

**ANNUAL REPORT OF
CONSUMERS' PROTECTION ASSOCIATION (CPA)
29 CENTRAL ROAD, AGARTALA
2023-24**

APRIL 1, 2023 TO MARCH 31, 2024

1. Introduction

Consumers' Protection Association (CPA) has completed one more year of its voluntary services for consumer awareness and consumer protection, with the specific objective of protecting the interest of Indian consumers, with intensive activities in the state of Tripura and with a specific focus in the North Eastern States.

2. Meetings of the General body and the Executive Committee

2.1 General body

A general body meeting of CPA was held on May 17, 2023 and the following resolution was passed unanimously, along with other agenda items.

Memorandum

As per decision of the meeting of General body of CPA, held on 17 May, 2023, Mr. George Cheriyan residing in Jaipur (F 7/73, AWHO Flats, Sukan, Vihar, Sector-I, Vidhyadhar Nagar, Jaipur-302039) is hereby admitted as Honorary Working President of Consumers' Protection Association (CPA), Agartala, India with immediate effect. Mr. Cheriyan shall conceive, plan and execute the programmes of CPA in the interest of Consumer Welfare at the national level and international level. He is also requested to represent CPA before the Governments, Regulators, Non-Government Organisations, Consumers International, donors and involve resource persons and experts as advisers to the Association.

I sincerely wish him all success.

(Amritlal Saha)

President

Date: 18 May, 2023

2.2 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee (EC) met physically 4 times during the report year. The following is the list of members of EC for the year 2023-24.

| S.No. | Name | Designation |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | Adv. Amrit Lal Saha | President |
| 2 | Mr. George Cheriyan, Jaipur | Honorary Working President |
| 3 | Adv Abheek Saha, Bangalore | Vice President |
| 4 | Mr. Jayanta Sur | Secretary |
| 5 | Mr Narayan Dutta Roy | Executive Member |
| 6 | Mr. Joydeep paul | Executive Member |
| 7 | Mr. Arijit Chowdhury | Executive Member |
| 8 | Ms Daliya Saha | Executive Member |
| 9 | Ms Madhumita Bhattacharyya | Executive Member |
| 10 | Ms. Madhuchhanda Sharma, Hyderabad, | Executive Member |
| 11 | Dr Jahar Lal saha | Executive Member |

3. Affiliate Membership with Consumers International for 2024

George Cheriyan, Honorary Working President of CPA initiated the process for the membership with CI by sending a mail to Tamara Meza, Global Networker Lead, Consumers International on May 23, 2023. The duly filled application for CI application was submitted with all required documents, such as annual reports for 3 years, audited statement of accounts, list of office bearers, copy of registration certificate etc. on June 24, 2023. Unfortunately, the application was regretted by the membership team, that was communicated through a mail on July 20, 2023 by Tamara Meza. George continued the follow up with CI for the membership. During the CI Global Summit held in Nairobi, Kenya, George had a one to one meeting with Helena Leurent. Director General of CI and discussed the CPA membership matter. In continuation George further followed up the matter with CI team. As a result, finally the Affiliate membership was granted to CPA for the year 2024, that was communicated through a mail dated April 2, 2024 by Ms. Charlotte Broyd, Head of Communications and Membership, Consumers International.

In continuation a membership fee of USD 45 for the year 2024 (9 months) was paid by CPA.

4. Programmes/Activities

During the report year several programmes were organized by CESDI.

4.1. Observation of International Days

CPA observed the Environment Day (June 5), World Food Safety Day (June 7) United Nations Day (24th October), National Consumer Day (December 24) World Consumer Rights Day (15 March) during the year with different activities in different locations.

4.2 Consumer Coordination Council (CCC)

Consumer Coordination Council (CCC) is the apex consumer organization, that was established in March 1993 as a Society registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. Consumers Protection Association (CPA) and its President Adv. Amrit Lal Saha are founding members of CCC and Adv. Saha is the past Chairman of CCC.

Visakha Consumer Council (VCC), a CCC member, established in 1978 celebrated its 50th Anniversary on August 31, 2023. Adv. Saha attended the jubilee celebration held in Visakhapatnam. He also attended the GB meeting of CCC held in Visakhapatnam. Adv. Saha also attended the CCC GB meeting and observation of World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) held in New Delhi on March 15, 2024.

4.3 In-house Internship

Four lawyers, practicing in different courts in Agartala, visited the office of CPA in December 2023 and interacted with Adv. Amrit Lal Saha, to get new insights on dealing with various consumer issues.

4.4 Launch of Project on Electricity Governance in India

Consumer Protection Association (CPA) in partnership with Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG), Chennai launched a new project "Accelerating Clean Energy Transition by Improving Stakeholder Participation for Electricity Governance in India", along with one-day seminar discussing the electricity issues in Tripura. The launch event was held on March 9, 2024 at Agartala Press Club, Tripura. The project is for a period of 9 months from March to November, 2024.

Mr. D. Radhakrishnan, Chairman, Tripura Electricity Regulatory Commission (TERC) and Ms. Dalia Shah, Member, Tripura State Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (SCDRC) were the guests. 35 participants from

voluntary organizations, teacher associations, self-help Groups, and domestic consumers participated in the seminar.

Mr. Amrit Lal Saha, chaired the Launch Meeting and spoke about the interventions of CPA in Tripura, working in various sectors for the last almost 37 years, since 1987. Mr. George Cheriyan, Working President, Consumer Protection Association (CPA), extended a warm welcome to all the speakers and participants and made the introductory remarks. G.N. Bharath Ram, researcher, CAG, presented the significance of launching a project in Tripura. The project aims to empower consumers and enable their greater participation in the electricity sector, while also enhancing their understanding of electricity governance, he said. A message from Mr. Abhishek Singh, IAS, Secretary of Department of Power, Govt. of Tripura was read in the meeting.

Mr. D. Radhakrishnan, Chairman, Tripura Electricity Regulatory Commission (TERC), highlighted the critical role that electricity plays in our daily lives. He appreciated the program's significant goal of accelerating the transition towards clean energy and promoting consumer participation in electricity governance. Ms. Dalia Shah, Member, State Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (SCDRC), talked about the commission's core objective of helping consumers resolve their issues without any hindrance

5. Participation in National Events/Meetings

5.1 'Multi-stakeholder Forum on Sustainable Production and Consumption' held at Chennai on January 23-24, 2024

'Multi-stakeholder Forum on Sustainable Production and Consumption' was organized by Citizen consumer & civic Action Group (CAG), Chennai on January 23-24, 2024 in Chennai, seeking to provide a platform to bring together relevant stakeholders including government officials, businesses, civil society, journalists, and academics. The need for multi stakeholder participation in addressing complex subjects such as sustainability and the climate crisis was explained by Dr. Sultan Ismail, Member, Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission during his inaugural address. He emphasized that climate systems, for example, were so complex that they cannot be contained or mitigated by just one country or one sector of government working independently. It needs people and policies from different walks of life, working hand in hand, globally. This was reiterated by Helena Leurent, Director General of Consumers International, who gave a video address at the event. She explained that even well-meaning consumers need the right tools in the form of a sustainable ecosystem, if their intentions to live sustainably are to translate into real action.

The two-day forum looks at sustainability through the lens of business models and strategies impacting sustainability, analysing current production and consumption patterns, with recommendations for an ecosystem for responsible and sustainable businesses. George Cheriyan, Honorary Working President, represented CPA in the forum and made a presentation on 'Citizens perception of sustainable businesses' on January 24, 2024.

6. Participation in International Events

6.1 CPA survey on plastic pollution and sustainable consumption in the backdrop of CI Global Summit

Consumers Protection Association (CPA) carried out a survey in the backdrop of the upcoming Consumers International Global Congress scheduled to be held in Nairobi, Kenya from December 6-8, 2023 on the theme '*Building A Resilient Consumer for the Future*'. The survey was carried out on two key issues which is scheduled to be discussed in the congress, 'Responsible Consumption and Production' (SDG12) and 'Tackling Plastic Pollution'. Participants of the survey were from various walks of life, consumer organizations, academia, businesses, researchers from 15 major states in India, covering all 5 regions of India. Adv. Amrit Lal Saha (President) and George Cheriyan (Working President) coordinated the conduct of the survey and data analysis. The survey findings also resulted in few media coverage as mentioned below.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS MANGALURU MONDAY 04.12.2023

65.7 PER CENT CONSUMERS IN INDIA NOW CARRY COTTON OR JUTE BAGS: CPA SURVEY

Findings to be presented before a global conference in Nairobi from December 6 to 8

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Mangaluru

INDIA banned manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of single-use plastic items, which have low utility and high littering potential, across the country from July 1, 2022. Though 91.7 per cent of consumers are aware of the ban, 61.1 per cent of consumers say the single-use plastic ban is not effective and should be strictly enforced to prevent the circulation/use of banned plastic items. After a short gap, all these banned items are back in the market.

These are findings of a national-level consumer perception survey carried out by Consumers Protection Association (CPA) based in Agartala, Tripura.

Adv. Amrit Lal Saha, president of CPA, said the survey was done in the backdrop of the upcoming Consumers International Global Congress, scheduled to be held at Nairobi in Kenya, from December 6 to 8, 2023 on the theme 'Building A Resilient Consumer for the Future'. The survey was carried out on two key issues which will be discussed in the congress 'Responsible Consumption and Production' (SDG12) and 'Tackling Plastic Pollution'.

Participants of the survey were from various walks of life, consumer organisations, academia, businesses and researchers from 15 major states in India, covering all five regions of India. 69.4 per cent consumers say, paper, jute, cotton and bamboo can be the possible alternatives to plastic. However, 54.3 per cent think the available alternatives to plastics are not cost-effective and easily available. 65.7 per cent of consumers in India now carry a cotton or a jute bag, while going for shopping.

Shockingly, while 55.9 per cent of consumers put plastic waste along with biodegradable or general garbage and dispose of, 44.1 per cent consumers segregate, keep it separately and give it to the garbage collectors or recyclers.

52.9 per cent think India is making sufficient efforts through various schemes and programmes to promote sustainable consumption and production. A good 77.1 per cent are aware about laws and legislations like like Guest Control Act to prevent food wastage and to control food extravagance at public events and weddings. However, these laws are not effectively enforced. Another 68.6 per cent are aware of the policies in India to promote Sustainable Tourism and Sustainable Public Procurement.

Saha said, George Cheriyan, Honorary Working President of CPA, will be representing CPA in the CI Global Congress as a delegate and will present these findings in the respective sessions. George represented India at the CI Global Council during 2015-19 and was a delegate and speaker at earlier three Global Congresses held in Hong Kong (2011), Brazil (2015) and Portugal (2019).

Held every four years, the Global Congress is a pivotal event for those committed to improving the lives of consumers. Consumers International Global Congress will bring together the consumer movement and leading influencers from across business, civil society and academia to tackle the pressing global issues and protect consumers worldwide.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/agartala/consumers-want-viable-alternatives-to-single-use-plastic-reveals-survey/articleshow/105741578.cms>

6.2 Consumers International Global Congress, Nairobi, Kenya, December 6-8, 2023

Every four years Consumers International's Global Congress brings together the consumer movement and leading cross-sector influencers to tackle pressing issues impacting consumers worldwide. We are delighted to announce our 2023 Global Congress will be held in Nairobi, Kenya from 06 – 08 December.

The conference, themed 'Building a Resilient Future for Consumers', drew approximately 300 delegates from over 100 countries. These delegates primarily consisted of consumer rights advocates and scholars, reviewing consumer protection status worldwide. The Global Congress, a quadrennial event, is the premier international gathering dedicated to enhancing consumers' lives. It unites prominent consumer organisations, governments, businesses, civil society, and academia. The Nairobi Congress focused on key consumer issues, including the cost of living, sustainable consumption, energy transitions, food systems, digital rights, and the future of finance. The 2023 Consumers International Global Congress marked a significant milestone in the global consumer protection movement. The initiatives and insights gained from this gathering will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in shaping a more resilient, fair, and sustainable future for consumers across the globe. George Cheriyan attended the global summit and actively participated in the deliberations. A media coverage about the summit is pasted below.

George also had one to one meetings with Marimuthu Nadesan, President CI; Helena Laurent, Director General CI etc.

[Consumer protection: Cost of living, digital rights in focus at global meet | Policy Circle](#)

7. Affiliations/Memberships/Appointments

7.1 Engagement with Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)

BIS is the National Standard Body of India established under the BIS Act 2016 for the harmonious development of the activities of standardization, marking and quality certification of goods and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. BIS has been providing traceability and tangibility benefits to the national economy in a number of ways – providing safe reliable quality

goods; minimizing health hazards to consumers; promoting exports and imports substitute; control over proliferation of varieties etc. through standardization, certification and testing. CPA actively engaged with BIS in various capacities. George Cheriyan, Honorary Working President, CPA was appointed to the following committees during the year and was actively engaged.

1. Rajasthan State Level BIS Committee Chaired by Chief Secretary (from July 2023 onwards)
2. Food Hygiene, Safety Management and Other Systems Sectional Committee, FAD 15
3. Helmets Subcommittee, CED 22:5

7.2 Unfair Trade Practices and Misleading Advertisements – Involvement with ASCI

The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), established in 1985, is committed to the cause of self-regulation in advertising, ensuring the protection of the interests of consumers. ASCI seeks to ensure that advertisements conform to its Code for Self-Regulation, which requires advertisements to be legal, decent, honest, and truthful, and not hazardous or harmful, while observing fairness in competition. George Cheriyan, Honorary Working President of CPA was appointed as a member of the Consumer Complaints Council (CCC) of Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI). The appointment is for a period of two years from April 1, 2024.

[Consumer Complaints Council - Advertising Standards Council Of India \(ascionline.in\)](http://ascionline.in)

8. Publications

CPA was involved in the publication of various articles and study papers contributed by various members. Interviews also were published in leading dailies on consumer issues.

[Did you just show me the finger? \(mid-day.com\)](http://mid-day.com), Sunday MidDay, June 23, 2024

9. Our Sincere Thanks

We take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the individuals, groups and organizations that supported CPA during the report year. A special word of thanks to Consumers International (CI) for accepting CPA as an affiliate member. We also thank CAG, Chennai for partnering with CPA in the implantation of Electricity Governance project in Tripura. We also express my sincere thanks to the Secretary and members of CPA executive committee for

their advice, and Volunteers for their timely support. I thank the God Almighty for all the guidance and blessings during the report year.

For the Executive Committee

Amrit Lal Saha
President

George Cheriyan
Honorary Working President
Consumers Protection Association