

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:790
ANSWERED ON:27.11.2006
CONSUMER WELFARE PROGRAMMES
Murmu Shri Hemlal

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

- (a) whether the Government has identified consumer awareness and consumer protection as an important project and decided to prepare National Action Plan for carrying out various functions for the welfare of consumers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has directed the States to prepare the State level action Plans for the consumer protection programmes and submit it to the Planning Commission directly for funds;
- (d) if so, the number of States which have prepared and submitted such plans and the number of States which are yet to complete this work; and
- (e) the effective steps taken by the Government for promotion of consumer awareness and consumer protection and the number of people benefited therefrom?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN)

(a) & (b): Consequent upon the 50th National Development Council Meeting held on 21.12.2002, the Planning Commission has identified consumer awareness & Consumer Protection as a thrust area for action and asked the Department to prepare a National Action Plan. Accordingly, a National Action Plan was prepared and sent to the Planning Commission. The major components of the National Action Plan consisted of seeking funds for undertaking consumer awareness programmes, strengthening consumer disputes redressal machinery, strengthening standards of laboratory of Weights & Measures, strengthening the Gold Hallmark scheme & also seeking greater involvement of State Governments in Consumer Protection activities, etc.

(c) : Yes, Sir.

(d) : As per information made available, so far 18 out of 35 States/UTs have prepared and submitted such action plans.

(e) : The following important measures have been undertaken by the Department of Consumer Affairs to spread consumer awareness & strengthen Consumer Protection in the country has benefited a large number of consumers. Some of the important measures undertaken are as under:

(1) A sustained multi-media campaign has been undertaken to create mass consumer awareness on wide ranging issues.

(2) A National Consumer Helpline has been set up in association with the University of Delhi, which provides a toll free number to advice consumers across the country.

(3) A web based Consumer Online Resource and Empowerment (CORE) centre has been set up, which is being operated by the Consumer Coordination Council, a coalition of Consumer Organizations, to provide web based advice to consumers and assist in resolution of consumer grievances.

(4) To supplement the effort of the States/UTs, financial assistance is being extended under the Integrated Project on Consumer Protection to meet the critical gaps in infrastructure so that Consumer Fora are made fully functional.

(5) A project for Computerization and Computer Networking of Consumer Fora is being implemented through the National Informatics Centre (NIC) on a turn key basis to provide for e-governance, trans-parency and time bound redressal of Consumer Complaints.

(6) Standard equipment have been provided to the enforcement machinery of Weights and Measures Department in States/UTs for effective enforcement of Weights and Measures laws.