

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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Motivation and Impact of Grassroots Philanthropy in Rajasthan

A new project entitled 'The Grassroots Philanthropy Project in Rajasthan', supported by the Ford Foundation, has commenced with a strong focus on preliminary landscaping activities. These activities are crucial for understanding the local philanthropic landscape, identifying key players, and gathering insights into the motivations and types of philanthropy prevalent in the region. Currently, the initiative is conducting a detailed analysis of grassroots philanthropy activities across Rajasthan.

Strategic meetings between the CUTS project team and the Ford Foundation team were held to review project's findings and seek recommendations. These discussions aimed to refine research methodologies and incorporate significant case studies, enhancing understanding of the motivations, mechanisms and impacts of community giving in diverse districts such as Kota, Jodhpur, Udaipur, and Jaipur.

The project employs rigorous research methods, including in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and surveys, to provide comprehensive insights into grassroots philanthropy in Rajasthan. Notably, in June, an in-depth interview was conducted with Sohan Lal Tambi, a prominent businessman in Jaipur known for his philanthropic endeavours.



Stakeholder Mapping on SDG Localisation in India

CUTS recently collaborated with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) India to study SDG localisation in India and mapping of stakeholders in three targeted states: Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Meghalaya. This study will examine state-specific performance on SDGs and identify priority areas through a comprehensive literature review. CUTS team will also visit relevant departments in each state and conduct interviews with key stakeholders.

During the kick off meeting with GIZ officials in New Delhi on May 14, 2024, the project action plan and strategy were discussed. GIZ officials outlined their priorities and CUTS presented the project strategy. The team initiated a secondary literature review of the targeted states and is gathering information from various sources for stakeholder mapping.





Grahak Sahayta Kendra (Consumer Care Centre) works as a ONE-STOP CENTRE catering to a spectrum of services for consumer welfare. GSK also functions on a common National and State Consumer Helplines IT platform. It provides services in Hindi and English with trained personnel experienced in counselling, drafting complaints, and providing information.

GSK has established complaint collection centres at Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Pratapgarh, Dausa, Udaipur, Ajmer, Dholpur, Bundi, Jodhpur, Jhunjhunu, Kota, Jhalawar, Bundi, Banswara and Sawai Madhopur, respectively. These centres work as extended arms for *Grahak Sahayta Kendra* Jaipur, where aggrieved consumers may register their complaints. Similar centres will operate very soon in other cities of Rajasthan as well.

GSK details can be accessed at:

<https://cuts-cart.org/consumer-support-centre-grahak-sahayta-kendra/>

For being a part of GSK family visit:

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

Online Submission of Complaints:

You Can Post Your Complaint via gsk@cuts.org by filling the complaint forms in either language as under:



Hindi

https://cuts-cart.org/pdf/Post_Your_Complaint_Format-Hindi.pdf

English

https://cuts-cart.org/pdf/Post_Your_Complaint_Format-English.pdf

Status of Complaints in April-June, 2024

GSK, Jaipur, has been dealing with complaints by various modes, like in person, through mail, post, or telephone. GSK has been solving most of these complaints through its Complaint Follow-Up (CFU), which is its standard way of dealing the complaints, such as talking to parties, writing responses, or serving notices, when required. The complaints and advisories, which GSK has received during April-June, 2024 months are presented through graphs below:

Sectorwise Complaints (in percentage)

Automobile	Financial Services
Online Shopping	Real Estate
Retail	Telecom
Transport	



Mode of Complaints (in percentage)

■ Email ■ Letter ■ In person ■ Telephonic



Judicial Reforms Needed for Swift Case Disposal

By Vijay L. Kelkar and Pradeep S Mehta

A recent report says that in India's judicial system. In the slothful manner that their adjudication takes place, it may take aeons to clear the backlog. There are many reasons for this terrible situation in a realm as vital as justice and therefore multiple remedial measures are required to arrest the delays. One of these measures is granting no more than the three adjournments.



Alas, this is practiced more in the breach, thus adding to delays in the disposal of cases and keeping our courts clogged. It drew criticism from Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud when the Supreme Court celebrated its 75th anniversary recently and he expressed his thoughts on reducing delays.

<https://tinyurl.com/2357jtj8>

Indian Food Safety Laws: Adequate but Poorly Enforced



The Indian food industry, particularly the packaged food sector, has seen many controversies during the past few days. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs recently asked the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to take appropriate action against multinational conglomerate Nestle after a report was published by Swiss Organisation Public Eye, known for its investigative work and public advocacy, in collaboration with the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN).

It revealed that two of the best-selling baby food brands marketed by Nestle in low and middle-income countries in Asia, including India, Africa and Latin America contained high levels of added sugar, while similar products sold in Europe were found to be free of added sugar.

<https://tinyurl.com/bdfj5s9h>

India's Governance Model: A Global Example

Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted India's governance achievements over the last decade, emphasising that the country has become a global example. He noted that India has lifted 25 crore people out of poverty, implemented innovative governance practices, and worked for the welfare of the poorest without discrimination. Modi recalled his election campaign, describing the experience at the Vivekananda Rock Memorial.

He praised India's Digital India campaign for empowering the poor and promoting social equality through affordable data and technology. He added that India's model of good governance and technological democratisation is now being studied and recommended by global institutions.

<https://tinyurl.com/5ts5z5bf>



TRAI to Announce Stricter Norms for Call Disruptions



India's 5G services are expected to see strict benchmarks for call disruptions and interruptions in video streaming and calling, along with other critical metrics, in the forthcoming telecom regulations. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, having concluded consultations with telecom operators on this matter, is expected to announce the regulations governing the quality of 5G services within the next two months. The telecom regulator will also revise the current quality standards for 4G services.

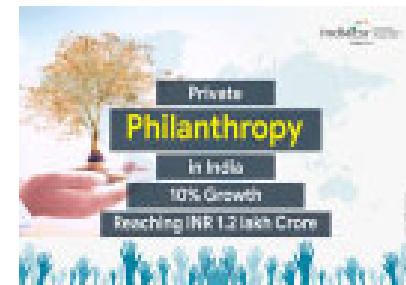
<https://tinyurl.com/28pstapp>

Private Philanthropy to Grow 10–15% Annually Over Next Five Years

The landscape of Indian philanthropy is dynamic and continues to evolve. Key cohorts shaping the giving landscape include corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, retail givers and family philanthropies. According to the India Philanthropy Report 2024, co-created by Dasra and Bain & Company, private philanthropy grew 10 percent in FY 2023, to Rs 1.2 lakh crore (US\$15bn).

This growth was primarily driven by growth in family philanthropy (15 percent) and retail donations (12 percent). Meanwhile, CSR and high-net-worth individual (HNI) or affluent donations grew moderately at 7 percent, despite an expanding donor base. Overall private philanthropy is expected to continue to expand at 10-15 percent annually over the next five years.

<https://tinyurl.com/wdyt6epz>



Bank Frauds Up Nearly 300% in Two Years



An analysis of frauds reported across banks has shown that the number of fraud cases reported in FY24 was 36,075, up nearly 300 per cent from the 9,046 cases reported in FY 2022-23. However, the amount involved has fallen from Rs. 45,358 crores to Rs. 13,930 crores, the central bank said in its annual report for FY2023-24.

<https://tinyurl.com/zrx2ak8r>

New Government's Top Priorities: Road Safety, Highway & EV Charging

Nitin Gadkari took charge as the Minister for Road Transport and Highways for the third time under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, met with senior officials of the Ministry to outline his vision and set the agenda for his new term. Sources said that in his initial meeting, Gadkari emphasised several critical priorities, including road safety, expansion of the highway network, and bolstering electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure.

Highlighting the importance of reducing road accidents, he reiterated the goal of a 50 percent reduction in road accident deaths by 2030. Gadkari also discussed the implementation of cashless treatment for road accident victims, aiming to provide immediate and comprehensive medical care to those injured on highways.

<https://tinyurl.com/yc4vzcb9>



Only 17% of SDG Targets on Track



The SDG Report 2024 reveals that only 17 percent of sustainable development targets are on track, while over a third have stalled or regressed. Major global challenges like peace, climate change, and international finance are hampering progress. The report calls for urgent action, including ambitious national climate plans, investment in digital connectivity, and improved access to finance. It also urges enhanced support for developing countries, the delivery of the SDG Stimulus, and strengthening multilateral development banks.

<https://tinyurl.com/4vwr6d3m>

Addressing Front-of-Pack Labelling and Food Safety in Rajasthan

Since 2018, CUTS has been effectively addressing issues related to Front-of-Pack Labelling (FoPL), Trans-Fatty Acids (TFAs), Cardiovascular Diseases (CVDs) and food safety, in collaboration with the Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAI). Currently, under Phase III of the project, the CUTS team organised a rural-level awareness programme on April 07, 2024, to mark World Health Day in several cities of Rajasthan like Kota, Chittorgarh, Banswara, Bhilwara, Pratapgarh and Bharatpur.

In May, three additional rural awareness programmes were conducted in Pratapgarh, Bhilwara and Chittorgarh followed by similar events in June in Chittorgarh, Ladbura (Kota), Sahada (Bhilwara) and Bundi. Each programme saw the participation of 25-50 rural stakeholders, including farmers and local businessmen. All the events were publicised via social media.



Chief Secretary of Rajasthan Discusses Road Safety with CUTS

CUTS was invited by Shri Sudhansh Pant, Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan, to discuss the state's road safety scenario and propose future strategies for improvement on June 11, 2024. The CUTS presented a detailed overview of its national and state-level road safety initiatives. Pant inquired specifically about actionable recommendations for Rajasthan.

Key discussions included the urgent implementation of the Rajasthan Road Safety Bill, 2022, which had been delayed at the transport department level, the adoption of 'Rajasthan Speed Management Guidelines' similar to those recently enacted by the Government of West Bengal, and the creation of a time-bound, result-oriented smart road safety action plan.



CUTS' Consumer Awareness Programme for Telecom Customers

CUTS organised a Consumer Awareness Programme (CAP) at Nursing College, Sawai Madhopur on June 14, 2024, which was attended by approximately 110 nursing students and representatives from local Telecom Service Providers. Supported by TRAI, the event aimed to inform participants about new rules and regulations regarding mobile number portability, do not disturb services, apps related to speed and call quality and other mobile phone-related issues. The sessions were conducted using videos and PowerPoint presentations to enhance understanding.



REPRESENTATION/WEBINARS/MEETINGS/VISITS

- Simi TB, Deepak Saxena and Deepika Ranawat attended a webinar on 'Hypertension and Its Determinants among Adolescents' organised by the School of Public Health, AIIMS Jodhpur on April 08, 2024. The webinar focused on addressing the increasing burden of hypertension in Indian adolescents and provided insights into control and mitigation strategies.
- Deepika Ranawat and Krishank Jugiani participated in an Open House Discussion on the Consultation Paper titled 'Review of Quality-of-Service Standards for Access Services (Wireless and Wireline) and Broadband Services (Wireless and Wireline)' organised by TRAI on April 09, 2024.
- Deepika Ranawat participated in an event to launch GHAI's revised Advocacy Action Guide hosted by the Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAI) on April 10, 2024. The webinar brought together experts from the Global Health Council and GHAI to underscore the significance of country-level advocacy in realising public health objectives.
- Simi TB attended a webinar series on 'Social Media Mastery for Changemakers' - Module 4, organised by GHAI, on April 12, 2024. The series aimed to explore effective strategies for content creation, storytelling, and impactful advocacy on social media platforms such as 'X', Facebook, and Instagram, empowering participants through practical exercises and discussions.
- Amar Deep Singh and Debashree Hazarika, participated in a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) workshop organised by Shakti Foundation in New Delhi, on April 18-19, 2024. He also attended the National Conference 'Cities for Youth - Leadership for Urban Wellbeing,' organised by SafetiPin and Botnar Foundation at Jaipur, on May 09, 2024.
- Simi TB attended a webinar titled 'Integrating Research, Policy and Innovation in Hypertension Management', on the occasion of the World Hypertension Day organised by AIIMS Gorakhpur, on May 17, 2024.
- Amrat Singh attended the 'Viksit Rajasthan 2047' conference on Vision Document - State Level 2nd Meet held at Rajasthan International Centre, Jaipur on May 31, 2024.
- Simi TB attended a webinar on "Food Safety: Preparing for the Unexpected Experiences in the Asia-Pacific Region" organised by FAO and WHO held on the occasion of World Food Safety Day, on June 11, 2024.
- Amrat Singh, Pritika Nayak and Shreni Jani participated in the webinar on 'Solving Complex Education Challenges for Rural & Underserved Millions at Scale from Primary Education to Jobs' hosted by the WHEELS Global Foundation on June 22, 2024.

Road Safety Crisis: Infrastructure Boom to Public Health Emergency

Policy Circle, April 09, 2024

By **Madhu Sudan Sharma**

The Union government should prioritise reinforcement of the Motor Vehicles Act (MV Act) 2019, implementing speed management initiatives, and developing comprehensive national and state road safety action plans. An informed debate on the incumbent government's performance, including legislative and institutional reforms, and safety initiatives, is crucial for understanding achievements, challenges, and direction for the future.

<https://www.policycircle.org/opinion/road-safety-motor-vehicles-act/>

Urgent Action is Required at All Levels to Tackle Plastic Pollution

Deccan Chronicle, April 21, 2024

By **Pradeep S. Mehta and T.B. Simi**

Amid the observance of Earth Day 2024 with the theme "Planet vs Plastics", the pressing global crisis of plastic pollution commands urgent attention. If one recalls the famous line from the 1967 comedy film Graduate, a young lad, Benjamin, played by Dustin Hoffman, is advised by elder future career choices to go in for plastics. Indeed, in those days, plastics were the "in" thing. But Benjamin may not have been able to envision the havoc it has been creating.

<https://www.deccanchronicle.com/opinion/columnists/pradeep-s-mehta-and-simi-tb-urgent-action-is-required-at-all->

PUBLICATION

Briefing Paper

Empowering Consumers for Sustainable Development *Exploring the Link between UNGCP and SDGs*

The Briefing Paper explores the nexus between consumer empowerment and sustainable development, tracing the evolution from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It emphasises consumers' pivotal role in driving sustainable economic growth and consumption patterns, highlighting how their choices can influence production decisions and ultimately shape progress towards the SDGs.

It emphasises the importance of empowering marginalised communities and ensuring equitable access to resources and opportunities, echoing the SDG principle of 'Leaving No One Behind.' Further, the paper examines the interplay between the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP) and the SDGs, and demonstrates how consumer protection and empowerment mechanisms can advance various SDG targets.

<https://cuts-cart.org/pdf/bp-empowering-consumers-for-sustainable-development-exploring-the-link-between-ungcp-and-sdgs.pdf>



CUTS Comments

CUTS Comments on TRAI Consultation Paper on Review of Quality-of-Service Standards

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) invited comments on a Consultation Paper on Review of Quality-of-Service Standards for Access Services (Wireless and Wireline) and Broadband Services (Wireless and Wireline). TRAI also held an Open House Discussion (OHD) through video conferencing on April 09, 2024, to invite the views of the stakeholders. In response to TRAI's invitation for further comments after the OHD, CUTS expresses its gratitude and has submitted its comments on the consultation paper.

<https://cuts-ccier.org/pdf/comments-on-trai-cp-on-review-of-quality-of-service-standards.pdf>

Upcoming Events/Project Activities

- CUTS-GRSP-ROSA Activities (Phase V)
- Advocacy for Scientific and Consumer Friendly FoPL for HFSS in All Foods in India (Phase IV)
- Depositor Education and Awareness Fund Scheme- April 2024-March 2025
- CUTS TRAI CAP Programmes
- Motivations and Impact of Grassroots Philanthropy in Rajasthan, India
- Scoping Study and Stakeholder Mapping for Localisation for Sustainable Development in India
- Green Action Week, 2024

Internship at CUTS CART

Chesta Gupta from Mumbai University (June 03-July 02, 2024), Shivangini Baruah from Mount Carmel College, Bengaluru (May 20-July 12, 2024), and Deepali Kumawat from the University of Tomorrow, Dehradun (June 05-July 26, 2024) have been interning on various topics of interest under different programme staff.

CART at Social Network

- CART is managing FB pages, one each for MyCity, Insight into the Indian States (I3S), ProOb, ProOrganic & CoPSA (Community of Practice on Social Accountability), GSK and three dedicated web portals for (ProOb), COPSA and I3S.
- CART has a Twitter account with link: <https://twitter.com/CUTSCART>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cutsintcart>
LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/cuts-cart-84b4b02a
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/cuts_cart?igsh=MXIzOHAzZW8xN2Rudg%3D%3D&utm_source=qcr
- Besides, CART is also responsible for moderating three google e-groups:
CUTSConsumersUp: Consumer Empowerment in India to take consumer protection issues forward.
CUTSGovForum: Discuss news and views on Governance issues and challenges in India.
CUTSRoadSafety: Discuss and disseminate relevant issues on road safety.
CUTS-G20 ConsumersForum: A e-platform through which all information related to wider aspects of consumer issues is being disseminated and taking forward the consumer protection agenda globally but with a specific focus on Global South and G20 nations.