

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

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 907**  
**TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.02.2024**

**PROLIFERATION OF DARK PATTERNS**

907. SHRI RAVIKUMAR D.:

Will the Minister of **CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION**  
**उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry is cognizant of the proliferation of dark patterns on e-Commerce platforms and other platforms which include a wide range of manipulative practices including bait and click and other privacy concerns;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government plans to collaborate with the other Government agencies, consumer advocacy groups, or industry stakeholders to address the issue of dark patterns, if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the details of the specific measures that have been proposed or considered by the Ministry in response to the rise of dark patterns across various sectors, such as online shopping, e-ticketing, restaurants and travel that infringe on consumer rights?

**ANSWER**

**उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण राज्य मंत्री**  
**(श्री अश्विनी कुमार चौबे)**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE**  
**CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION**  
**(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)**

(a) to (d) : Dark patterns involve using design and choice architecture to deceive, coerce, or influence consumers into making choices that are not in their best interest. Dark patterns encompass a wide range of manipulative practices such as drip pricing, disguised advertisement, bait and switch, false urgency etc. Such practices fall under the category of "unfair trade practices" as defined under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

The Central Consumer Protection Authority, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 18 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 has, following consultations with relevant stakeholders, 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.

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 customer grievance redressal.

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has notified framework on 'Online Consumer Reviews — Principles and Requirements for their Collection, Moderation and Publication' on 23.11.2022 for safeguarding and protecting consumer interest from fake and deceptive reviews in e-commerce. The standards are voluntary and are applicable to every online platform which publishes consumer reviews. The guiding principles of the standard are integrity, accuracy, privacy, security, transparency, accessibility and responsiveness.

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