

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4193
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18.03.2026

GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL AND ENFORCEMENT OF QUALITY STANDARDS

4193. SHRI PRAVEEN PATEL:
SHRI P P CHAUDHARY:
SHRI SHANKAR LALWANI:
SMT. MALA RAJYA LAXMI SHAH:
SHRI KHAGEN MURMU:

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

- (a) whether there has been a significant surge in complaints related to food adulteration specifically for milk products, spices and edible oils on the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) in the first quarter of 2026;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the manner in which the Ministry collaborating with the Ministry of Health to ensure that the 12,057 legal cases launched against defaulting food business operators in Financial Year 2024- 25 result in timely compensation for affected consumers;
- (d) the details of the steps are being taken by the Government to integrate the e-Jagriti portal with State-level food safety labs to allow consumers to track the testing status of samples they have flagged as suspect; and
- (e) the manner in which the 'Jago Grahak Jago' campaign being repurposed in 2026 to educate rural consumers on using the 305 'Food Safety on Wheels' mobile labs to check for common adulterants like detergent and starch?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e) : 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 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. 1,398 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 details of complaints related to food adulteration registered on NCH during the period January 2026 to February 2026 and January 2025 to February 2025 are as follows:

Duration	No. of complaints registered
January 2026 to February 2026	250
January 2025 to February 2025	331

The Department regularly monitors grievance data received on the helpline and holds meetings with the concerned Ministries, Departments and Regulators including the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to strengthen the grievance redressal mechanism and ensure timely resolution of consumer complaints.

FSSAI operates a dedicated consumer grievance portal on FoSCoS which is an online grievance redressal mechanism (<https://foscos.fssai.gov.in/consumergrievance/>). Consumers can register complaints on the portal upon which a unique code/ticket number is generated and communicated to the consumer through SMS on the registered mobile number. As per the online system, the complaint is first forwarded to the concerned Food Business Operator (FBO). If the consumer is not satisfied with the response of the FBO or in cases where the FBO fails to respond, the complaint is escalated to the respective State/ Central Food Authority for subsequent action.

During the Financial Year 2024-25, a total of 12,057 legal cases were launched under the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the rules made thereunder in courts of law. This includes 11,358 civil cases (Adjudication) and 699 criminal cases (Prosecution).

In the same year, 8,636 civil cases were decided with penalty and 179 criminal cases resulted in conviction. Accordingly, the penalties imposed by the respective courts amounted to ₹ 36,43,90,416/- in civil cases and ₹ 28,23,001/- in criminal cases, respectively. This also includes cases launched in previous years and not exclusively from Financial Year 2024-25.

The Department has launched “e-Jagriti” portal on 1st January, 2025, which aims to enhance consumer grievance redressal through Artificial Intelligence / Machine Learning integration and modern features like faceless onboarding and role-based dashboards. It unifies existing applications (OCMS, e-Daakhil, NCDRC CMS, CONFONET) into a single, scalable platform, allowing users to file complaints seamlessly from anywhere with multilingual support. The portal is designed to provide a convenient, transparent and efficient means for consumers to seek redressal by enabling online complaint filing, digital submission of documents, online payment of fees and also supports virtual courtrooms, enabling the hearing of cases remotely and ensuring faster disposal while reducing dependency on physical infrastructure. These features address bottlenecks like geographical barriers, scheduling conflicts and manual interventions. e-Jagriti has reduced reliance on physical proceedings and has accelerated justice delivery.

The Department has been conducting country-wide multimedia awareness campaigns under the aegis of “Jago Grahak Jago” under the Consumer Awareness Scheme. Consumers are made aware of unfair trade practices, hallmarking, grievance redressal mechanisms and various other consumer related issues through all media including electronic, digital, outdoor & social media and through participation in fairs and festivals. Under the scheme, grants-in-aid are also provided by the Department to States/UTs for carrying out activities on consumer awareness with local content at the regional level. The Department has also been conducting virtual interactions with panchayats of all States/UTs to generate awareness at the grassroots level.
