



SEMINAR ON COMPARATIVE TESTING RESULTS OF DETERGENTS AND FAIRNESS CREAMS

As you may all know, CAI recently conducted the Seminar on the Comparative Testing results of Detergent Cakes and Fairness Creams at the Gandhi Nagar Club, Adyar. The seminar was widely covered by the Press and Electronic Media. For the first time we had some "Consumers speak out" and share their experiences. It was encouraging to note the interactive manner in which the seminar progressed.



Presenting the results of a study done by the CAI and CONCERT (A centre for consumer education, research, teaching, training and testing), Dr.R.Hemalatha (Consultant) and the CONCERT head for the project said that Fairness Creams are being used despite users being aware of the fact that they do not cause any appreciable skin lightening.

"The general perception of users that fairness is associated with beauty is because of the advertisements and their influence on women to buy these products," said Mrs. Hemalatha.

She also cautioned the audience about **Parabens**, a class of preservatives found in moisturizers, skin creams, shampoos, conditioners and many personal care products which are supposed to be carcinogenic.

One should not fall for promotional phrases used by advertising agencies to add to the hype of fair skin over dark skin. Mr. R. Desikan, Founder Trustee of CAI and CONCERT pointed out that a clinical trial for these products should be made mandatory instead consumers being used as guinea pigs.

Similarly the study done on Detergent cakes showed that universally most detergents had similar effectiveness irrespective of their cost. Thus, it is advisable to make a cost effective choice instead of going by big Brand Names or catchy advertisements!

Following are some excerpts from Newspapers who covered the Seminar on the comparative testing of Detergents and Fairness creams:

1. Deccan Chronicle: 20th April 2014:

"A Survey done as part of the study says that 50% of women were happy with the performance of a skin lightening product though many agreed that it did not bring any appreciable change, but only a psychological boost."

"The presence of heavy metals like Arsenic, Mercury or Lead even in permissible limits is not shown in the ingredient list of fairness cream packs. Natural products are the safest bet!"- Dr.R.Hemalatha, Consultant, CONCERT

2. The New Indian Express: 22nd April 2014

"Only through education and scientific evidence use of such skin products can be reduced."

- Dr.R. Hemalatha.

3. Dinamalar: 20th April 2014

"Some Fairness cream brands do not include essential ingredients used for preparation on the product label. But mention in bold that anyone using the product would become fairer and further beautiful every day."- Dr. R. Hemalatha

"The members who attended the Seminar felt that the Government should bring about necessary action to curb such advertisements."

4. Dinakaran, Adyar Sunday Special: 27th April 2014

"Always use products prescribed by your Doctor!"

"Before using any product, always read the Label to note any side effects that may harm your skin."

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ACTIVITIES OF CAI STUDENT CHAPTERS

VERSATILE BUSINESS SCHOOL

The Versatile Business School, Egmore has recently started a CAI Student Chapter. Students and Staff Members of the College have been attending our Seminars regularly as part of the activities planned by CAI!



As a Student Chapter Member of CAI, the College Students benefit from the following activities through their academic year:

- **Seminars:** Two Seminars would be conducted by CAI on very critical Consumer related subjects.
- **Activities** like **debate, Just a minute, Paper presentation** etc on Consumer related subjects would be conducted.
- **On Field Activity:** One on field activity would be conducted.
- **Workshop:** One workshop on Consumer related subject will be conducted
- **Survey:** The students will also be encouraged to participate in one of the surveys conducted by CAI
- **Access to the online magazine** of Consumers Digest.
- Students will also be encouraged to **write blogs** which would be linked to our website.

QUICK REMINDER- COMPARATIVE TESTING SEMINAR

TOPIC: Vehicle Insurance and Health Insurance

DATE: 23rd May 2014

TIME: 10:00 A.M.- 1:00 P.M.

VENUE- Will be Notified Shortly!

ETHIRAJ COLLEGE

Ethiraj College for Women has had a CAI Student Chapter from the year 2012. In the Year 2013, 500 students of the college enrolled with CAI to be a part of the consumer movement!



Ethiraj College Students have actively participated in all the Seminars conducted by CAI through their academic year. CAI has also been able to organize many events like:

- Guest lecture on the Topic "**Impact of Mobile phones on today's generation**"
- **Work shop cum training** on Food Safety with focus on Junk food.
- A **Survey** to help us gather information from Consumers regarding their awareness on usage of Mobile Phones.

MOP VAISHNAV COLLEGE:

MOP Vaishnav College for Women has had a CAI Student Chapter from the year 2013. In this year, 361 students of the college enrolled with CAI to be a part of the consumer movement!



Students from MOP have also been active participants of seminar conducted by CAI through their academic year. CAI has been able to organize many events like:

- Guest lecture on the Topic "**Impact of Mobile phones on today's generation**" with a short Debate session.
- Students were involved in a **Survey** to help us gather information from the Consumers regarding their awareness on usage of Mobile Phones.
- Students of MOP presented their survey results during the "Protect your Phone Rights" Seminar

BAN JUNK FOOD FROM SCHOOLS!

It is high time that unhealthy eatables are banned from schools or atleast kept out of reach in schools and college canteens!



The Centre for Science and Environment Director-General, Sunita Narain, has demanded that all junk food be banned from unaided and private schools across the country.

Food high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) should not be available in educational institutions and within 500 yards of them.

She pointed out that schools are not the right place for promoting HFSS Foods. She also said cricketers, Bollywood actors and other celebrities should avoid endorsing junk food.

Poor eating habits developed at an early age could lead to a lifetime of health consequences. School is where children spend most of their time, and it is where one should lay the foundation for healthy habits. **Benefits of balanced, fresh and traditional food cannot be replaced!**

What is most important is how we teach and create awareness regarding nutrition amongst youngsters and also encourage them to be more physically active!

Source: www.foodsafetynews.wordpress.com

ELDERLY MUST GET PASSPORT WITH AFFIDAVIT AS PROOF!

Activists have appealed that applications for a passport by the elderly, especially those who cannot read or write, who produce an Affidavit as proof of age instead of their birth certificates, should not be 'put on hold' at the Regional Passport Office (RPO) in Chennai.



“For illiterate and semi-literate persons born before 1989, an affidavit, stating the date and place of birth and sworn before a notary, is adequate proof of age while applying for passports,” said Syed Shabbeer Hussain of Royapettah, showing a copy of the notification he had obtained from the ministry through a Right to Information Act query.

He helps people coming from remote villages in preparing the required paperwork. He said there were many senior citizens who do not have their birth certificates.

Applications with an affidavit as age proof are put on hold. Unless brought to the attention of senior officials, the papers do not move. This delay causes a lot of pain to those who need the passport to meet their relatives.

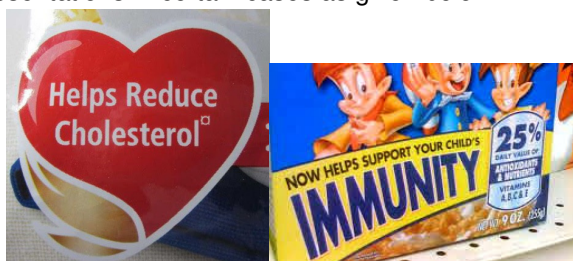
There are many elderly women who need it to go abroad for a job,” Mr. Hussain said. Getting a birth certificate from a local body proved extremely difficult and time-consuming for the elderly, he added.

Sources at the RPO said, for people born after 1989, a birth- or school-leaving certificate is mandatory, and for those born before 1989, an affidavit was sufficient.

Source: “The Hindu” Newspaper, 28th March 2014

FOOD LABELLING AWARENESS

In our earlier Newsletters, we have been helping you understand the general requirements of labeling and some of the information in general to be given on the label of any packed food. The FSS (Packaging and Labelling) Regulation, 2011 have put forth specific restrictions on use of particular words, declarations, statements or pictorial representations in certain cases as given below :-



1. Labels not to contain reference to Act or rules or regulations contradictory to required particulars:

No reference of the Act, Rules or Regulations is permitted to be made on the labels.

2. Labels not to use words implying recommendations by medical profession:

The words "recommended by the medical profession" or any words which suggest that the food is recommended, prescribed, or approved by medical practitioners or approved for medical purpose, are not allowed to be mentioned on the labels.

3. Unauthorized use of words showing imitation prohibited:

- ✓ Words indicating that the article is a substitute for any food are not to be mentioned on the label.
- ✓ The food product which does not contain the specified amount of fruit or contains only fruit flavour and is likely to give a false impression to the consumer that the product contains fruit should be clearly declared on the label as 'ADDED (NAME OF THE FRUIT) FLAVOUR'.
- ✓ Picture of fruit on the label of non-fruit products like carbonate beverage, synthetic Vinegar Syrups/Sharbats is prohibited.
- ✓ The fruit and vegetable product, claimed to be fortified with vitamin C shall contain not less than 40 mg of ascorbic acid per 100 gm. of the product.

4. The word "pure" or any word or words of the same significance shall not be included in the label of a package that contains an imitation of any food.

Another important aspect of labeling is that there are specific requirements and information which is product specific and mandatory to be given on the label of packaged foods

Products like Infant Milk Substitute/Foods, Edible Oils and Fats, Irradiated Foods, packaged drinking water etc are required to give specific information, statement or warning.



In case of Infant Milk Substitutes/Food, the container should bear the following additional label declaration:

"IMPORTANT NOTICE: MOTHER'S MILK IS BEST FOR YOUR BABY."

Other mandatory warnings include:

- ✓ Infant food shall be introduced only after the age of six months and up to the age of two years.
- ✓ Infant milk substitute or infant food should be used only on the advice of a health worker.
- ✓ Infant milk substitute or infant food is not the sole source of nourishment of an infant.
- ✓ In case of premature baby milk substitute/Food product, "TO BE TAKEN UNDER MEDICAL ADVICE" should be displayed.
- ✓ The product, which contains neither milk nor any milk derivatives, shall be labelled as: "CONTAINS NO MILK OR MILK PRODUCT"

A Food Business Operator has to specifically mention certain important instructions on the labels of baby milk substitutes and statements like "warning", "caution" etc should be properly commented and implanted on the label as per regulatory guidelines.

CONSUMER CASES SOLVED BY CAI-1

COMPLAINT AGAINST INDANE
GAS AGENCY

Complaint Nature:

I recently took an Indane Gas connection (Agency name: Cauvery Indane Agency) in the month of January 2014. I had paid Rs.7000/- on 6th January 2014, but received a receipt only for Rs.3500/-. The remaining amount they took for the gas stove which they forced us to take. Even though it is written there that it is not compulsory, they don't accept the application if we don't buy the stove. Hence I had to buy the stove. On 8th Jan 2014, cylinders were delivered to my house at around 8.50 AM. I paid Rs. 50 apart from the bill but the delivery person as tips but he refused to take it and demanded for Rs.100, claiming that for a new gas connection I was supposed to pay him Rs.100, but I refused to pay. In the month of February 2014, I booked a refill cylinder and it was delivered on 18th Feb 2014. I paid Rs.424.00/- as per the bill charge. This was the last Cylinder I received, I once again booked for a cylinder in the month of March, but I am yet to receive it. I have tried complaining regarding this problem and the rude behavior of the delivery person who demanded more money, but I have not received any proper response from them. Please help me with this.

Ms. Dhamayanthi. J



Solution:

After CAI's mediation, the complainant received the Cylinders on the same day!

Ms. Dhamayanthi's Testimonial:

"I received a call from the Indane Distributor who apologized for what had happened and asked me to book another cylinder, which I refused as I was busy. But within 10 minutes the delivery person reached to my residence and apologized for their mistake. And now, they have delivered the cylinder with the bill (without me booking). The distributor also promised that the mistake will not repeat. Thank you for your help!"

COMPLAINT AGAINST RELIANCE

Complaint Nature:



I have made advance payment of Rs.3534 for Reliance Datacard Rental Plan on 7.9.13 for 6 months. . Usually they establish the plan changing within 2 or 3 working days but I gave request in Reliance outlet at erode with payment, they didn't change the plan within 3 days. They sent a bill for September month. In that bill the amount of that month was deducted from my Rs.3534. So, now the amount was not sufficient to activate 6 months advance rental plan. After my complaint they activated the plan on 4.10.13. I conformed that from customer care. And they sent a bill next month to pay Rs.600. Again, Next month I was billed month Rs. 700 (including the late payment charges Rs.100). Again in December I received a bill of Rs.800. Unfortunately, on 12.12.2013, I lost my Data card, laptop and bag. I repeatedly complained at the Erode Reliance outlet, but no one solved my issue. When I complained to the Customer care, they were evasive. Please help me solve the problem.

Mr. Dinesh Kumar

Solution:

After CAI's mediation, the late payment charges Rs.800 was waived.

Mr. Ashwin's Testimonial:

"The Erode Retail Outlet has waived the charges. Thank you for your intervention."

Consumers Association of India (CAI)

A5, 2nd Main Road, Thiruvalluvar Nagar,

Thiruvannamipur, Chennai – 600041

Phone: (044) 24513191/92

CONSUMER CASES SOLVED BY CAI-2

COMPLAINT AGAINST GETIT BAZAR



Complaint Nature:

I have ordered a Samsung Mobile online through the Getit Bazar site for Rs.1430. It has been more than 20 days since I made the payment, but I am yet to receive the product I ordered for. When I tried calling them, they are telling me that the product is out of stock. Please help me with this

Mr. M. Hari

Solution:

After CAI's mediation, within 2 days, the order was cancelled immediately and the amount was refunded to the Complainant.

Mr. Hari's Testimonial:

"Getit Bazar has refunded the total amount of Rs. 1430 immediately. Thank you for resolving my complaint."

CONSUMER HELPLINE:- 044-6633 4346

Do you have a complaint against a manufacturer, trader or service provider? If yes, CAI is here to help. Call our Helpline ANYTIME and record your complaint either in Tamil or English. We will get back to you within three working days.

COMPLAINT AGAINST COUNTRY CLUB VACATIONS



Complaint Nature:

I had been to Big Bazar Nagpur. There I was asked to fill up a lucky draw coupon. Within 2 days I got a call that I have won 2 prizes, a kitchen set and a gift voucher for Rs.25,000. I told the concerned person that I live 140 Km away from Nagpur but she insisted that I come along with my husband to collect that prize. Next day went there and we were handed a cheap bowl set and asked us to join a membership of their club for a stipulated fees which we declined. After that they handed a gift voucher of Rs. 25000 which says that we can stay at any of their hotels listed for 7 days with a registration of Rs.4000. We were asked to make the booking one month in advance. Now when I am trying to book a hotel in any of the hotels mentioned by them it is showing no vacancy. Is this not cheating?

Ms. Archana Agarwal

Solution:

After CAI's mediation, the Country Club called her personally and resolved the issue.

Ms. Archana Agarwal's Testimonial:

"Thank you for your help and intervention!"

CAI is here to help you!!!

CONSUMER CASES SOLVED IN CONSUMER FORUMS

Name of Complainant: Mr. Pon Velayuthan

Name of Opposite Party: CARE Centre, Acupuncture Research and Education

Date of Complaint filed: 21.02.2011

Date of Order: 04.09.2012



Complaint Nature:

The Complainant joined a class with the CARE Centre on 30.06.2010 and paid Rs.4900/- to attend the class at Bharat Sevak Samaj National Development Agency for getting Certificate. After the first week, he was asked to pay an additional amount of Rs.2000/-. At the end of the classes, the Complainant did not receive a certificate from the centre even after paying the full amount of Rs. 6900/- demanded by the Opposite party. Thus the Complainant filed a case in the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum, Dindigul.

Judgment given by Consumer Forum:

The Consumer Forum directed the Opposite Party to return the entire fee of Rs. 6900/-, Rs. 25,000 towards mental agony and Rs.2000/- towards cost spent for court fee and other charges. Further the Court directed the CARE Centre to send their documents to the Collector of Erode District to check the genuineness of the Centre to conduct courses and take necessary action to safeguard the interest of the Consumer.

Name of Complainant: Mr. Subbarayan, Secretary of Tamil Nadu Payanittalar Sangam.

Name of Opposite Party: Mahalakshmi Iyengar Cake Shop, Namakkal



Complaint Nature:

In 2013, the Complainant purchased two bread packets of Rs.20/- from the Opposite Party. But he found that the product did not have the required information like MFD, Expiry Date, Batch number etc. on the label. Since he did not receive any response from the Food Safety Authorities after filing a complaint, he approached the Consumer Court and filed case against Cake shop.

Judgment given by Consumer Forum:

The Consumer Forum directed the Opposite Party to refund the product cost of Rs.20/- , Rs.2000/- for Court fee and Rs.5000/- as compensation to the Complainant. Since the Opposite party had violated the Company norms, they were directed to pay Rs.10,000/- to the Consumer Welfare Funds within a month.