

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:457
ANSWERED ON:07.07.2009
SETTING UP OF CONSUMER FORA
Rawat Shri Ashok Kumar

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

- (a) whether consumer courts/fora have been set up at the State and district level;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Central Government provides any assistance to the State Governments for setting up the said courts/fora;
- (d) if so, the funds allocated for the purpose during each of the last three years, State-wise;
- (e) the number of cases registered, disposed of and pending in the courts/fora at National, State and district level, Statewise; and
- (f) the reasons for pendency and the effective steps proposed to be taken for early disposal of these cases?

Answer

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

(a): Yes, Madam. In pursuance with the provisions of Section 9 of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, all State/UT Governments have established Consumer Disputes Redressal Forums or consumer fora at State & District level called State Commission and District Forum respectively.

(b): The State-wise details of State Commission and District Fora established by States/UTs are indicated at Annexure-I.

(c): Setting up of consumer fora at the district and State level is the responsibility of the State/UT Government.

However, in order to supplement the efforts of the States, the Central Government has extended financial assistance to States for strengthening the infrastructure of consumer fora.

(d): The details of financial assistance released during the last three years for the purpose of strengthening the infrastructure of consumer fora State-wise are at Annexure-II.

(e): State wise details of numbers of cases filed, disposed of and pending in the Consumer Fora at National, State and District level are indicated at Annexure-III.

(f): Increase in pendency of cases is usually due to consumer fora remaining non functional due to non-filling up of vacancies of President/Members for long periods of time. Other reasons for pendency of cases are shortage of staff, inadequacy of infrastructure and increase in filing of cases due to growing consumer awareness. In order to ensure uninterrupted functioning of Consumer Fora and reduce the pendency of cases, the Central Government has been impressing upon the State/UT Governments to take the following measures:-

- i) Take advance action for filling up of vacant posts.
- ii) Maintain a panel of candidates for filling up of vacant posts.
- iii) Clubbing together of neighbouring District Fora, wherever required.
- iv) Follow Lok Adalat Pattern, wherever possible, for disposing of pending cases.
- v) Provide adequate staff and infrastructural facilities to Consumer Fora.

Further more, the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 has been amended in 2002 to provide for the senior most Member of the State Commission or the District Forum to preside over the Forum in the absence of the President, due to any reason, so that the Consumer Forum continues to function. These measures result in speedier disposal of cases. Also as indicated at (d) above the Central Govt. has also been providing financial assistance to States for strengthening infrastructure of the Consumer Fora so that the facilities, required for their effective functioning, are made available to each consumer forum.