

Consumer Dialogue

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E-newsletter

Women Must Play a Pivotal Role in Generating Awareness of Sharing

“Women must come forward because they are the only ones who can transform and reinvigorate the spirit of sharing while raising awareness in the society,” said Munesh Gurjar, Mayor of Jaipur Municipal Corporation (Heritage). She delivered the inaugural address at the State Level Stakeholders Consultation organised by CUTS International under ‘Green Action Week Rajasthan’. Gurjar also said that through the ‘Wealth out of Waste’ training, women had made such commendable products from waste.

George Cheriyan, Director of CUTS International, stated that the organisation runs this campaign in 14 different states of India and Rajasthan to promote sustainable consumption. Citing Earth Overshoot Day, he said that we would need another Earth to live on at the rate we consume natural resources. He stated that the focus of this year’s campaign is to support a ban on single-use plastics, which will come into effect in July 2022.

From 1950 to 2015, approximately 8.3 billion metric tonnes of plastic were produced globally; of this, 80 percent — 6.3 billion metric tonnes — was accounted for as plastic waste. Of this, only 9 percent was recycled, and 79 percent went to landfills. If current trends continue, by 2050, there will be 12 billion metric tonnes of plastic in landfills.

The Central Pollution Control Board Report (2019-20) stated that 3.5 million metric tonnes of plastic waste are generated in India annually, and it is expected to double in capacity by 2040. Citing reuse and recycling, he called upon to abandon the linear economy approach and adopt a circular economy. Rajasthan has minimal water and forest resources, which the common man must use better.

KC Meena, Member Secretary, Rajasthan State Biodiversity Board, said that consumerism is increasing and needs to be reduced. Meena emphasised on adopting the culture of cycling. He said that by adopting a lifestyle of simple living and high thinking, the use of natural resources could be limited. He also appreciated the use of cycle campaigns in cities, which addresses sustainable mobility.

Regional Officer of Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board, Vijay Sharma, said that in 2011, an Act was brought to ban plastic. Common people have to be aware not to use plastic. He emphasised on recycling the e-waste properly. He said that Indore is the only city in the country which is best in terms of cleanliness. The citizens understand the importance of cleanliness and the environment. Under the e-Waste Collection Act 2022, dismantling recycler agencies have been set up in Rajasthan. For this, it is vital to bring behavioural change and awareness among the common man.

Citing several examples of community sharing, Nimali Singh, Syndicate member and Professor in the Department of Home Science, University of Rajasthan, said that even today, there is a tendency to share goods and services in villages. She explained the activities through which this feeling can be increased in urban areas.

At the beginning of the programme, Deepak Saxena, Associate Director, CUTS, welcomed the participants and said that ‘Green Action Week’ is organised every year in the first week of October. This international-level campaign is organised globally in collaboration with the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) Sweden.

Nimisha Sharma, Programme Officer, initially presented the activities done under the campaign. She said that women from four communities participated enthusiastically in training for ‘Wealth out of Waste,’ developing kitchen gardens etc. The programme also organised an exhibition of the products made during the training by women. Prizes were given to the best-performing participants.

Rajdeep Pareek, Programme Officer, proposed a vote of thanks. In addition to the representatives of various institutions, more than 55 participants participated.



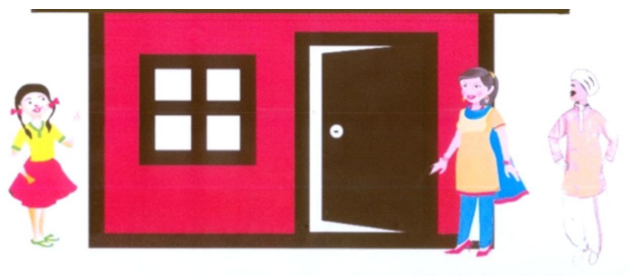
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CUTS CART



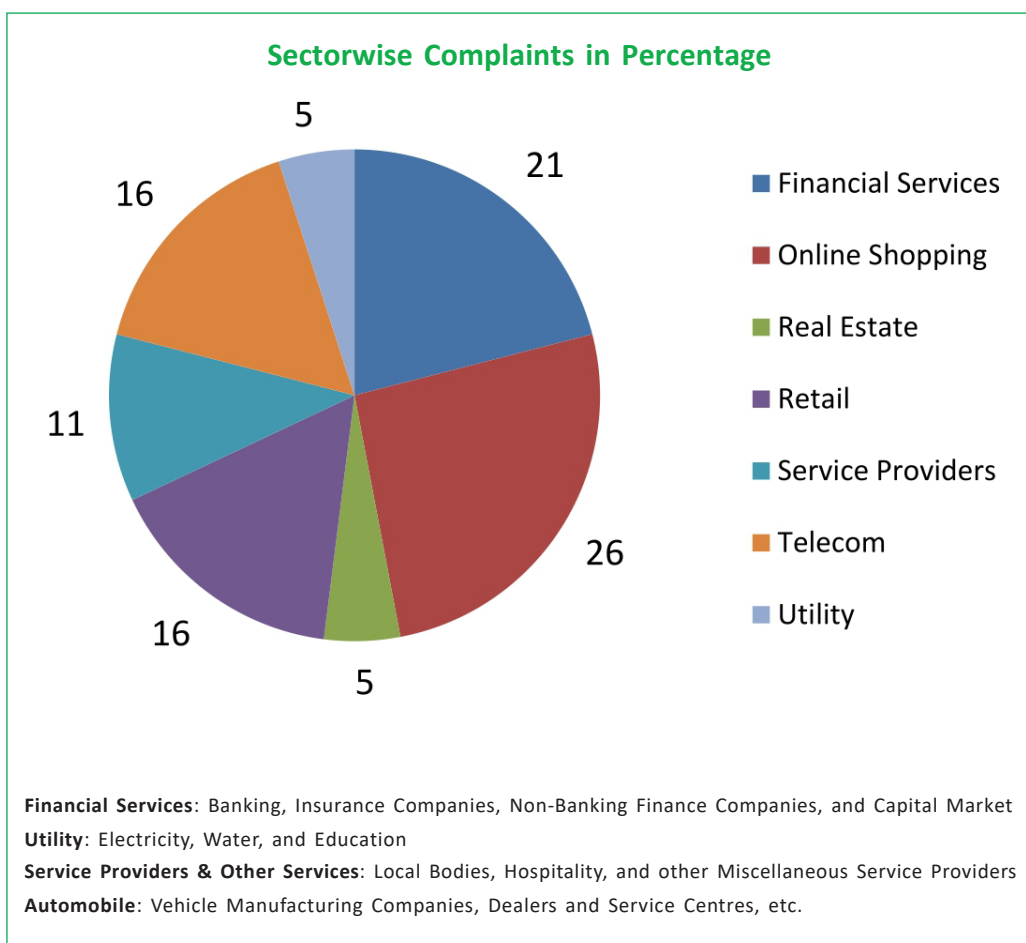
Grahak Sahayta Kendra, Jaipur

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 matters. Besides, the GSK centre also handles consumer complaints through counselling and conciliation for quick and easy redress.

GSK details can be accessed at:

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

During September-December, 2022, the status of complaints and advisories received at GSK are shown in the below graph below:



No Honking in Residential Areas



Pursuant to a case filed by CUTS, the Central Zone of the National Green Tribunal issued a landmark order, directing the Rajasthan government to enforce a 'No Honking' policy in residential areas between 10 pm and 6 am, except in exceptional circumstances. The Central Bench of the NGT, headed by Justice Sheo Kumar Singh, directed the government to seize noise pollution sources exceeding permissible limits.

<https://bit.ly/3kGxmaa>

Ensure Consumer Welfare During Tokenisation

By Pradeep S Mehta and Sidharth Narayan

To enhance the safety and security of card-based online transactions, the Reserve Bank of India has mandated the Card on File Tokenisation (CoFT) operationalisation. The industry is yet to fully operationalise CoFT, particularly for recurring transactions, and this may warrant another deadline extension, at least for recurring payments. More importantly, it is time for RBI to penalise defaulting entities after releasing a 'status of readiness' report.

<https://bit.ly/3xNAuov>



India's Digital Initiative Seeks to Democratis Ecommerce

The world's lowest data and smartphone costs, increasing levels of online shopping in small cities and villages, and a pandemic that forced people into digital purchases have led to a dramatic rise in e-commerce in India. In theory, the concept is appealing and aims to answer the questions that advanced and emerging economies are grappling with, says Amol Kulkarni, Director of Research at CUTS. On the one hand, big tech networks bring credibility, trust and some level of certainty, but on the other, they are exclusionary, with high prices and anti-competitive practices.

<https://bit.ly/3faldH2>





COP 27: India's Ancient Learnings Can Help Climate Change Mitigation Efforts

By Pradeep S Mehta and Purushendra Singh

The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27), starting in Egypt, is a platform for countries to discuss and act towards a sustainable future. Known for nature-worshipping, sustainable practices and eco-friendly lifestyle for ages, India has been a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) since it came into force on March 21, 1994.

<https://bit.ly/3Nyr8U6>



Concerns on Proposed Indian Nutrition Rating Display on Food Labels



Thousands of other relevant stakeholders vehemently oppose the present format's draft regulation. CUTS International has written to the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and handed over a written submission to the Chairperson, Parliamentary Committee on Health and Family Welfare highlighting key areas of concern in the draft Food Safety and Standards (Labelling & Display) Amendment Regulations, 2022 related to front-

of-pack labelling (FoPL). These have been uploaded by the Authority seeking public comments.

<https://bit.ly/3R5mzSZ>

Good Governance Day: Celebrating Atal Bihari Vajpayee

Every year on December 25, India celebrates Good Governance Day or Sushasan Diwas. The day was established in 2014 to honour former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his birthday. Under Vajpayee's visionary leadership, efforts to improve governance began to show up in the people's lives.

<https://bit.ly/3Hvb2cF>



ProScop Activities Gains Momentum on the Ground

After the launch of 'ProScop' project on April 12, 2022, the activities took off on the ground. Initially, an online meeting with consultants for project activity updates was organised on July 12, 2022. All the team members, including district consultants, attended the meeting.

During September-December 2022, activities, such as village-level awareness campaigns, inception meetings for school clubs and kitchen gardens and knowledge-sharing meetings, seed exchange meetings and kitchen garden trainings under the model organic village were organised in 12 districts.



Under the Sustainable Consumption Practices part of the project, after the perception survey, which aimed to gauge the level of SC practices among consumers regarding their actual behaviour and consumption pattern. Besides, as many as three Stakeholder's Sensitisation Programmes were organised at Jodhpur on September 29, 2022; at Kota District on November 18, 2022, and at Bharatpur on December 01, 2022.



New Innovations Required for Sustainable Urban Governance

CUTS organised an expert consultation at the Local Self Governance (LSG) Department of Government of Rajasthan under the project 'Improving City Governance Through Enhancing Knowledge of Urban Local Bodies in Rajasthan' on September 02, 2022. The project is supported by the Australian High Commission under its Direct Aid Programme.

Hridayesh Kumar Sharma, IAS, Director-cum-Joint Secretary, LSG Department, Government of Rajasthan, was the Chief Guest. George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS, delivered the opening address. Dacheppally Sudhakar, a Former Executive Engineer of Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, highlighted the best practices of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation.

Amar Deep Singh, Sr. Programme Officer CUTS, presented the CUTS' previous work on urban governance and explained the objectives and activities of the project. Delegates actively participated in the discussions. During the meeting, Himani Tiwari, City Managers' Association, Rajasthan (CMAR), Department of Local Self Government, highlighted the government's initiative and programme related to urban governance. Amit Babu, Programme Associate, CUTS, proposed the vote of thanks.

The meeting saw the participation of more than 35 senior officials of the LSG Department, experts in urban governance and resident welfare associations.



Glimpses of some more ACTIVITIES





Green Action Week India, 2022

Launch

Marking the launch of GAW India 2022, Anmol Foundation, the local partner of Chhattisgarh in Raipur, organised a one-day meeting on September 08, 2022. Cheriyan delivered the opening address and Harbans Singh Miri, Joint Collector, was the chief guest of the programme.



Other speakers included Sanjeev Jain, Chief Engineer, CREDA Chhattisgarh as a technical expert and GK Das, Head of Department of Agro-Metrology from Indira Gandhi Agricultural University; Ajay Malu, Superintendent Engineer, Chhattisgarh State Environmental Protection Board; Director of Prerak Sansthan, Ram Gulam Sinha and Kuntal Mukherjee from Pradhan as speakers.

Around 54 participants, including government officials, NGOs and community representatives, participated in the workshop.

Partners Meet

GAW India Partners Meet was organised at CUTS Conference Hall, Jaipur, on December 15, 2022. Representatives of 13 partner organisations from 13 states participated and presented their activities under the campaign. Nils Viklund, Programme Manager, SSNC, also attended the meeting and interacted with participants. All partners made presentations and shared activities, challenges, impact, and way forward. It was a good opportunity to learn from each other and discuss innovative ideas.



Gram Gadar Award for Best Rural Journalism

Gram Gadar Award for Rural Journalism was presented in a function held in Jaipur on November 23, 2022, to Jay Kumar Bhati of Rajasthan Patrika, Jodhpur, by Munish Gurjar, Hon'ble Mayor of Jaipur-Heritage, for his reporting/writings on the topic 'Women's Participation in Development' published during 2021. He was given a certificate and a cash prize of ₹10,000.



CCC National Convention and AGM

The convention cum AGM was held at Shahid Smarak Bhawan, Raipur, in Chhattisgarh, on September 09, 2022. Delegates from 22 States attended the convention. Cheriyan and Deepak Saxena from CUTS participated. Amarjeet Bhagat, Minister for Food and Consumer Affairs, Chhattisgarh, was the Chief Guest. Naveen Srivastava, President of Upbhokta Shiksha evam Suraksha Foundation, welcomed all the participants.



P Ramarao, Chairperson, CCC, delivered the inaugural speech, followed by Ramji Bhai Mawani, Amrat Lal Sah, Abhishek Srivastava, Cheriyan, Liyakat Ali, P K Panda, Packialaxmi and Sharmila Ranade. Besides participants, Saxena, G S Panda, Rama Ben Mawani, Pramod Jhanwar, Sanjay Arya and a few other members also shared their thoughts.

Cheriyan Elected as Vice Chairperson of the CCC of India



Cheriyan has been elected to the position of Vice Chairperson of the Consumer Coordination Council (CCC) of India during the election held in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, on September 09, 2022.

As per the CCC constitution, the election is held once in two years, and after becoming the Vice Chairperson, after two years, automatically becomes the Chairperson of CCC. Delegates from 22 different states in India attended the National Consumer Convention and the Annual General Body meeting of CCC and participated in the elections.

CCC is the Apex consumer body of all consumer organisations in India and the voice of consumers in India, established in 1993 to take up issues affecting consumers' interests in urban and rural areas of India. Consumer organisations from across the country are members of CCC.

Why India Needs Front of the Pack Warning Labels-An Interactive Session of CUTS

In collaboration with Maharani College, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, CUTS organised an interactive session on "Why India Needs Front of the Pack Warning Labels, on November 40, 2022. George Cheriyan spoke on the importance of FoPL in curbing NCDs and why warning labels are needed. He also appealed to the students and faculty members to submit their comments and suggestions to the FSSAI on the draft notification.

Mukta Agarwal, Principal, Maharani College, Jaipur, chaired the session. Nimali Singh, Syndicate Member & CUTS team, drafted the questions for the parliamentarians on FoPL that are directly related to CUTS concerns and recommendations.



Glimpses of
some more
ACTIVITIES





Improving City Governance for Urban Transformation

Two capacity-building workshops were organised for the officials of urban local bodies (ULBs) of Rajasthan under the project 'Improving City Governance' project supported by Australian High Commission.



The first workshop was conducted at Jodhpur for the ULB officials who come under the Jodhpur division on November 10, 2022. Amar Deep Singh welcomed the participants and delivered the workshop's opening remarks. D Sudhakar, a Lead Resource Person from Hyderabad, delivered the sessions on municipal finance,

solid waste management, sustainable transportation and community participation.

The second capacity-building workshop was conducted at Kota for ULB officials comes under the Kota division on December 22, 2022. Vasudev Malawat, Commissioner, Kota Municipal Corporation (North) and Deepti Ramchandran, Divisional Deputy Director, Local Self Government Department, attended the workshop as special guests. Both interacted with participants and appreciated the training programme.



Making Telecom Consumers Aware

CUTS organised three back-to-back Consumer Awareness Programmes with the support of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) at Devthala in Govindgarh block of Jaipur district on November 15, 2022, with around 100 senior students.

The second one was held at Sargoth village of Reengus Panchayat Samiti of Sikar district on December 28, 2022, with around 46 senior students. The third one was held on December 30, 2022 at Nawan City of Nagour district with about 52 local telecom customers and a few students.



Visits

- Devendra Kumar Dhodawat, IAS, Principal Secretary to the Governor of Kerala, who hails from Rajasthan, made a courtesy visit to CUTS on September 07, 2022, and discussed issues of mutual interest with the CART team.



- To discuss the progress of the ICG project, Mish Khan, Chair Director Aid Programme (DAP) and Pallavi Nayak, Senior Research Officer from Australian High Commission, New Delhi, visited CUTS on September 27, 2022.



- Nils Viklund, Programme Manager for Chemicals at SSNC Sweden, visited CUTS from December 12-15, 2022, to review the progress of the ProScop project. The visit began with an introductory and review meeting with the project team. He visited the proposed model organic village of Devthala in Nindola Panchayat, Govindgarh Block of Jaipur District and met with the progressive organic farmers of the village. On December 15, 2022, Nils visited Lalsot block in the Dausa district to see several organic gardens in schools, organic farms, and kitchen gardens developed by women in Thaloj village.



- Taifur and Nalin of GRSP visited the CUTS office on December 21, 2022, and met with the RoSA team.

Glimpses of some more ACTIVITIES





- Dharmendra Chaturvedi attended the fourth Manak Manthan Programme on IS 17505(Part 1): 2021 Fire Survival Cables at the BIS office, Jaipur, on September 06, 2022
- Madhu Sudan Sharma participated in a national dialogue on children's road safety in Delhi organised by CEE Ahmedabad and Synergy Mumbai on September 15, 2022.
- George Cheriyan, Simi TB and Satyapal Singh attended a meeting 'Sharing Findings of a New Study Published from India and Updates on the FoPL Policy' organised by Nutrition Advocacy in Public Interest (NAPI) on September 16, 2022.
- The Energy & Resources Institute (TERI) organised a virtual Roundtable on Lifestyles and Sustainable Consumption in the Context of SDG 12 on September 23, 2022. Cheriyan was one of the panellists and spoke on the theme from a consumer perspective.
- Nimisha Sharma attended an online course on 'E-Waste Management in India' conceptualised by the Centre for Science and Environment from September 25- October 01, 2022.
- Simi TB attended World Environmental Health Day Celebrations and National Symposium on Life Cycle Assessment organised by the Department of Chemical Engineering, MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology, MSR Nagar, Bangalore in collaboration with Institute Innovation Council, MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology on September 26, 2022.
- Simi TB attended a webinar of 'Climate Dialogue Series 2022 – India' jointly organised by The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH under the Indo-German bilateral cooperation project on 'Supporting the Institutionalisation of Capacities on Climate Change Studies and Actions' on September 26, 2022.
- Dharmendra Chaturvedi attended a State-level Consultation to Combat Child Marriage at Jaipur on September 28, 2022.
- Deepak and Dharmendra attended a webinar organised by BIS, Delhi, on the occasion of World Standards Day on October 14, 2022.
- Simi TB attended a National Conference on COP27 Compass- Road to Sharm el-Sheikh: Towards Equitable and Collective Climate Action and focused on COP27 climate negotiations on October 12, 2022.
- George participated in the 14th TMC meeting headed by Usha Sharma, Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan, convened by the Transport and Road Safety Department on November 09, 2022.
- Amar Deep Singh participated in the national consultation organised by the Praja Foundation and the National Institute of Urban Affairs at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, on November 25, 2022.
- George Cheriyan attended the 14th World Conference on 'Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion' organised by Global Road Safety Programme in Adelaide, Australia, from November 27-30, 2022.
- Nimisha Gaur attended an event on GM Mustard, Diversity, Integrity & Purity of our Seeds & Food organised by Navdanya at Jaipur on December 19, 2022.
- Deepak Saxena and Dharmendra Chaturvedi and intern Varsha Yadav attended an event organised by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare jointly with Bhawani Niketan PG College to commemorate National Consumers Day on December 24, 2022. Satyapal attended an event on the same occasion organised by the Department of Food and Consumers Affairs, Government of Rajasthan, at HCM-RIPA, Jaipur.
- Simi TB and Amit Babu attended the third FSSAI-Consumer Forum meeting for discussion on issues of consumers and consumer organisations on December 29, 2022.

Human Rights Day

On the occasion of Human Rights Day, the CART team organised manifestation at the CUTS conference hall on December 10, 2022, by lighting candles and holding placards to honor hundreds of environmental defenders killed yearly.



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES/ SOCIAL NETWORK



Internship at CUTS CART

Two interns: Justine Shibu and Varsha Yadav, both from Symbiosis Law School, Nagpur, joined for a month's internship in CART on November 28, 2022, and completed their internship successfully during the last week of December 2022.

Upcoming Events/Project Activities

- CUTS-SSNC-ProScope Activities, 2022-23 as per the Work Plan
- CUTS-GRSP-ROSA Activities (Phase IV)
- GHAI-Advocacy for Scientific and Consumer Friendly FoPL for HFSS in All Foods in India
- DVARA-Voice of Aggrieved Consumers (VOAC)
- CUTS- Australian High Commission -Improving City Governance Through Enhancing Knowledge of Urban Local Bodies in Rajasthan
- CUTS-APCO World wide India-Developing a Knowledge Paper for a "Fire Safe India" to Understand the Gaps in Current Fire Safety Scenario in the Country and Advocate for Better and More Stringent Norms
- CUTS TRAI CAP Programmes

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> and Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/cutsintcart>
- 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 Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CART)

D-217, Bhaskar Marg, Bani Park, Jaipur 302 016, India, Ph: 91.141.5133259, 2282821, Fx: 91.141.4015395

Email: cart@cuts.org, Web: www.cuts-international.org/cart

Also at Delhi, Calcutta and Chittorgarh (India); Lusaka (Zambia); Nairobi (Kenya); Accra (Ghana); Hanoi (Vietnam); Geneva (Switzerland) and Washington DC (USA).