

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3852

ANSWERED ON:16.12.2014

CONSUMER CASES .

Godse Shri Hemant Tukaram;Gupta Shri Sudheer;Hari Shri G.;Jadhav Shri Prataprao Ganpatrao;Kalvakuntla Smt. Kavitha;Kashyap Shri Dinesh;Kataria Shri Rattan Lal;Khaire Shri Chandrakant Bhaurao;Mullappally Shri Ramachandran;Pradhan Shri Nagendra Kumar;Radhakrishnan Shri T.;Sawaikar Shri Advocate Narendra Keshav;Singh Shri Rajveer (Raju Bhaiya)

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

(a) the number of consumer courts in the country along with the number of consumer cases registered, disposed and pending during each of the last three years and the current year and the steps taken for its timely disposal, State/UT-wise;

(b) whether inadequate infrastructure and vacancies in the Consumer Fora have adversely affected the disposal of cases, if so, the details thereof indicating the number of vacancies reported during the said period and the corrective steps taken in this regard, State/UT-wise;

(c) whether the Government has assessed the functioning and efficacy of the Consumer Fora; if so, the details and the outcome thereof;

(d) whether the Government proposes to create additional benches to clear the backlog cases, if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon including the other steps taken to bring down the number of pending cases in Consumer Courts; and

(e) whether the Government proposes to amend the Consumer Act to make it more stringent and expand its scope, if so, the details thereof indicating the new products and services proposed to be covered thereunder?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB PATIL DANVE)

(a): Madam, there are 644 District Fora, 35 State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission and One National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) in the country. The number of cases registered, disposed and pending during each of last three years and current year are given in Annexure I.

The Government has taken the following action for its timely disposal:-

(1) 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 delay in appointments.

(2) Circuit Benches from National Commission have been frequently visiting States.

(3) Some State Commissions have constituted Additional Benches mainly to dispose off backlog of pending cases.

(4) The National Commission and some of the State Commissions as well as District Fora are adopting the process of holding LokAdalats for speedy disposal of the cases.

(5) Financial assistance is provided by the Central Government to the States/UTs for strengthening of infrastructure of Consumer Fora including computerization and networking.

(b): Vacancies in Consumer Courts is one of the reasons which has adversely affected disposal of cases. The detail of vacancies reported State-wise is given at Annexure II.

The Government advises the state Governments 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 delay in appointments.

(c): Yes, Madam, The Government had instituted a study through Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi in 2012. The study revealed the following standing in the way of efficacy of Consumer Fora:

i) Involvement of lawyers in District Forum;

ii) Inadequate lab testing facility;

iii) Problem in execution of the orders of the District Forum;

iv) Because of small compensation, consumers lose interest in the case;

v) Lack of capacity of the members to adjudicate the case;

Lack of infrastructure/man-power.

(d): The Government notifies the sitting of Circuit benches as and when requested by National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission. The list of Circuit benches already notified is at Annexure III.

(e): Yes, Madam. The Government is consulting with all stake holders for amendment of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, but no final view has been taken. Consumers buying through new modes like e-commerce, teleshopping, on-line shopping are proposed to be covered thereunder.