपुर, 02 जुलाई	सुखराम कोली, एम.एल.ए, बासेडी बी.एल. नाथावत, जिला रसद अधिकारी देवी सिंह, खंड विकास अधिकारी

