

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 855
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.12.2024

CASES OF ADULTERATION REGISTERED WITH CONSUMER COMMISSIONS

855. SHRI KARTIKEYA SHARMA

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

- (a) the initiatives taken to tackle the issue of food adulteration particularly in milk, milk products and baby food, the details thereof;
- (b) how many cases of adulteration have been registered with the consumer commissions over the last two years from urban and rural areas, the details thereof, State-wise; and
- (c) the assistance provided to the complainants, particularly with low income and education, in terms of ease of raising complaint, timeline for resolution etc, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE, CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI B.L VERMA)

(a) to (c) : Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) was established in 2008 under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 primarily for laying down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption.

The Food Safety and Standards Act includes specific provisions for penal action concerning substandard food, misbranded food, and unsafe food. FSSAI through its regional offices and State/Union Territories conducts regular surveillance, monitoring, inspection, and random sampling of food products including milk, milk products and baby food. In cases where food samples are found to be non-conforming, penal action is taken against the defaulting Food Business Operators as per the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, Rules and Regulations. Further, to extend reach of basic testing facilities even in remote areas, FSSAI has provided mobile food testing labs called Food Safety on Wheels (FSWs).

Section 90 and 91 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provide for punishment for manufacturing for sale or for storing or selling or for distributing or importing any product containing an adulterant or spurious goods, which includes imprisonment or fine depending on the extent of injury to the consumer.

The details of the consumer complaints registered under food and beverages category in the consumer commissions during last two years are as below:-

Name of the State/UT	Number of complaints registered
Andhra Pradesh	17
Assam	3
Bihar	16
Chandigarh	4
Chhattisgarh	10
Delhi	28
Gujarat	16
Haryana	57
Himachal Pradesh	5
Jammu and Kashmir	1
Jharkhand	2
Karnataka	6
Kerala	51
Madhya Pradesh	8
Maharashtra	7
Odisha	15
Puducherry	9
Punjab	12
Rajasthan	88
Tamil Nadu	30
Telangana	20
Uttar Pradesh	112
Uttarakhand	4
West Bengal	12
TOTAL	533

In terms of the Consumer Protection (Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions) Rules, 2020, framed under the aegis of Consumer Protection Act, 2019, no fee has to be paid for filing complaints where the value of goods or services paid as consideration is up to Rs.5,00,000/-.

E-daakhil portal has also been launched for online filing of consumer complaints. Besides physical hearing, video conferencing facility has also been provided at National and State level Consumer Commissions.

Further, in terms of Section 38 (7) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, 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:

To serve the interest of speedy justice to the end consumers, Consumer Protection Act states that no adjournment shall ordinarily be granted by the consumer commissions unless sufficient cause is shown and the reasons for grant of adjournment have been recorded in writing by the Commission.
