

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:741  
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2013  
CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT  
Meghwal Shri Arjun Ram

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

- (a) the salient features of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986;
- (b) whether the Government has reviewed the said Act to assess its efficacy in promoting and protecting consumer rights; and
- (c) if so, the details and the outcome thereof indicating the areas identified for reform?

**Answer**

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

(a) : The followings, among others, are the salient features of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986:

# The Act Provides for better protection of the interests of the consumers;

# The Act contains the provisions for right to be informed about the quality, quantity, potency, purity, standard and price of goods to protect the consumer against unfair trade practices;

# It contains right to be protected against marketing of goods which are hazardous to life and property;

# It provides for speedy and simple redressal to consumer disputes; a quasi judicial machinery have been placed at District, State and Central level, which observe the principle of natural justice and have been empowered to give relief of a specific nature and to award, wherever appropriate, compensation to the consumers. Penalties for the non-compliance of the orders given by the quasi-judicial bodies have also been provided.

(b) & (c): The Government had engaged Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi to conduct a study on "Evaluation of the Impact and Effectiveness of Consumer Protection Act, 1986". The recommendations in the study report and areas identified for reform are as follows:

(i) Each State Government should set up at least a Directorate of Consumer Affairs to begin with, followed by full-fledged Department. Consumer Protection Council down to District level is to be strengthened.

(ii) 'CONFONET' Project is to be speeded up for retrieval of Data on all India basis. State Commissions and District Commissions should have their websites.

(iii) Members appointed to District Fora should qualify a written test.

(iv) A process of filling up vacancy in State/District Fora should be under taken well in advance. To attract better talent uniform pay scale of all the members of the State Commissions and District Forum should be fixed.

(v) To tide over the increasing volume of cases more benches are to be set up at the level of State Commission. State Commission should be given more power to supervise the functioning of District Fora which lack discipline.

(vi) District Forums should be encouraged to organize Lok Adalat to dispose of pending cases. Appearance of lawyers should be banned except in some special cases.

(vii) Remedy available under special law should not come in conflict with the remedy available in the Consumer Protection Act.

(viii) Awareness campaign for consumer rights using electronic and print media is to be launched. VCOs, which play a major role in educating consumers, should be funded. Mediation Centre is to be set up to resolve consumer complaints.