

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1201
ANSWERED ON:16.11.2010
DISPOSAL OF CONSUMER CASES
Naranbhai Shri Kachhadia

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

- (a) the number of fresh cases registered in various district consumer courts in the country during 2010;
- (b) the number of pending cases and the rank of Gujarat in this regard as on January 1,2010;
- (c) the number of cases out of the total pending cases disposed of during 2010;
- (d) whether the said number was higher than the freshly registered cases;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether there is inordinate delay in the disposal of consumer cases; and
- (g) if so, the remedial steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K. V. THOMAS)

(a): As per available information furnished in this regard by the National Commission, the number of fresh cases filed in the district Consumer Fora in the country during 2010 is 52238. This information pertains to 14 States & UTs.

(b): As on 01.01.2010, 26593 cases were pending in the Consumer Fora in Gujarat, i.e. 4564 in State Commission and 22029 in District Fora. There is no system of ascribing ranks to States in this regard.

(c) to (e): A statement showing the cases filed and disposed off during the year 2010 in consumer fora in Gujarat is enclosed as Annexure - 'I'. As may be seen therefrom, the total number of cases disposed of in Gujarat State Commission as well as District Forums are higher than the number of cases filed in the year 2010 in Gujarat State Commission and District Forums.

(f) & (g): It has been noticed that there are delays in disposal of cases, in consumer fora across the country. Accordingly, various steps are being taken for speedy disposal of consumer cases, pending before the Consumer Fora. The important steps are as under:-

(i) Financial assistance is being provided to the States/UTs for strengthening their infrastructure. 'CONFONET' scheme for computerization and networking of Consumer Fora across the country is also being implemented which is expected to bring about systematization of Consumer Fora and improve their efficiency.

(ii) With an objective to facilitate the Fora in quicker disposal of cases, several provisions were made through Consumer Protection (Amendment) Act, 2002 which included enabling the Senior Most Member to preside over the Consumer Fora if the President is absent for any reasons, establishment of Circuit Benches of National Commission/State Commissions and providing for reappointment of President/Members of Consumer Fora.

(iii) The Central Government has been requesting State Governments 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. Benches can also be established in Consumer Fora, as required.

(iv) The State Govts have been advised that the Consumer Fora should also resort to Lok Adalat method for disposing off long pending complaints.

(v) In addition the National Commission also takes the following steps for speedy disposal of cases in the Consumer Forum.

(A) The Hon'ble President of the National Commission regularly writes letters to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of States to meet the shortcomings in the Consumer Fora, particularly with regard to appointment of President/ Members in the State Commissions, providing sufficient staff and infrastructure etc. as well as interacts with the Presidents of the State Commissions to get the first hand information

regarding functioning of the State Commissions & District Forums, pendency of the cases and the difficulties faced by them.

(B) The National Commission also advises the State Commissions and District Forums to adopt the process of holding Lok Adalats for speedy disposal of the cases. The National Commission also holds Circuit Bench sittings as per the provisions of Section 22 C of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, for rendering speedy justice at the doorsteps of the consumers of that particular State. So far, the National Commission has held Circuit Bench sittings at Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Pune, and Kolkata.

(C) In the following States Circuit Benches / Additional Benches are functioning

(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

(D) In addition to the existing five Benches of the National Commission, the Central Government has recently sanctioned one additional bench for the National Commission for a period of five years for disposing off backlog of pending cases.

ANNEXURE - I

STATEMENT REFERRED IN REPLY TO PARTS (c) to (e) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1201 FOR 16.11.2010 REGARDING DISPOSAL OF CONSUMER CASES.

Cases Disposed off during 2010 in Consumer Courts in Gujarat Upto 31.08.2010

Consumer Courts in Gujarat Cases Filed Cases Disposed

State Commission	2019	2177
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District Forums	6163	8599
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Total	8182	10776
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