

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
DEPARTMENT FOR PROMOTION OF INDUSTRY AND INTERNAL TRADE**

LOK SABHA

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4669.
TO BE ANSWERED ON WEDNESDAY, THE 24TH MARCH, 2021.**

ONLINE SHOPPING SCAMS

4669. SHRI M. BADRUDDIN AJMAL:

Will the Minister of **COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY** be pleased to state:

वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्री

- (a) whether it is true that there is a sharp increase in online shopping scams in the country as more people have started preferring e-commerce;
- (b) if so, the number of such fraud cases during the last three years and the current year;
- (c) the number of such cases in percentage which were solved protecting consumers' rights and punishing Prowdsters;
- (d) the measures taken/mechanism adopted by the Government to stop fraud in online shopping and the details of the punishment in Indian laws for such frauds;
- (e) the extent to which the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) is active and the manner in which it works to help consumers who are victims of online scams?

ANSWER

वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सोम प्रकाश)

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(SHRI SOM PARKASH)**

- (a) & (b):** The Department of Consumer Affairs has set up a National Consumer Helpline (NCH) to attend to consumer grievances. NCH takes up the consumer grievances with the companies concerned for resolution by them. On an average, it receives 70,000 grievances per month. As per information received from NCH, details of grievances received during the last three years along with current year relating to online fraud is given below:

Period	Online fraud grievances registered	Total Grievances	% of Online fraud grievances of the total grievance
Apr 2017 – Mar 2018	356	4,55,029	0.078 %
Apr 2018 – Mar 2019	531	5,65,579	0.093 %
Apr 2019 – Mar 2020	1,119	7,41,094	0.15 %
Apr 2020 – Feb 2021	967	6,14,285	0.157 %

- (c):** 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Constitution of India. States/UTs are primarily responsible for prevention, detection, investigation

and prosecution of crimes including cyber crime through their law enforcement machinery. The Law Enforcement Agencies take legal action as per provisions of law against the cyber crime offenders. Therefore, in cases of grievances regarding online frauds, the National Consumer Helpline advises the complainants to approach the local police.

- (d):** Under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, E-Commerce Rules, 2020 have been notified by Central Government for prevention of unfair trade practice in e-commerce and protection of the interest and rights of the consumers. These Rules require e-Commerce entities to establish adequate grievance redressal mechanisms and redress the complaint within one month from the date of receipt.

Furthermore, under the Consumer Protection Act, a three tier quasi-judicial mechanism has been set up at District, State and Central levels for better protection of the interests of consumers and to provide simple and speedy redressal of consumer disputes including online frauds.

The Government has also launched the online National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal, www.cybercrime.gov.in to enable citizens to report complaints pertaining to all types of cyber crimes. A toll-free helpline no. 155260 has been made operational in all States/UTs to assist citizens in lodging online complaints on the Portal in their own language.

To strengthen the mechanism to deal with cyber crimes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, the Central Government has taken steps for spreading awareness about cyber crimes; issuance of alerts/advisories; capacity building/training of law enforcement personnel/prosecutors/ judicial officers; improving cyber forensic facilities; etc.

Primarily, the provisions under Indian Penal Code, 1860 and Information Technology Act, 2000 provide for punishment for activities relating to such frauds.

- (e):** NCH provides an automated grievance redressal platform www.consumerhelpline.gov.in for consumers to register their grievances. It has partnered with more than 600 companies as part of the 'Convergence' programme for effective resolution of the grievances of the consumers. Complaints against those companies, who have not partnered with National Consumer Helpline, are forwarded to the company's email id available on public domain for redressal. NCH also advice consumers on multitude of problems arising in day-to-day dealings with business and service providers. It generates proper awareness among consumers in order to educate them, empower them by protecting themselves from exploitation and also to induce efficiency, transparency and accountability into the entire system.

Further, to cater to the needs of consumers of different regions, six Zonal Consumer Helplines have been set up each at Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Jaipur, Guwahati & Patna to attend to consumer grievances in regional languages.
