

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1800
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.12.2025

URGENT ISSUES RELATED TO CONSUMER AFFAIRS IN BORDER BELT REGIONS OF AMRITSAR

1800. SHRI GURJEET SINGH AUJLA:

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

- (a) whether the Government has conducted assessment of consumer rights violations, unfair trade practices and price exploitation in border regions and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government ensures strict enforcement of quality standards and food safety regulations for essential food items especially in dairy, grains and packaged goods;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the details of the steps taken by the Government to curb smuggling and counterfeit goods from across the border significantly impact local businesses and consumers;
- (e) whether the prices of essential commodities often fluctuate sharply in border regions especially in Amritsar and nearby areas due to supply chain challenges and if so, the details thereof including the remedial measures taken by the Union Government in this regard;
- (f) whether the Union Government has a special consumer affairs strategy for border regions to ensure that citizens are not exploited by unfair trade practices, adulteration or illegal market activities; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(a) to (g) : Department of Consumer Affairs is continuously working for protection and empowerment of consumers by enactment of progressive legislations. With a view to modernize the framework governing consumer protection in the era of globalization, technologies, e-commerce markets etc., the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 was enacted.

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. As of 04.12.2025, a total of 13,350 consumer cases have been filed before the Amritsar District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, of which 11,299 cases have been disposed of.

Section 90 and 91 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provide for punishment for manufacturing for sale or for storing or selling or for distributing or importing any product containing an adulterant or spurious goods, which includes imprisonment or fine depending on the extent of injury to the consumer.

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.

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 Punjabi 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.

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.

Department of Consumer Affairs monitors the daily prices of 38 essential food commodities submitted by 575 price monitoring centres (including 12 in Punjab) across the country. The daily price report of Amritsar price monitoring centre is at **Annexure**. The daily report of prices and indicative price trends are duly analysed for taking appropriate decisions such as release of stocks from the buffer, stock disclosure by stockholding entities, imposition of stock limits, changes in trade policy instruments like rationalisation of import duty, changes in import quota, restrictions on exports of the commodity etc. Government keeps a close watch on the production and availability of essential commodities through regular reviews by the Inter Ministerial Committee (IMC). The Committee reviews, on regular basis, the situation of prices and price trends of essential agri-horticulture commodities and suggests measures to enhance availability through increased domestic production and through imports.

In order to tackle the volatility in prices, Government maintains buffer stocks of pulses and onion for market interventions through calibrated and targeted release to moderate the prices in the market. Part of the stock of pulses from the buffer were converted to dals for retail sale to the consumers at affordable prices under the Bharat Dal brand during 2023-24 and 2024-25. Similarly, atta and rice are distributed to retail consumers under Bharat brand at subsidized prices. In 2025-26, onion from the buffer had been released from 4th September, 2025 in a calibrated and targeted manner to moderate prices in high price consuming centres at wholesale markets and through retail outlets. These measures have helped in making essential food commodities available to the general consumers at affordable prices.

Also, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is mandated to lay down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption. In order to achieve this mandate, FSSAI through State/UTs food safety authorities including border states and its Regional Offices, conduct regular surveillance, monitoring, inspection and random sampling of food products including dairy and food grains to check compliance of said standards as per the provisions of Food Safety and Standards Act 2006, Rules and Regulations made thereunder. Further, FSSAI also monitors imported food in India through a risk-based system. Authorized officers appointed by the FSSAI ensure compliance with the FSS rules and regulations as per the procedures mentioned in the FSS (Import) Regulations, 2017. In cases where Food Business Operators (FBOs) are found responsible for violations, appropriate legal action is initiated.

Border Security Force (BSF) deployed in Punjab border is aware of the challenges posed by cross border smuggling activities and several preemptive / proactive measures have been taken to forbid these threats. Surveillance equipment, such as CCTV / PTZ cameras are placed strategically to ensure 24X7 surveillance of vulnerable patches. Anti-drone systems have been deployed to neutralize counterpart drones. Depth patrolling/Naka and Mobile Check Post (MCP) in depth area, joint patrolling Ops with local police is carried out, perpetually. In addition, BSF conducts awareness campaigns in border villages to involve local communities.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (G) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1800 FOR 10.12.2025 REGARDING URGENT ISSUES RELATED TO CONSUMER AFFAIRS IN BORDER BELT REGIONS OF AMRITSAR

Commodities	Unit	Price As On	1 Day	1 Week	1 Month
		02/12/2025	01/12/2025	25/11/2025	02/11/2025
Rice	1 Kg	40	40	40	40
Wheat	1 Kg	28	28	28	28
Atta (Wheat)	1 Kg	32	32	32	32
Gram Dal	1 Kg	87	87	87	83
Tur/Arhar Dal	1 Kg	118	118	118	118
Urad Dal	1 Kg	132	132	132	132
Moong Dal	1 Kg	115	115	115	115
Masoor Dal	1 Kg	92	92	92	92
Groundnut Oil (Packed)	1 Kg	220	220	220	220
Mustard Oil (Packed)	1 Kg	198	198	198	198
Vanaspati (Packed)	1 Kg	165	165	165	165
Soya Oil (Packed)	1 Kg	150	150	150	150
Sunflower Oil (Packed)	1 Kg	188	188	188	188
Palm Oil (Packed)	1 Kg	NR	NR	NR	NR
Potato	1 Kg	20	23	25	22
Onion	1 Kg	25	25	26	25
Tomato	1 Kg	53	55	72	30
Sugar	1 Kg	46	46	46	45
Gur	1 Kg	57	57	57	57
Milk @	1 Ltr	57	57	57	57
Tea Loose	1 Kg	277	277	277	275
Salt Pack (Iodised)	1 Kg	29	29	29	30
Bajra (whole)	1 Kg	36	36	36	37
Jowar (whole)	1 Kg	39	39	39	39
Maida (wheat)	1 Kg	40	40	40	40
Ragi (whole)	1 kg	58	58	58	58
Suji (whole)	1 Kg	40	40	40	40
Besan	1 Kg	95	95	95	97
Desi Ghee	1 Kg	663	663	663	666
Butter (Pasteurised)	100 gm	59	59	59	59
Eggs	1 Dozen	89	89	87	79
Brinjal	1 Kg	40	40	40	42
Black Pepper (whole)	100 gm	92	92	92	95
Coriander (whole)	250 gm	38	38	38	37
Cummin Seed (whole)	100 gm	30	30	30	30
Red Chillies (whole)	100 gm	29	29	29	29
Turmeric (powder)	50 gm	13	13	13	13
Banana	1 Kg	45	45	45	43

Source:- State Civil Supplies Deptt.
