

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 203
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.02.2025

GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL OF CONSUMERS IN PRE-LITIGATION STAGE

203. SHRI BRIJ LAL:

DR. ANIL SUKHDEORAO BONDE:

DR. MEDHA VISHRAM KULKARNI:

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

- (a) whether the Ministry has undertaken any steps to enhance grievance redressal of consumers in the pre-litigation stage;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the average number of complaints registered per month through the National Consumer Helpline and other digital communication channels?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE, CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

(SHRI B.L VERMA)

(a) to (c) The Department has revamped, the National Consumer Helpline (NCH), which has emerged as a single point of access to consumers across the country for grievance redressal at the pre-litigation stage. The helpline is available in 17 languages, including Hindi, English, Kashmiri, Punjabi, Nepali, Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Maithili, Santhali, Bengali, Odia, Assamese, and Manipuri, allowing consumers from all regions to register their grievances via the toll-free number 1915. These grievances can be submitted via the Integrated Grievance Redressal Mechanism (INGRAM), an omni-channel, IT-enabled central portal, through various channels: WhatsApp (8800001915), SMS (8800001915), email (nch-ca@gov.in), the NCH app, the web portal (consumerhelpline.gov.in), and the Umang app, offering convenience and flexibility to consumers.

The helpline operates in a dedicated manner from 8 AM to 8 PM on all seven days of the week, except on national holidays. To enhance accessibility further, a call-back facility is available. An exclusive call center has been established to ensure prompt service.

NCH proactively partners with companies who want to join the programme on a voluntary basis to offer efficient consumer complaint resolution. This initiative gives the company an opportunity for better Corporate Governance and Social Responsibility by redressing Consumer Disputes at pre-litigation stage. The number of convergence partners has steadily increased from 263 companies in 2017 to 1038 companies till now .

The technological transformation of the NCH has significantly boosted its call-handling capacity. The number of calls received by NCH has grown more than tenfold, from 12,553 in December 2015 to 1,55,138 in December 2024. This exponential growth reflects the rising confidence of consumers in the helpline. Similarly, the average number of complaints registered per month has surged from 37,062 in 2017 to 1,12,468 in 2024. Additionally, grievance registration via WhatsApp has gained momentum, with the percentage of complaints filed through the platform increasing from 3% in March 2023 to 18% in December 2024, demonstrating a growing preference for digital communication channels.

In a significant move to further enhance grievance redressal, NCH has introduced AI-based Speech Recognition, a Translation System, and an AI enabled Chatbot as part of the NCH 2.0 initiative. These technological advancements aim to make the grievance filing process more seamless, efficient, and inclusive. The AI-powered Speech Recognition and Translation System enables consumers to file complaints through voice input in their local languages, reducing manual intervention. The AI enabled Chatbot provides real-time assistance, streamlining complaint-handling processes, and improving the overall user experience. These upgrades ensure that consumers from diverse linguistic backgrounds have equal access to the grievance redressal system.

The website of the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) has also been upgraded to serve as the central point of access for consumers across India seeking grievance redressal at the pre-litigation stage. This website includes enhanced functionality, modern features, and improved navigation with a user-centric design. It incorporates advanced features, offering faster grievance resolution and a more efficient user experience.

Average number of complaints registered during a month with the National Consumer Helpline, including other digital communication channels, is as per the table below:

Financial Year	Average number of dockets registered on monthly basis
Apr'24 - Dec'24 (2024- 25)	1,13,551
2023 – 2024	1,02,976
2022 – 2023	83,832
