

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 3425

TO BE ANSWERED ON 31.03.2023

CONSUMER RIGHTS AWARENESS SCHEME

3425. SHRI KARTIKEYA SHARMA

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has implemented any schemes in the last three years to educate consumers of their rights;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken by Government to safeguard the rights of consumers in the last three years; and
- (d) whether Government is also planning to fast track its resolution framework to avoid delays while dealing with the grievances?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE, CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) and (b): Department of Consumer Affairs is implementing a scheme namely “Consumer Awareness” and has generated consumer awareness under the aegis of “Jago Grahak Jago” campaign through various media including electronic, outdoor and social media. The Department participates in prominent fairs/festivals/events where a large number of people may congregate. The Department also releases grant-in-aid to various States/UTs for generating awareness at local level.

The Department of Consumer Affairs in 2022-23 has launched “Jagriti”, a mascot for empowering consumers and generating awareness of their rights. Jagriti is projected as an empowered young consumer.

(c) and (d): The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides for redressal of the grievances of consumer through 3 tier quasi-judicial systems known as ‘Consumer Commissions’, that have been established at the District level (District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission), State level (State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission) and National level (National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission) where consumers can file complaints for redressal.

For speedy disposal of cases in Consumer Commissions, the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides for, inter-alia, simplification of the adjudication process in the Consumer Commissions, like filing of a complaint by a consumer in the Consumer Commission having jurisdiction with respect to his place of work/residence irrespective of place of transaction and place of business or residence of the opposite parties, e-filing of cases in Consumer Commissions through e-daakhil portal, video conferencing for hearing, deemed admissibility of complaints if admissibility is not decided within 21 days of filing, and court monitored mediation to facilitate early disposal of cases.

Section 38(7) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides that every complaint shall be disposed of as expeditiously as possible and endeavour shall be made to decide the complaint within a period of three months from the date of receipt of notice by opposite party where the complaint does not require analysis or testing of commodities and within five months if it requires analysis or testing of commodities.

The e-Daakhil portal has been launched covering 34 States/UTs to provide facility to all the aggrieved consumers to register online consumer complaints in different Consumer Commissions from anywhere in India. It allows consumers to pay the complaints fees online, upload case documents and track the process. The purpose is to provide timely and effective administration and settlement of consumer disputes.

The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 also provides for establishing Mediation Cells within the premises of Consumer Commissions to work as an Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism and cases may be referred to these Mediation Cells from Consumer Commissions if scope for early settlement exists and parties agree for it. At present, 448 Mediation Cells have been set up in various Consumer Commissions in the Country.
