

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.†1913
ANSWERED ON 13.03.2023**

UNFAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES BY ONLINE TRAVEL AGENTS

†1913. SHRI RAMCHARAN BOHRA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of any incidents of unfair business practices adopted by the hospitality service providers/Online Travel Agents;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard; and**
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to prevent the exploitation of the customers by such agencies?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) to (c): Yes, Sir. Ministry of Tourism (MOT) through its Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) portal receives complaints/grievances related to service delivery, cheating etc. The CPGRAMS portal is available to the citizens 24x7 to lodge their grievances related to inappropriate trade practices by Tourism & hospitality service providers, including Online Travel Agents. All such matters are examined in the Ministry and taken up with the concerned Travel & Tourism Service provider for resolution of the grievance/ complaint. Accordingly, reply of the grievances is furnished to the complainants. However, if the complainant is not satisfied with the response he/she can submit appeal to the higher authority for reconsideration.

It is further, to submit that to ensure standardized services for tourists, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India gives recognition to different categories of service providers in Travel & Hospitality

industry including Online Travel Agents in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Ministry in each category for a period of 5 years. This is purely a voluntary scheme and is not mandatory for the service providers to seek Ministry's approval for conducting business. However, if MOT approved Travel & Tourism Stakeholders are not found to be working in the manner fulfilling the required service standards or complaints of serious nature related to deficiency in services, irregularities etc., or it is found that the agency has got recognition on the basis of false or fabricated documents, etc., the Ministry of Tourism may consider to withdraw/terminate/revoke the recognition granted. However, before taking a final decision, an opportunity is given to the service provider to explain their stand. In case, no such clarification or reply is received from the agency within 30 days, the Ministry may take a suitable decision unilaterally.
