

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 204 (OIH)
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.12.2025

E-COMMERCE CONSUMER PROTECTION AND GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL

204. SHRI SANJAY KUMAR JHA:
(OIH)

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

- (a) whether the Ministry has issued any new guidelines for e-commerce consumer protection, if so, the details thereof; and
- (b) whether the digital platform has been strengthened to expedite consumer grievance redressal, if so, the details of grievance redressal reported on it?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE, CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI B. L. VERMA)

(a): Department of Consumer Affairs is continuously working for consumer protection and empowerment of consumers by enactment of progressive legislations. With a view to modernize the framework governing the consumer protection in the new era of globalization, technologies, e-commerce markets etc., the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was repealed and Consumer Protection Act, 2019 was enacted.

To safeguard the interests of consumers from unfair trade practices in e-commerce, the Department of Consumer Affairs has notified the Consumer Protection (E-commerce) Rules, 2020 under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019. These rules, inter-alia, outline the responsibilities of e-commerce entities and specify the liabilities of marketplace and inventory e-commerce entities, including provisions for consumer grievance redressal. These rules also provide that no e-commerce entity shall adopt any unfair trade practice, whether in the course of business on its platform or otherwise.

Aligned with global best practices, "Safety Pledge" has been finalized, in consultation with all the stakeholders, which is a voluntary public commitment of e-Commerce platforms to ensure the safety of goods sold online. This initiative strengthens consumer protection in the e-commerce. Various e-Commerce companies viz. Tata Digital, Tata 1mg, BigBasket, Tata Cliq, Chroma, Swiggy, Ola, Zomato, Ajo, JioMart, Netmeds and Meesho etc. have signed the Safety Pledge for ensuring consumer safety.

Under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), an executive agency, came into existence on 24.07.2020. The CCPA, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 18 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, has issued “Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Dark Patterns, 2023” on 30th November, 2023 for prevention and regulation of dark patterns listing 13 specified dark patterns identified in e-Commerce sector. These dark patterns include false urgency, Basket Sneaking, Confirm shaming, forced action, Subscription trap, Interface Interference, Bait and switch, Drip Pricing, Disguised Advertisements, Nagging, Trick Wording, Saas Billing and Rogue Malwares. Further, an “Advisory for Self-Audit by E-Commerce Platforms for detecting the Dark Patterns on their platforms to create a fair, ethical and consumer centric digital ecosystem” was also issued by the CCPA on 5th June, 2025.

The CCPA has also notified the Guidelines for Prevention of Misleading Advertisements and Endorsements for Misleading Advertisements, 2022 on 9th June, 2022. These guidelines inter-alia provide for; (a) conditions for an advertisement to be non-misleading and valid; (b) certain stipulations in respect of bait advertisements and free claim advertisements; and, (c) duties of manufacturer, service provider, advertiser and advertising agency. These guidelines states that due diligence is required for endorsement of advertisements such that any endorsement in an advertisement must reflect the genuine, reasonably current opinion of the individual, group or organisation making such representation and must be based on adequate information about or experience with, the identified goods, product or service and must not otherwise be deceptive.

(b) The National Consumer Helpline (NCH) administered by the Department of Consumer Affairs has emerged as a single point of access to consumers across the country for their grievance redressal at a pre-litigation stage. Consumers can register their grievances from all over the country in 17 languages including Hindi, English, Kashmiri, Punjabi, Nepali, Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Maithili, Santhali, Bengali, Odia, Assamese and Manipuri through a toll-free number 1915. These grievances can be registered on Integrated Grievance Redressal Mechanism (INGRAM), an omni-channel IT enabled central portal, through various channels- WhatsApp (8800001915), SMS (8800001915), email (nch-ca@gov.in), the NCH app, the web portal (consumerhelpline.gov.in) and the Umang app, as per their convenience. 1169 companies, who have voluntarily partnered with NCH, as part of the ‘Convergence’ programme directly respond to these grievances according to their redressal process and revert by providing a feedback to the complainant on the portal.

The technological transformation of the NCH has significantly boosted its call-handling capacity. The number of calls received by NCH has grown from 70,159 in October, 2019 to 3,08,130 in October, 2025. This growth reflects the rising confidence of consumers in the helpline. Similarly, the average number of complaints registered per month has surged from 37,062 in 2017 to 1,42,605 in 2025 [as on 31.10.2025]. Additionally, grievance registration via WhatsApp has gained momentum, with the percentage of complaints filed through the platform increasing from 11% in October, 2023 to 30% in October, 2025 demonstrating a growing preference for digital communication channels.

In a significant move to further enhance grievance redressal, NCH has introduced AI-based Speech Recognition, a Translation System, and an AI enabled Chatbot as part of the NCH 2.0 initiative. These technological advancements aim to make the grievance filing process more seamless, efficient and inclusive. The AI-powered Speech Recognition and Translation System enables consumers to file complaints through voice input, reducing manual intervention. The AI enabled Chatbot provides real-time assistance, streamlining complaint-handling processes and improving the overall user experience. These upgrades ensure that consumers from diverse linguistic backgrounds have equal access to the grievance redressal system.

The website of the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) has also been upgraded to serve as the central point of access for consumers across India seeking grievance redressal at the pre-litigation stage. This website includes enhanced functionality, modern features and improved navigation with a user-centric design. It incorporates advanced features, offering faster grievance resolution and a more efficient user experience. A total number of 14,26,046 grievances have been reported on the NCH in 2025 (till Oct, 2025) and 13,10,102 grievances have been disposed of.

The “e-Jagriti” portal launched by the Department of Consumer Affairs on 1st January, 2025 aims to enhance consumer grievance redressal through a micro-service architecture, Artificial Intelligence / Machine Learning integration and modern features like faceless onboarding and role-based dashboards. It unifies existing applications (OCMS, e-Daakhil, NCDRC CMS, CONFONET) into a single, scalable platform, allowing users to file complaints seamlessly from anywhere with multilingual support. The system streamlines grievance redressal processes with real-time data access, automated workflows and tools for stakeholders like judges and advocates. The portal is designed to provide a convenient, transparent and efficient means for consumers to seek redressal by enabling online complaint filing, digital submission of documents, online payment of fees and virtual hearing from any location. On e-jagriti, 1,30,300 cases have been filed in the consumer commissions in 2025 (till Oct, 2025) and 1,26,640 cases have been disposed of.
