

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 215
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.12.2025

STEPS FOR FASTER DISPOSAL OF CONSUMER CASES

215. SHRI JAGGESH:

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

- (a) whether Government has proposed specific amendments to the Consumer Protection Act, to ensure faster disposal of consumer cases and reduction of pendency across all consumer commissions;
- (b) whether the Department of Consumer Affairs has taken steps to integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) tools in the consumer grievance redressal system for improved efficiency and transparency;
- (c) whether Government is considering to conduct regular performance audits of the National, State, and District Consumer Commissions to evaluate their effectiveness in delivering timely consumer justice; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof, and how it will be implemented?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) : 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in the new era of globalization, technologies, e-commerce markets etc., the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was repealed and Consumer Protection Act, 2019 was enacted.

Salient features of the new Consumer Protection Act, 2019 are establishment of a Central Consumer Protection Authority(CCPA); simplification of the adjudication process in the Consumer Commissions such as enhancing pecuniary jurisdiction of the Consumer Commissions, online filing of complaint from the Consumer Commission having jurisdiction over the place of work/residence of the consumer irrespective of the place of transaction, videoconferencing for hearing, deemed admissibility of complaints, if admissibility is not decided within 21 days of filing; provision of product liability; penal provisions for manufacture/sale of adulterated products/spurious goods; provision for making rules for prevention of unfair trade practice in e-commerce and direct selling.

The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides for a three tier quasi-judicial machinery at District, State and National level commonly known as “Consumer Commissions” for protection of the rights of consumers and to provide simple and speedy redressal of consumer disputes including those related with unfair trade practices. The Consumer Commissions are empowered to give relief of a specific nature and award compensation to consumers, wherever appropriate.

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.

The Department of Consumer Affairs has taken steps to align the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) with the Next-Gen GST Reforms 2025 and introduced a dedicated GST grievance redressal category on the NCH to address consumer queries and complaints related to revised GST rates and exemptions. An Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) in 15 languages has also been deployed on toll-free number 1915 of the helpline to inform consumers in queue about the other available modes for lodging grievances. NCH has put in place a mechanism to address all the grievances received on the helpline portal.

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.

Further, as per Section 38 (7) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, 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.

To serve the interest of speedy justice to the end consumers, Consumer Protection Act states that no adjournment shall ordinarily be granted by the consumer commissions unless sufficient cause is shown and the reasons for grant of adjournment have been recorded in writing by the Commission.

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 platform offers digital case filing, document exchange and automated SMS/email notifications. Features include a chatbot help system, voice-to-text capabilities and accessibility support for the visually challenged and elderly. 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.

Besides consumer, the portal also offers dedicated modules for advocates and judges. Advocates can track their cases, receive hearing notifications and upload documents through their personalized dashboards. The system also verifies advocate credentials through Bar Council integration. Judges benefit from secure, centralized access to complete digital case files, a smart court calendar and analytics dashboards that aid in workload monitoring and scheduling. The platform supports virtual courtrooms, enabling the hearing of cases remotely and ensuring faster disposal while reducing dependency on physical infrastructure.

e-Jagriti also integrates Bharat Kosh and PayGov payment gateways to simplify fee transactions and ensure flexibility and ease for users across jurisdictions. The system ensures secure access through role-based permissions and end-to-end encryption, maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of legal data.
