

**Bringing brand ambassadors within purview of consumer Protection Act**

†612. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether cases of misleading claims in the advertisements of several popular products have come to light recently even as these products are being endorsed by famous personalities/brand ambassadors, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the brand ambassador does not come under the ambit of Consumer Protection Act currently, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether there is a proposal to bring the brand ambassadors within the purview of Consumer Protection Act, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) Yes, Sir. 1046 complaints relating to misleading advertisements have come to notice of the Department of Consumer Affairs between March, 2015 and March, 2016.

(b) The existing Consumer Protection Act, 1986 provides for making a complaint against unfair trade practice in a Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission/Forum. As per section 2(1) (r) (1) (i) of the said Act, the practice of making any statement, whether orally or in writing or by visible representation which falsely represents that the goods are of a particular standard, quality, quantity, grade, composition, style or model, is treated as an unfair trade practice, against which a consumer can make a complaint in a Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission.

(c) On the Consumer Protection Bill, 2015, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution has recommended stringent punishment to check misleading advertisements and to fix responsibility of celebrities and brand ambassadors.

**Help desk for consumer under PDS**

613. SHRI ANUBHAV MOHANTY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the huge nationwide network of PDS is inter-connected through computer;

(b) if so, whether all information about the availability of stock of all items supplied through PDS is uploaded in the public domain and updated regularly;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.