

## About CART

Established in 1983 as a small voluntary group of concerned citizens, Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) expanded its activities and CUTS CART was set up in 1996 as a programme centre to pursue the cause of common consumers, initially being undertaken by CUTS as the mandate.

The programmes of the Centre are primarily aimed at generating awareness, creating a more responsible society and encouraging changes at the policy level by advocating with the government machinery and sensitising it to the issues of concern of the common man. The Centre has spearheaded several campaigns and pioneered consumer empowerment.

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### CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CART)

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## Motor Vehicles Act 2019 to bring down Road Fatalities in India

Road safety experts and civil society organisations (CSOs) from 20 states gathered in Delhi for a National Conference on Road Safety and urged strongly for implementation of Motor Vehicles Act (MVA) 2019 as soon as possible which will bring down the number of road fatalities in the country.

Vinay P Sahasrabuddhe, MP and Chairman, Select Committee, Rajya Sabha on MVA Bill, 2017 as chief guest said that road safety is not a glamorise issue to attract media. The Government of India and other agencies are not able to provide real-time data on road accidents, especially deaths which occur due to faulty roads. Therefore, deeper research is required in multiple areas. He stated that poor conditions of roads are also the reason for accidents. He requested state governments to implement the law as much effective as possible.



Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International said that the urgent need of the hour is to look into the roots of road safety issues. He expressed his concern about decreasing levels of impatience and indiscipline among road users, which is the root cause of accidents.

George Cherian, Director, CUTS stated that India shares the highest-burden of road crashes in the world, which accounts for about 10 percent of road crash fatalities. Average 5 lakh accidents and 1.5 lakh deaths occur in India. As per World Health Organization (WHO), 733000 people died in the last five years in India due to road accidents. He said strengthening of law is the first step in the right direction to address road crashes.

Cherian congratulated the Minister for Transport and the Government of India, for bringing the much-needed Act and requested all state governments to implement the MVA, 2019 without further delay.

Rajesh Yadav, Secretary to Government of Rajasthan and Transport Commissioner said instead of promoting good provisions of MVA people are creating cartoons on it. The Centre should make a Road Safety fund for states. The Central and state governments should promote MVA and its important provisions through advertisement.

There was a technical session to provide inputs on the rulemaking for corresponding rules to be made for MVA 2019. Nalin Sinha, Country Coordinator, Global Health Advocacy Incubator, moderated the session. Sanjeev Kumar, Chief Engineer, Road Safety Cell, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH); Karuna Raina, Savelife Foundation; Ranjit Gadgil, Parisar, Pune; and Madhu Sudan Sharma spoke in the session.

In the second technical session, T Elangoan, Executive Director, Kerala Road Safety Authority was the main speaker. S Saroja, Director, Consumer Action Group, Chennai moderated the session. About 70 participants attended.

## Indian Army and Transport Department to Ensure Road Safety in the State

“Since the Army being one of the biggest users of roads and having a big fleet of its vehicles is deeply related to road safety issues, therefore Indian Army and State Government can join hands to ensure that road safety is ensured”, said Lt. General Cherish Mathson, Commander of South Western Command of Indian Army, Jaipur. He was delivering the address as the Chief Guest in the State Level Workshop on ‘Good Samaritan Guidelines: Challenges and Way Forward’ organised by CUTS in Jaipur, in partnership with the MoRTH, Government of India on July 02, 2019.



George Cherian, Director, CUTS International in his opening remarks introduced the chief guest and briefed the evolution of Good Samaritan concept. He briefly explained the relation between army and road safety.

Rajesh Kumar Yadav, Transport Commissioner in his special address provided an overview of the road accidents and scenario of road safety of Rajasthan and spoke about the initiatives taken to improve road safety. Deepak Kumar, DIG (Traffic Police), Head Quarters, said that Good Samaritan Guidelines are extremely important, which need to be followed by all stakeholders.

In the technical session Madhu Sudan Sharma, Senior Programme Office delivered the presentation about the status of the Good Samaritan Guidelines at the National and State level and defined technical terms. Deepak Saxena, Assistant Director, CUTS, moderated the session. Dr. D S Meena, Medical Superintendent, SMS Hospital; Virendra Rathore, DTO, Transport Department; LN Pandey, Member, Road Safety Cell, Transport Department; and Shree Pal, Inspector, Traffic Police spoke on different aspects. More than 100 participants attended the workshop.

## Towards Inclusive Green Economies

Cherian attended the National Consultation on ‘Towards Inclusive Green Economies’ organised by United Nations Environment Programme-Partnership for Action on Green Economy-The Energy & Resources Institute (UNEP-PAGE-TERI) at Goa on July 14-16, 2019.

C K Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India; Usha Titus, IAS, Principal Secretary, Environment, Government of Kerala; Ajay Misra, IAS, Special Chief Secretary to Government of Telengana; Ligia Noronha, UN Environment Assembly, Nairobi; Rene Van Berk, United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) etc. and a number of representatives from UN organisations, academia and civil society attended the consultation.

Cherian made a presentation on ‘Efficiency and Circularity for Sustainable Consumption and Production’, and actively participated in discussions.



## GHAI Partners Meet

Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAI) partners meet and capacity building workshop was held on July 03-04, 2019, which was attended by George Cherian, Madhu Sudan Sharma, Aakansha Choudhury and Satyapal Singh.

The objective was to orient project partners about the know-how of trans-fats, origin, chemistry, harmful effects, proposed alternatives and work on action plan lined with project objectives. Vandana Shah, Regional Director, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (CTFK); Ayesha Ahmed, Programme Compliance Officer; Lopa Ghosh and Om Prakash Bera from GHAI facilitated multiple sessions along with other speakers. Around 35 participants actively participated.



## Consumer Protection Law and Policy

Cherian attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy organised by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at Geneva on July 08-09, 2019. Cherian also attended a Roundtable on 'Contribution of Consumer Protection to Sustainable Consumption' on July 09, 2019 and spoke about the initiatives of Government of India and CUTS' interventions on Sustainable Consumption and Protection.



## Consumer Awareness Programme

The fourth Consumer Awareness Programme (CAP) with the support of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was held at Shahpura, Jaipur on June 28, 2019. The programme has been successful with the participation of as many as 110 participants. Representatives of Airtel, BSNL, Reliance Jio and Vodafone-Idea participated.

The fifth CAP was held at Mewar University, Gangrar, Chittorgarh on September 24, 2019. The programme has been successful with the participation of as many as 150 participants mainly students of IT and Communication Department of the University. Airtel Reliance Jio and Vodafone-Idea participated.



## Green Action Week Campaign

CUTS is coordinating Green Action Week (GAW) Campaign in 12 states in India in partnership with various CSOs. Cherian attended a Stakeholder Consultation organised by Consumer Guild at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh under GAW India and delivered the opening address on September 27, 2019.



B.B Awasthi, Chief Environment Officer, UP Pollution Control Board and Vijaypal Baghel, Environmentalist known as 'Green Man' spoke in the inaugural session.

Amar Deep Singh participated in a Stakeholder Consultation organised by Environment and Social Research Organisation (ESRO) at Shahdara, New Delhi and delivered the opening address. Rajeev Kumar, Professor, IGNOU; Satyaveer Singh Dhama, Consultant, Central Pollution Control Board; Om Prakash Malik, Organic Farmer from UP; and Sanjay Rana, Chief Functionary addressed the participants.

## Greater Voice for Consumers

Cherian and Nimisha Gaur attended the Greater Voice for Consumers' project partners meeting in Chennai, in partnership with Consumers International and Ikea Foundation on September 03, 2019.



## 'Eat Right India' Campaign

Cherian and Madhu Sudan Sharma participated in the Media Interfere and Stakeholder Event under the 'Eat Right India' campaign organised by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) on September 05, 2019. More than 250 media persons attended the event.

During Q&A, session, Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW), who was the Chief Guest, provided an opportunity to Cherian to raise pertinent questions related to the strategy for elimination of trans fats from India.

Cherian and Sharma also met with the Minister, Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director, World Health Organisation (WHO); Preeti Sudan, Secretary, Health; and Rita Teotia, Chairperson, FSSAI and also submitted the Charter on Consumer Demands. They also met with and Pawan Agarwal, CEO, FSSAI; and Kumar Anil, Adviser, FSSAI and other key officials.



## Gram Gadar Award



Lt. General Cherish Mathson presenting the Gram Gadar Award to Journalist Chetan Kumar Malviya, Bilada, Jodhpur

## Addressing Child Labour and Migration

Cherian visited Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Pratapgarh and Banswara districts and attended the meeting of the *Panchayat Level Child Protection Committee (PLCPC)* in Handi Gram Panchayat in Sujangarh block of Banswara District. Staff meetings were held in Bhilwara, Chittorgarh and Banswara to assess the progress of various projects. Banswara is a tribal district in southern Rajasthan bordering MP and Gujarat, which has a high level of migration and child labour.



## Elimination of Trans-fats in India

As part of the project activities, the team organised an event with the involvement of key stakeholders in relation to elimination of Trans-fats from India. Around 22 participants were part of the meeting representing FSSAI, National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), public health experts, CSOs and Industry along with GHAI.

CUTS, on behalf of consumer organisations and civil society, presented a Charter of Consumer Demands to a representative from FSSAI, Dr. Meenu Singh, Nutrition Consultant, FSSAI. The event also initiated the national campaign to eliminate trans-fats from India.

