

Government of India
Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Department of Consumer Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.441
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24.07.2024

UNETHICAL PRICING BY SHOPS ON HIGHWAYS

441. SHRI HIBI EDEN:

Will the Minister of **CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION** उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware about the unethical pricing followed by shops on isolated highways, taking advantage of the travellers, who are left with no better options than pay what they ask for;
- (b) whether there is any one step call or message solution for consumers to get their issues addressed at real time and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether there are any specific guidelines or regulations in place to prevent such exploitation and protect consumer rights on isolated highways;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether any measures are being considered by the Government to raise awareness among travellers about their rights and the appropriate channels for lodging complaints against such unethical practices; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण राज्य मंत्री
(श्री बी. एल. वर्मा)

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

(a), (c) & (d) : Rule 18 of the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 provides that 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.

Section 36 of the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 provides for penalty provisions in case of violation of the provisions of the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 and the provisions of the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011. Rule 32 of the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 provides for compounding amount for selling of products for more than the Maximum Retail Price.

Under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 State Governments are empowered to take action for selling packaged commodities at the price higher than MRP, as the enforcement of weights and measures laws is done by the State Governments.

(b) : The Department runs the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) which has emerged as a single point of access to consumers across the country for grievance redressal at pre-litigation stage. Consumers can register their grievances from all over the country in 17 languages (i.e. Hindi, English, Kashmiri, Punjabi, Nepali, Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Maithali, Santhali, Bengali, Odia, Assamese, Manipuri) through a toll-free number 1915. These grievances can be registered on Integrated Grievance Redressal Mechanism (INGRAM), an omni-channel IT enabled central portal, through various channels-Whats App, SMS, mail, NCH app, web portal, Umang app as per their convenience.

(e) & (f) : The Department of Consumer Affairs is implementing an exclusive scheme namely “Consumer Awareness” to generate consumer awareness and empower the consumers under the aegis of “Jago Grahak Jago” campaign through various media including electronic, outdoor and social media. The Department, in 2022-23, has launched “Jagruti”, a mascot for empowering consumers and generating awareness of their rights. The Department participates in prominent fairs/festivals/events where a large number of people may congregate. The Department also provides grant-in-aid to various States/UTs for generating awareness at local level.
