

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 624 (OIH)
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.12.2025**

CONSUMER PROTECTION

624. SHRI DARSHAN SINGH CHOUDHARY:

(OIH)

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

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

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

(a) & (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in the new era of globalization, technologies, e-commerce markets etc., the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was repealed and Consumer Protection Act, 2019 was enacted.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 National level 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, an “Advisory for 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 also issued by the CCPA on 5th June, 2025.

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. 1169 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.

The technological transformation of the NCH has significantly boosted its call-handling capacity. The number of calls received by NCH has grown from 70,159 in October, 2019 to 3,08,130 in October, 2025. This 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 1,42,605 in 2025 [as on 31.10.2025]. Additionally, grievance registration via WhatsApp has gained momentum, with the percentage of complaints filed through the platform increasing from 11% in October, 2023 to 30% in October, 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 taken steps to align the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) with the Next-Gen GST Reforms 2025 and introduced a dedicated GST grievance redressal category on the NCH to address consumer queries and complaints related to revised GST rates and exemptions. An Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) in 15 languages has also been deployed on toll-free number 1915 of the helpline to inform consumers in queue about the other available modes for lodging grievances. NCH has put in place a mechanism to address all the grievances received on the helpline portal.

The Department of Consumer Affairs has been implementing a scheme titled “Consumer Awareness” scheme to generate consumer awareness and empower the consumers under the aegis of “Jago Grahak Jago” campaign. Under Consumer Awareness Scheme, Department has been generating awareness about various consumer related issues including fraud, misleading marketing and low quality products using popular social media platforms . Infographics in the form of creatives and videos have been posted regularly on these platforms to create awareness among Consumers regarding fraud, misleading marketing and low quality products.
