

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

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4442**  
**TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.08.2025**

**MISLEADING REVIEWS AND RATINGS ON E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS**

4442. SHRI PUSHPENDRA SAROJ:

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of the increasing trend of fake or misleading product reviews and ratings on e-commerce platforms particularly those operating in Uttar Pradesh, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the steps taken by the Government to regulate or verify online reviews to protect consumer interest and ensure transparency;
- (c) whether the Government has engaged with e-commerce companies or issued specific advisory guidelines to address this issue and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the details of the number of consumer complaints received on this matter since 2022, platform-wise;
- (e) whether the Government is considering setting up a centralized review-verification mechanism or penalty framework for platforms promoting misleading content; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) to (f) : 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 Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was repealed and Consumer Protection Act, 2019 was enacted.

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has notified framework on 'Online Consumer Reviews — Principles and Requirements for their Collection, Moderation and Publication' on 23.11.2022 for safeguarding and protecting consumer interest from fake and deceptive reviews in e-commerce. It lays down the process which demonstrates the commitment of consumer review sites that they value their customers and provide reviews that can be trusted. The standard is voluntary and is applicable to every online platform which publishes consumer reviews. The guiding principles of the standard are integrity, accuracy, privacy, security, transparency, accessibility and responsiveness.

"Unfair trade practice" [Section 2(47) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019] encompasses deceptive methods such as misrepresenting product standards, falsely advertising old goods as new, claiming unverified sponsorship or benefits, offering misleading warranties, misrepresenting prices, or disparaging competitors' goods or services. These provisions ensure accountability, transparency and fairness, safeguarding consumer interests in a dynamic marketplace.

Section 2(28) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 defines “misleading advertisement” in relation to any product or service, as an advertisement, which— (i) falsely describes such product or service; or (ii) gives a false guarantee to, or is likely to mislead the consumers as to the nature, substance, quantity or quality of such product or service; or (iii) conveys an express or implied representation which, if made by the manufacturer or seller or service provider thereof, would constitute an unfair trade practice; or (iv) deliberately conceals important information.

The Department of Consumer Affairs has notified the Consumer Protection (E-commerce) Rules, 2020 under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 to safeguard consumers from unfair trade practices in e-commerce. 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 customer grievance redressal.

Further, National Consumer Helpline (NCH) has registered a total number of 1137 grievances pertaining to Fake Reviews from different States/UTs since 2022. Out of these grievances, 136 have been registered from the State of Uttar Pradesh.

The Central Consumer Protection Authority, 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.

A “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 and respect the consumer rights. Aligned with global best practices, this initiative strengthens consumer protection in the e-commerce. So far, 13 major e-Commerce companies including Reliance Retail group, Tata sons group, Zomato, Ola, Swiggy etc. have signed the Safety Pledge for ensuring consumer safety.

In exercise of the powers conferred by section 18 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 (35 of 2019), the Central Consumer Protection Authority has prepared “Draft Guidelines for Prevention, Regulation and Remediation of Fake Online Consumer Reviews, 2024” and circulated to the stakeholders for their comments/inputs. The Department has also hold a meeting with the ecommerce companies regarding adoption of Standard on Fake Reviews.

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