

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2817
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17.12.2025

REGULATION FOR DARK PATTERNS

2817. SHRI GAURAV GOGOI:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the growing use of “dark patterns” on digital platforms that mislead or manipulate consumer decision-making, as highlighted by recent research and civil society organisations and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA)’s advisory issued in 2023 has led to any measurable enforcement actions or compliance improvements by major platforms and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government is considering the issuance of binding regulations, penalties or rules under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 to curb such deceptive design practices; and
- (d) if not, the reasons for relying solely on non-binding advisories despite evidence of continuing consumer harm?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) : To safeguard consumers from unfair trade practices in e-commerce, the Consumer Protection (E-commerce) Rules, 2020 under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 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.

Central Consumer Protection Authority, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 18 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, issued “Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Dark Patterns, 2023” on 30th November, 2023, 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.

In furtherance, Department of Consumer Affairs, engaged with major e-commerce companies, industry associations, Voluntary Consumer Organizations and National Law Universities for eliminating deceptive online practices. As an outcome, “Advisory in terms of Consumer Protection Act, 2019 on Self-Audit by E-Commerce Platforms for detecting the Dark Patterns on their platforms to create a fair, ethical and consumer centric digital ecosystem” was issued by Central Consumer Protection Authority on 5th June, 2025 .

All E-Commerce platforms have been advised to take necessary steps to ensure that their platforms do not engage in such deceptive and unfair trade practice which are in the nature of Dark Patterns. Further, all E-Commerce platforms have been advised to conduct **self-audits** to identify dark patterns, **within three months of the issue of the advisory** and give self-declarations that their platform is not indulging in any dark patterns, in order to ensure fair digital ecosystem along with building trust between consumers and e-commerce platforms. 26 leading e-commerce platforms have voluntarily submitted their self-declaration letters confirming compliance with the Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Dark Patterns, 2023.

A Joint Working Group, comprising representatives from Ministries, National Law Universities and Voluntary Consumer Organizations, has been constituted vide Office Memorandum dated 5th June, 2025 for identifying the dark patterns and stakeholders to work together in creating a transparent, ethical and user-centric online environment .

As per Consumer Protection Act, 2019 under Section 21 (2), Central Government is vested with powers to impose a penalty in respect of false or misleading advertisements by a manufacturer or endorser, which may extend to ten lakh rupees and for every subsequent contravention the penalty may extend to fifty lakh rupees.
