

The Public Newsense

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF CITIZEN CONSUMER AND CIVIC ACTION GROUP

APRIL - JUNE 2023

Dear friends

Greetings from CAG! We write to you amidst the flurry of Climate Action Month 2023 (CAM). If you have been following our social media pages, you will be aware of the array of activities that we have held across Chennai to bring the message of climate action closer to citizens. We still have another two weeks of events left. If you've not already participated in CAM, we would love to see you at one of our forthcoming events. All our social media pages (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, @CAGChennai) will carry the latest updates on events.

The Global Plastics Treaty (GPT) is one of many international efforts to seek and mandate mitigatory efforts to address the climate crisis. The role that plastics play in the climate crisis is now increasingly evident, and the GPT aims to create a legally binding treaty that will hold countries responsible for their various roles in the life cycle of plastics. CAG had the privilege of representing Consumers International at the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee - 2 (INC-2) that was held in Paris last month, where we submitted our recommendations towards the Treaty.

Continuing in the vein of climate action, the CAG textbook FOCUS (Facts on Climate Change Unraveled for Students) is now being translated into Tamil. This will be followed by a pilot phase with lessons in Tamil medium schools, after which the book will be available for public distribution. We'll keep you posted.

Our work on sustainable transport (another mitigatory factor for the climate crisis) continues with studies, audits and reports on promoting public transport, walking and cycling. You will find an abridged version of our report on livelihood cyclists in this edition of the newsletter. We are also working now on a project that examines how free bus travel for women modifies their freedom and access to services.

Our work on electricity governance has seen a renewal of the Energy Clubs run in different schools across the city, this school year. We are also working with select Panchayats helping them address excessive energy bills - this typically follows an audit | analyse | recommend process. The outcome of these will help us fashion an audit tool that Panchayats can use independently to audit their energy use.

A core area of CAG's work is making representations to the government on behalf of the public. Some of our interventions this quarter include representations on: : the exclusion of non-motorised transport from the Chennai Smart Urban Roads Project and draft amendments to the Distribution Code, Supply Code, Distribution standards of performance, Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum and Electricity Ombudsman by the Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission. You will find these representations on our website.

Thank you for being a part of our work. Should you need any further information on any aspect of it, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Regards
S.Saroja
Executive Director



Food safety in the era of online shopping

As online shopping continues to gain momentum in India, the issue of food safety has come into the spotlight. With e-commerce platforms delivering a wide range of food products, it is crucial to address the concerns surrounding the safety and quality of these items. The factors, such as convenience, wide product selection, competitive pricing, and seamless user experience contribute to popularity of online food shopping. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) establishes a regulatory framework to ensure compliance in the online sale of edible items. By integrating strict food safety practices, consumers can enjoy the convenience of online shopping without compromising their health and well-being.

🕒 7 minutes read



Climate-induced displacement: A new normal for India's vulnerable communities

This article examines the impact of climate change-driven displacement in India, exploring the human & socio-economic consequences of extreme weather events. It aims to raise awareness of the challenges of displacement and the urgent need for climate action.

🕒 3 minute read



Cycling into the sunset

Cyclists are invisible on our roads. So much so that motorists are convinced that very few people cycle. While the numbers are dwindling, there are still stalwarts who brave the traffic to commute. We spoke to nearly 500 cyclists to understand their travails on Chennai's dangerous roads.

🕒 5 minute read



Greenwashing : Part 2

'Greenwashing' is a problem faced all over the world. This article looks at the steps taken by various nations and provides some recommendations to tackle greenwashing.

🕒 5 minute read



Putting the brakes on speed limit enforcement

Chennai Traffic Police recently backtracked on its announcement of enforcing the speed limits due to an outpouring of motorists' angst on Twitter. The sad truth is that speeding is the biggest cause of crashes and deaths in Tamil Nadu and Chennai. International research has shown that 30kmph is a safe upper limit for urban roads. Even small increases beyond 30kmph increase the risk of death by a huge margin. So, do we indulge our inner speed demons or ensure the road is safe for everyone?

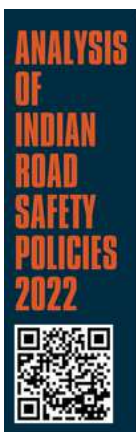
🕒 4 minute read

Resources for you



Climate change textbook for middle grade students (FOCUS - Facts on Climate Change Unraveled for Students)

You can now download and use the much anticipated textbook on climate change, FOCUS. The book is designed specifically for middle school children aged 12-14. Dive into the world of climate change and join us in our mission to empower young minds to understand and address climate change. Together, we can build a sustainable future for our planet. For those who prefer a high-resolution print version, simply write to our helpdesk at helpdesk@cag.org.in



When the rubber hits the road!

A qualitative analysis of Road Safety Policies of select Indian States.
August 2022

When the rubber hits the road !

Tamil Nadu was the first state to bring in a Road Safety Policy as a part of its road safety management system. However, the status of the existing Road Safety Policy calls for an immediate review to ensure that the policy reflects prevailing road safety issues and identifies existing policy constraints. This report furnishes a set of recommendations for the state through a qualitative comparison of Road Safety Policies of other states in India.

🕒 20 minutes read



REPORT ON TAMIL NADU'S TRANSITION TO GREEN ENERGY



CAG
Central Vigilance Commission and Centre for Action Energy

A report on Tamil Nadu's transition to green energy

Tamil Nadu has made significant strides in renewable energy, with a higher installed capacity than non-renewable energy. However, this progress is yet to be reflected in the state's electricity mix. This report explores Tamil Nadu's transition to green energy and assesses public perception of renewable energy sources.

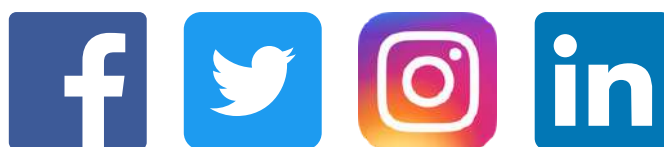
🕒 45 minutes read

Climate Action Month 2023



Climate Action Month is here again! Starting the first of July, we have planned an exciting array of events across the city of Chennai! Performance arts, talks, workshops, stand up comedy, music & more! Follow our social media profiles for regular updates!

#ClimateActionMonth2023 #ChennaiClimateAction



Our latest videos



We encourage everyone to take simple yet powerful steps towards sustainability by carrying their own cloth bags and water bottles. By reducing our reliance on single-use plastics, we can significantly reduce plastic pollution and protect our planet.
#SustainableFuture



Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG)

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