

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:37
ANSWERED ON:27.07.2010
PENDING CONSUMER CASES
Thamaraiselvan Shri R.

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

- (a) whether there is a huge backlog of consumer cases pending before the District/State/National Consumer Commissions;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto alongwith the details of the pending cases before various such fora;
- (c) whether the Government has made any assessment/study on the reasons for the growing pendency of consumer cases alongwith the rate of fresh receipt and disposal of such cases;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the details of the steps taken for the clearance of the backlog of cases pending before various consumer fora including the National Commission in addition to speedier disposal of fresh cases alongwith setting up of new benches at the District, State and National levels?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.37 FOR 27.07.2010 REGARDING PENDING CONSUMER CASES.

(a) & (b): No Madam. According to the information compiled by National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC), 89.24% of the cases filed in District/State/National Commission have been disposed. The details are as given below:-

Name of Agency	Cases filed since inception	Cases disposed since inception	Cases Pending	Cases Disposal	% of total
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National Commission	65017	56664	8353	87.15%
State Commissions	510652	402522	108130	78.83%
District Forums	2852787	2600463	252324	91.16%
TOTAL	3428456	3059649	368807	89.24%

Thus, the performance of the three levels of Consumer Forums can be considered as satisfactory. The details of the cases filed/disposed off pending in the National Commission & State Commission and District Fora are at Annexure A & B.

(c) & (d): The Government has not made any such specific assessment/study.

(e) : The details of steps taken are as follows:-

(i) The Consumer Protection Act has been amended three times in the year 1991, 1993 and 2002. The Consumer Protection (Amendment) Act, 2002 specifically provided for enabling the senior most Member to preside over the Consumer Fora if the President is absent for any reason, setting up of additional benches in National Commission and State Commissions establishing Circuit Benches of National Commission/State Commissions and providing for reappointment of President/Members of Consumer Fora.

(ii) The Central Government has been advising State Government to take advance action for filling up expected vacancies of President and Members. They have also been advised that wherever required, adjacent Fora can be clubbed together.

(iii) The report on cases disposal by Consumer Fora is sought by National Commission monthly. The National Commission holds annual conference of the Presidents of the State Commissions and Secretaries In-charge, Consumer Affairs of the State Governments/UTs to evaluate the functioning of the Consumer Forums in the country.

(iv) Some of the State Commissions and District Fora are adopting the process of holding Lok Adalats for speedy disposal of the cases. The National Commission has also started holding Lok Adalat.

(v) The National Commission also holds Circuit Bench sittings as per the provisions of Section 22C of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986. So far, the National Commission has held Circuit Bench sittings at Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Pune, and Kolkata.

(vi) The following State Commission have set up Circuit Benches or Additional Benches

(a) Gujarat 03 Additional Benches

(b) Maharashtra Circuit Bench at Nagpur & Aurangabad

(c) Uttar Pradesh 01 Additional Bench

(d) West Bengal 01 Additional Bench

(e) Madhya Pradesh 01 Additional Bench

(f) Punjab 01 Additional Bench

(vii) The National Commission at present has a strength of nine Members and one President. The Central Government has recently sanctioned appointment of two more Members for one additional Bench for the National Commission for a period of five year with the objective of disposal of pending cases.

(viii) Financial assistance is being provided by the Central Government to the States/UTs for strengthening of infrastructure of State Commissions and Consumer Fora. 'CONFONET' scheme for computerization and networking of all the Consumer Fora across the country is also being implemented with assistance from Central Government.