

**Government of India
Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Department of Consumer Affairs**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1633
TO BE ANSWERED ON 30.07.2025**

REDRESSAL OF CONSUMER COMPLAINTS

1633. SHRI LUMBARAM CHOUDHARY:

(OIH) SHRI ANURAG SHARMA:

SHRI DINESHBHAI MAKWANA:

SHRI DILIP SAIKIA:

SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO:

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

- (a) the measures taken by the Government to strengthen consumer protection and ensure better redressal of consumer complaints; and
- (b) the initiatives being taken by the Government to make consumers aware of their rights and to protect them from fraud, misleading marketing and low quality products?

ANSWER

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

(a) and (b) : 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. Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was repealed and Consumer Protection Act, 2019 was enacted.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 Central levels 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.

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.

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. It is designed to intervene, to prevent consumer detriment arising from unfair trade practices and to initiate class action(s), including the enforcement of recalls, refunds and return of products. Its core mandate is to prevent and regulate false or misleading advertisements which are prejudicial to the public interest.

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.

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 to strengthen consumer protection, the CCPA enacted the Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Greenwashing and Misleading Environmental Claims, 2024 (effective 15th October 2024), mandating transparency in environmental claims, and the Guidelines for Prevention of Misleading Advertisements in the Coaching Sector, 2024 (effective 13th November 2024), addressing false claims, exaggerated success rates, and unfair practices in coaching institutes.

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. 1,110 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. Complaints against those companies, who have not partnered with National Consumer Helpline, are forwarded to the company for redressal.

The technological transformation of the NCH has significantly boosted its call-handling capacity. The number of calls received by NCH has grown more than tenfold, from 12,553 in December 2015 to 1,55,138 in December 2024. This exponential 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 1,11,951 in 2024. Additionally, grievance registration via WhatsApp has gained momentum, with the percentage of complaints filed through the platform increasing from 3% in March 2023 to 20% in March 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 been implementing a scheme titled “Consumer Awareness”. Under the Scheme, the Department of Consumer Affairs has been conducting countrywide multimedia awareness campaigns titled “Jago Grahak Jago”. Consumers are made aware of unfair trade practices, grievance redressal mechanisms, Hallmarking, ISI products, and various other consumer related issues through various media like TV, radio, cinema theatres, IVRS, fairs & festivals as well as digital media like Youtube etc. Under the scheme, Grant-in-Aid are also provided to States / UTs for carrying out activities on consumer awareness with local content in regional level. The Department has been actively using social media with various creatives, infographics and videos for consumer awareness.
