

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.736
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.02.2026

CONSUMER PROTECTION THROUGH DIGITAL ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS

736. SMT. KAMALJEET SEHRAWAT:
SHRI PRAVEEN PATEL:
SHRI JUGAL KISHORE:

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

- (a) the details of the technology-enabled and digital initiatives undertaken by the Government to strengthen consumer justice delivery;
- (b) the achievements recorded under these initiatives in terms of number of consumer cases disposed, virtual hearings conducted, refunds facilitated and grievances resolved under these initiatives particularly in Jammu and Kashmir during the last year; and
- (c) the details and the outcomes of regulatory and enforcement actions taken by the Central Consumer Protection Authority to curb unfair trade practices and enhance transparency and trust in consumer markets across the country particularly in Jammu and Kashmir?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c) : The “e-Jagriti” portal launched by the Department of Consumer Affairs on 1st January, 2025 aims to enhance consumer grievance redressal through a micro-service architecture, 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 system streamlines grievance redressal processes with real-time data access, automated workflows and tools for stakeholders like judges and advocates. The platform offers digital case filing, document exchange and automated SMS/email notifications. Features include a chatbot help system, voice-to-text capabilities and accessibility support for the visually challenged and elderly. 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.

During 2025, 1,701 consumer cases have been filed before the Jammu & Kashmir Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions, of which 1,436 have been disposed of. Out of these 1,701 cases, 504 cases were heard through virtual hearing.

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. 1,185 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 62,172 calls in December 2019 to 3,59,336 calls in December 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 1,47,635 in 2025 [as on 31.12.2025]. Additionally, grievance registration via WhatsApp has gained momentum, with the percentage of complaints filed through the platform increasing from 12% in December 2023 to 21% in December 2025 demonstrating a growing preference for digital communication channels.

NCH 2.0 aims 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 National Consumer Helpline (NCH) has successfully facilitated refund of ₹46 crore to consumers between 25th April 2025 and 31st December 2025. This significant redressal was achieved across 31 sectors, effectively addressing 69,058 consumer grievances related to refund claims.

During the last year, 12,662 complaints were registered in Jammu and Kashmir on NCH, of which 12,022 were disposed of.

Under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) is empowered to intervene for preventing consumer detriment arising from unfair trade practices through issuance of guidelines and class action(s), including the enforcement of recalls, refunds and return of products. It has the mandate to prevent and regulate false or misleading advertisements which are prejudicial to the public interest.

The CCPA has 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.

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.

An “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 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. 27 leading e-commerce platforms have voluntarily submitted their self-declaration letters confirming compliance with the Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Dark Patterns, 2023.

Section 19 (2) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides that if the Central Authority, upon determining that a particular matter falls within the jurisdiction of a Regulator established under any other law for the time being in force, may refer the matter to the respective Regulator, accompanied by its report. The CCPA's role is to complement sector regulators in a way that it avoids duplication, overlap or potential conflict. As such, the matters relating to other Ministries/Regulators/Authorities are forwarded to the concerned by the Central Authority for appropriate action in the matter, as per their mandate and extant rules.

Guidelines issued by CCPA

- (i) Guidelines for Prevention of Misleading Advertisements and Endorsements for Misleading Advertisements, 2022 were issued on 09th June, 2022
- (ii) Guidelines that hotels and restaurants shall not levy service charge issued on 4th July, 2022.
- (iii) Guidelines on Prevention of Dark Pattern 2023 were issued on 30th November, 2023
- (iv) Guidelines for the Prevention and Regulation of Greenwashing, 2024 were issued 15th October, 2024
- (v) Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Misleading Advertisement in Coaching Sector 2024 were issued 13th November, 2024
- (vi) Guidelines for the Prevention and Regulation of Illegal Listing and Sale of Radio Equipment including Walkie Talkies on E-Commerce Platforms, 2025 were issued on 27.05.2025.

Advisories Issued by CCPA

- (i) CCPA 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 dated 05.06.2025.
- (ii) Advisory in terms of Consumer Protection Act, 2019, on risk to life & safety of consumers through sale of car seat belt alarm stopper.
- (iii) Advisory in terms of Consumer Protection Act, 2019 concerning sale of Ayurvedic, Siddha and Unani Drugs containing ingredients listed in Schedule (E) (1) of the Drug and Cosmetic Rules, 1945 on e-commerce platforms.
- (iv) Advisory in terms of Consumer Protection Act 2019 concerning illegal facilitation and sale of wireless jammers on e-commerce platforms
- (v) Advisory in terms of Consumer Protection (E-commerce) Rules, 2020 for displaying information provided by sellers to marketplace e-commerce platforms
- (vi) Advisory in terms of Consumer Protection, 2019 for resorting to misleading advertisements.
