

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2292
ANSWERED ON:27.03.2012
REVIEW OF CONSUMER FORA
Sugumar Shri K. ;Yadav Shri M. Anjan Kumar

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

- (a) the number of consumer fora operating in the country including Andhra Pradesh, State-wise;
- (b) the details of cases disposed of by the said fora during each of the last three years alongwith the number of cases pending with the fora in the current year, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has recently reviewed the functioning of the consumer fora in the country;
- (d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and
- (e) the steps being taken to improve the performance/working of consumers fora in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K. V. THOMAS)

- (a): The number of Consumer Fora functioning in the Country as on 29.02.2012 is at Annexure-1.
- (b): The State-wise details of cases filed and disposed by the Consumer For a during each of the last three years and the current year is at Annexure - II.
- (c) & (d): The Central Government reviews regularly the functioning of the Consumer Fora in the country through Periodical (Quarterly/Monthly) Reports on Consumer Protection Measures received from States/UTs and defaulting States/UTs are requested to take remedial action for the same.
- (e) : The following steps,inter-alia,have been taken to improve the performance/working of Consumer Fora in the country :
 - (i) Consumer Protection (Amendment) Bill, 2011 has been introduced in the Lok Sabha on 16.12.2011. In this bill provisions have been made for empowering the Consumer fora for faster decision on Disposal of cases, Simplifying selection procedure, Online Filing of Applications and Strengthening of Penalty Provisions
 - (ii) The State Governments have been requested from time to time to take action well in advance for filling up of vacancies of President and Members and to maintain a panel of candidates for filling up of future vacancies also to avoid delays in appointments. The Central Government has also requested State Governments that wherever required, adjacent Fora may be clubbed together so that functioning of Consumer Fora is not affected due to any temperory absence or vacancy.
 - (iii) In order to dispose of the pending cases, Circuit Benches from National Commission have been frequently visiting States. So far, the National Commission has held Circuit Bench sittings at Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Pune, Kolkata, Ernakulam, Ahmedabad and Bhopal. Some State Commissions have constituted Additional Benches mainly to dispose off backlog of pending cases.
 - (iv) Financial assistance is provided by the Central Government to the States/UTs for strengthening of infrastructure of Consumer Fora (Building as well as Non-Building Assets). The Computerization and Computer Networking of all the Consumer Fora across the country is also being implemented through NIC under the `CONFONET` . Scheme.
 - (v) 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.