

728 Consumer Commissions established at State and District level: MoS

By TIOL News Service

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Union Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Ashwini Kumar Choubey in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha yesterday informed that at present, the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission is established at national level and 728 Consumer Commissions have been established at State and District level in the country.

Under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, a consumer can file consumer complaint in Consumer Commission of appropriate jurisdiction offline or online using e-Daakhil portal (www.edaakhil.nic.in). As per the revised pecuniary jurisdiction, a District Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission has jurisdiction to entertain complaints where the value of the goods or services paid as consideration does not exceed Rupees Fifty Lakh. The State Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission and the National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission have jurisdiction where such consideration is above Rupees Fifty Lakh & upto Rupees Two Crore and above Rupees Two Crore respectively.

Department of Consumer Affairs has generated consumer awareness under "Jago Grahak Jago" Campaign among all the consumers of the country through video spots and other material on issues like salient features of the Consumer Protection Act 2019, packaged commodities, weights and measures, hallmark, consumer grievance redressal mechanism through departmental website, State / UT Governments, VCOs, TV, Radio, CSCs. Regular messages on these issues are being posted on social media to harness its potential to create consumer awareness. State / UT Governments have been involved to spread consumer awareness in rural and remote areas.

The Department of Consumer Affairs has recently launched "Jagriti", a mascot for empowering consumers and generating awareness of their rights. "Jagriti" is projected as an empowered young consumer.

The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides for, inter-alia, simplification of the adjudication process in the Consumer Commissions; filing of a complaint by a consumer in the Consumer Commission having jurisdiction with respect to his place of work/residence irrespective of place of transaction and place of business or residence of the opposite parties, e-filing and e-payment, video conferencing for hearing, deemed admissibility of complaints if admissibility is not decided within 21 days of filing; court monitored mediation to facilitate early disposal of cases; provision of product liability

The Consumer Protection (Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions) Rules, 2020 notified under the ibid Act provides that no fees is required for registering cases in the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions involving value of goods or services paid as consideration upto 5 lakhs.

Further, Section 38(7) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 prescribes that every complaint shall be disposed of as expeditiously as possible and endeavour shall be made to decide the complaint within a period of three months from the date of receipt of notice by opposite party where the complaint does not require analysis or testing of commodities and within five months if it requires analysis or testing of commodities.