

**Regulating e-commerce business**

†1049. DR. SANJAY SINH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received complaints against direct selling/ecommerce companies regarding fraud, selling goods at very low prices, quality and privacy;

(b) if so, the details of such complaints, e-commerce company/site-wise, during the last two years and current year;

(c) whether Government feels the need to regulate e-commerce business in the country; and

(d) the present status of the proposal regarding setting up of National Consumer Safety Authority?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAMVILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Over last 2 years and current year, a total of twelve complaints have been received against e-commerce companies against deficiency in service, unfair trade practices and unauthorized collection of funds from the public. The Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) has completed investigation in the cases relating to two companies *i.e.* Unipay 2 Group and Speakasia Online Group.

(c) A separate regulation for e-commerce activities may not be required as these activities are already covered under the different laws and regulation like the Information Technology Act, 2000, the Company Law, Income tax Laws, Consumer Protection Act etc.

(d) The Consumer Protection Bill, 2015 seeks to establish a Central Consumer Protection Authority, an executive agency, for protection of the interest of the consumers. The Bill has been introduced in Lok Sabha on 10.8.2015. It has been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution further examination and report.

**Charging arbitrary price for packaged foods and drinks**

1050. SHRI K.K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of charging arbitrary prices - most often more than MRP for packaged food products, aerated drinks and water by some of the retailers; and

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether any measures are in the offing for making the manufacturers accountable to ensure that the retail price remains within the MRP?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAMVILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) Sir, the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 have been made under the provisions of Sec. 18 of the Legal Metrology Act, 2009. As per Rule 18(2) of the said rules provisions are made to prevent the sale of any pre-packaged commodity at a price higher than MRP, which are as follows:

"No retail dealer or other person including manufacturer, packer, importer and wholesale dealer shall make any sale of any commodity in packed form at a price exceeding the retail sale price thereof."

Rule 32 of the said rules provides for compounding amount for selling of products for more than the Maximum Retail Price.

Section 36 of the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 provides for penalty provisions in case of violation of the provisions of the Act and the provisions of the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011.

Therefore, under the provisions of the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 and the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011, State Governments are taking action against the manufacturer, packer, importer, wholesale dealer, and retailer for selling packaged commodities at the price higher than MRP in various States/UTs, as the enforcement of weights and Measures is done by the State Governments.

#### **Rise in prices of essential food items**

1051. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to set up a body to monitor the variation in prices of essential food articles in view of sudden sharp rise in prices of essential food items since last few years and failure of the Government to check price rise in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAMVILAS PASWAN): (a) No Sir. There is no such proposal under consideration at present.