

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1649
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.07.2026

**CONSUMER PROTECTION AGAINST MISLEADING DIGITAL ADVERTISEMENTS AND
INFLUENCER CLAIMS**

1649. SHRI ARVIND DHARMAPURI:

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

- (a) whether the Government maintains data on complaints relating to misleading online advertisements including on Social Media, influencer endorsements and false product claims;
- (b) if so, the number of such complaints received and action taken by the Government during the last five years, category-wise;
- (c) whether celebrities, influencers or endorsers have been proceeded against for misleading claims; and
- (d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to strengthen consumer awareness and enforcement in digital marketplaces?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) : The Department of Consumer Affairs has strengthened the consumer protection framework through the enactment of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, to effectively address emerging challenges arising from globalization, technological advancements and e-commerce.

The Central Authority i.e. Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has been established under Section 10 (1) of Consumer Protection Act, 2019 to regulate matters relating to violation of rights of consumers, unfair trade practices and false or misleading advertisements which are prejudicial to the interests of public and consumers and to promote, protect and enforce the rights of consumers as a class.

To safeguard consumers from unfair trade practices in e-commerce, the Department of Consumer Affairs has also 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 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) duties of manufacturer, service provider, advertiser and advertising agency. According to these Guidelines endorser, social media endorser/virtual endorsers includes an individual or a group or an institution making endorsement of any goods, product or service in an advertisement whose opinion, belief, finding or experience being the message which such advertisement appears to reflect. These Guidelines state 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.

Under Section 21 of the Act, CCPA is empowered to impose penalties and issue directions for discontinuation of misleading advertisements and unfair trade practices to an extent of ₹10 lakhs. For every subsequent contravention the Central Authority is empowered to impose a penalty which may extend to ₹ 50 lakhs. The amount of penalty is determined taking into account the facts and circumstances of each case and in line with the provisions of the Act.

In order to further curtail misleading advertisements and in compliance to Hon'ble Supreme Court's Order dated 07.05.2024, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has launched a new feature on Broadcast Seva Portal for TV/Radio advertisements and Press Council of India Portal for print/internet advertisements respectively for uploading of Self-Declaration Certificate (SDC). The Ministry issued an advisory on 03.07.2024 advising Advertisers/Advertising Agencies to upload an annual SDC for advertisement related to products and services related to 'Food & Health sectors', published across various media platforms i.e. print/electronic/internet on the above-mentioned portals.
