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● Introduction

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Introduction

It is proven that in a free market, consumer is the king of the market. The earlier slogan that “Consumer should be aware” has changed to “Seller should be aware”. It is found that to increase their share and to survive in the ever-increasing competition, producers of goods and services adopt unethical, exploitative and unfair practices. Due to such malpractices, consumers are being cheated. Consumers are forced to pay a higher price and at the same time they are experiencing insecurity due to defective products, health hazards due to adulteration and also due to wrong and misleading advertisements, sales of duplicate products, black marketing and hoarding of goods. The needs to protect consumers from unethical practices are on the rise. Such consumers who fall prey to various malpractices tend to put their lives to danger by unknowingly consuming such products. This is absolutely not justifiable.

11.1 Meaning, Concept and Importance of Consumer Protection

11.1.1 Meaning : Consumer protection means providing shield to consumer from the unethical, exploitative and unlawful practices of sellers or manufacturers.

11.1.2 Concept : The consumers either do not have the capacity to unite and become aware or do not have information regarding the legal measures in the event of consumer exploitation.

11.1.3 Importance : The exploitation of consumers can be predominantly categorised under three heads.

(1) Physical and Mental Exploitation : Consumers are disappointed and angry when they are forced to purchase sub-standard quality products or duplicate ones. The inferior ingredients used in the product, leads to physical problems.

(2) Economic Exploitation : Consumers are facing financial losses due to hoarding of goods, black marketing and charging higher price than the printed price.

(3) Against Public Interest : Public interest is not safeguarded when some products are produced by using certain materials which can cause harm to environment.

Meaning of Consumer : According to the Consumer Protection Act a consumer is “a person who receives goods or services against an exchange. He pays or agrees to compensate partly or fully or promises to compensate on a future date or has participated in some future payment plan. Any user

of the product or service who uses it on the basis of the permission of the purchaser is a consumer. But the one who purchases on a resale basis or for further production is not included under the definition of a consumer.”

11.1.3 Importance of Consumer Protection : The list of the functions of consumer protection is broad and detailed. The functions is not limited to only spreading awareness regarding consumers’ rights and responsibilities but also solving the genuine complaints of consumers. Just to legally protect consumers is not the end of the work. Consumers also should unite for their good and at various levels, consumer protection forum should be set-up.

Business units also understand the importance of the work of consumer protection. They can also maximize consumers’ welfare and protect them from malpractices earnestly.

(A) Importance of Consumer Protection from the View Point of Business :

(1) Use of Public Resources and Wealth : As every business is utilizing public resources and wealth continuously, it becomes their responsibility to promote social welfare by producing such goods and services which are useful to the society.

(2) Social Responsibility : It is proven that business has social responsibility towards various stakeholders’ group. Business returns are based on sale which is made to the consumers. Consumers also are the main stakeholders among the various groups of stakeholders. Business units safeguard the interest of various other groups in the same way they should do so honestly for consumers also.

(3) Part of the Society : Any business is a part of a society. Every seller is a customer of another seller. If consumer exploitation is inevitable then every person will have to experience exploitation. Hence, every seller should adopt such a policy which will increase the faith of the buyer and distance him from consumers’ exploitation.

(4) Impression on the Society : Business impacts the habits of the people of society, their life styles, thoughts, living standards, food habits, fashions, clothing etc. Thus can be changed through advertisement. That is why business policy should be proper and good business ethics remains the moral responsibility of the businessmen.

(5) Consumers’ Protection is Good for Business : Business units have realised that consumer’s wellbeing is essential for the wellbeing of business. The basic requirement of a competitive market is to reach out to the consumers and produce goods according to consumers’ preferences. Those manufacturers who fail to understand this, will lose market to their competitors. Therefore, it is in the interest of the business that the producer realises that he should develop his business by protecting and understanding the preference of the consumers. A satisfied consumer does not just not purchase the product again, but also recommends the product to various groups of people in the society which will attract new consumers.

(6) Principles of Trusteeship and Consumer Protection : According to Gandhiji’s principle of Trusteeship, whatever wealth the society has given to person should be used for the welfare of the people of the society. According to Gandhiji “Consumer is the most important person visiting the place of business. He is not dependent on the seller but we (sellers) are dependent on him. He does not interfere in our work but he is the objective of our business. He is not an outsider for our business but he is a part of our business. We do not favour him by providing a product of his choice but he does a favour by giving an opportunity to serve him”.

(B) Importance of Consumer Protection from the View Point of Consumer :

(1) Extensive Exploitation of Consumers : It is widely seen that business units are trying to increase their profit by producing sub-standard, adulterated and duplicate products and resorting to misleading advertisement, black marketing, hoarding of goods and other unethical and exploitative policies. Such wrong and irrelevant policies adopted by business units have resulted in a need for consumer protection.

(2) Ignorance of Consumers : Consumers are not aware about laws which empower them with rights or even if they are aware, they hesitate in taking legal steps or they have insufficient and misleading information. The prime importance is to spread awareness among the consumers regarding the laws which are in existence and the procedure therein.

(3) Lack of Unity among Consumers : An individual consumer always proves himself weak but if a large group of consumers unites and form a consumer protection forum, it becomes easy and effective to protect their interests. Such organizations have become active in India too. But till such organizations become strong, protection of consumers through law becomes essential.

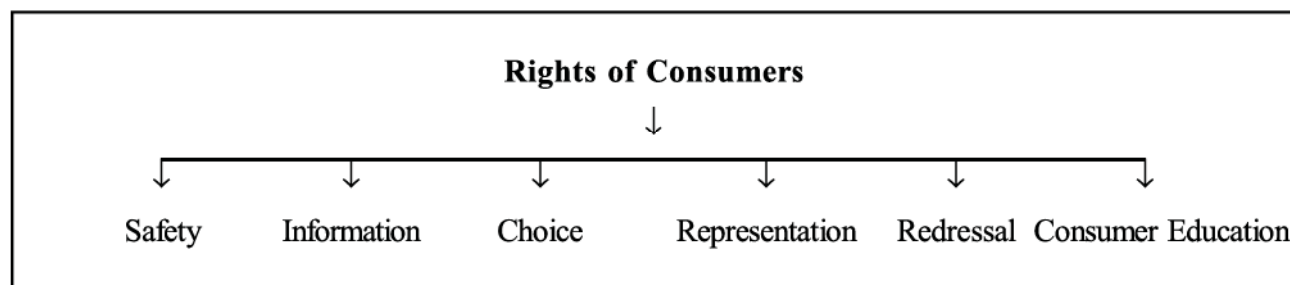
11.2 Consumer Protection Act-1986

Of the various measures adopted for consumer protection, Consumer Protection Act is the most important one. The main aim of this act is to protect the rights of consumers by guarding their interests. This Act protects consumers from defective products, services, irrelevant business policies and cheating. Through the legal system, a triple level layer has been set up to protect the interests of consumers in which at the district level, state level and national level facilities are set up for immediate registration of complaints and their quick redressal at less cost.

11.2.1 Meaning of Consumer Protection : Consumer protection refers to the measures taken against the manufacturers and sellers who adopt various means to exploit consumers for earning high profits to fulfil their greed.

11.2.2 Rights and Responsibilities of Consumer :

(A) Rights of Consumer : Every consumer should get his due rights so that he can get protection from exploitation. Consumer Protection Act gives 6 rights to consumers. The Consumer Protection Forum which has been set up under the direction of Consumer Protection Law, encourages and protects the rights of consumers.



(1) Safety : Every consumer is entitled to get protection from products which are harmful to health. For instance, sub-standard electrical appliances can cause dangerous injuries to the consumer and hence such appliances should not be used. Standardised and superior quality appliances should be used so that consumers can be protected.

(2) Information : Consumer should get all information regarding the products like, ingredients, manufacturing date, directions for use, price, quality, purity etc. For this, legally, a manufacturer is bound to display all informations either, on the packing or on the label.

(3) Choice : Every consumer has a right to choose and hence they have a right to choose either goods or services. He must get them at a competitive price, right quantity, right place and right time. This right to selection on part of the consumer has brought in market variety in goods and services by way of quality, brand, price, size etc. by the producers. e.g. In the two wheeler range, there are wide varieties to satisfy the requirement of the consumers and if one wants to purchase a motor cycle, he gets variety for selection with variations regarding engine, power, color, design, etc.

(4) Representation : If a consumer is dissatisfied with a product or a service, he has the right to complain. Hence, most business units have set-up their own complaint redressal department. In India, many organizations which work for consumer protection help consumers to initiate the process of complaint.

(5) Redressal : If a consumer gets sub-standard quality of goods or services as compared to what he has been promised to get then accordingly, he should get relevant relief. Consumers are eligible for various types of relief under the Consumer Protection Act like replacement of goods or services or repair of the product or part. If there is any damage to the consumer a compensation is offered, Consumer has right to complain and there is equal right for redressal.

(6) Consumer Education : Every consumer has the right to know and also remained informed throughout his life. Consumer should get right quality, quantity at the given time, place and at an ideal price. To get assurance for all these; the consumer has the right to get educated. If a product or a service is sub-standard as against the assured quality, he should know that he is entitled to legal relief. Most business units and organizations who work for consumer protection are actively working to educate consumers.

Apart from this, the United Nations Organisation (UNO) has issued a directive recommending two more rights for the consumers (i) Basic Needs (ii) Hygienic Environment.

(i) Basic Needs : Basic Needs refer to the requirement of goods and services for a decent living.

(ii) Hygienic Environment : Hygienic environment is a protection from various types of pollution so that an individual can lead a quality life. Every individual has the right to get pollution-free air, water, food and land.

Responsibilities of a Consumer : We are all aware that without responsibilities, rights cannot be available. Every consumer should be conscious about the purchase of product or service, its use and after-consumption responsibilities.

(1) Conscious Use of Rights : Every consumer has number of rights which are legally available and the use of these rights require complete knowledge about it.

(2) Beware of Misleading Advertisements : Very often sellers and producers, in order to promote sales, resort to wrong and misleading advertisements. e.g. Consumption of a specific product will increase the energy level in a person immediately or specific types of drink will increase the height of person in a short span. While taking a decision regarding purchase of a product, such

misleading advertisement should be overlooked and the consumer should compare the product with other products. Inappropriate advertisements should be discontinued by drawing attention of the advertisers. If there are discrepancies between the informations provided in advertisements and the actual product, such discrepancies should be highlighted to the advertisers.

(3) Care During Purchase : No producer or seller should provide false incentive for the sake of selling the product. Consumer should emphasize on getting all the necessary informations regarding the product or service in question like - name of manufacturing unit and address, quality, quantity, direction for use, expiry date, ingredients, manufacturing date, weight, guarantee or warranty period and other conditions.

(4) Solicit for a Bill : Whenever a consumer purchases a product or a service, he should ask for the bill from the seller. If the purchased product or service is damaged or of a sub-standard quality or does not fulfill the characteristics of a product and if the consumer wants to complain to the Consumer Protection Forum, it is mandatory to submit the proof of purchase in the form of a bill. Every seller is bound legally to give a bill as a proof of his purchase.

(5) Solicit a High Quality : Special emphasis should be laid for a permanent solution from sub-standard quality of product and service. Problem of adulteration, duplicate products etc. are common. While purchasing, care should be taken to confirm whether it has got quality control certificate and standardization mark.

(6) Registration of Genuine Complaints : If there is any violation of consumer rights after the purchase of a product or a service, complaint should be registered by the consumer to the concerned authority. Very often consumers tend to ignore minor problems or violation of consumers rights which is not a correct approach. This trend encourages the seller to continue his exploitative tendencies. On the other hand, there are instances where consumers misuse their available rights and claim larger compensation for minor damages, which is also inappropriate.

(7) Spread of Consumerism : Every consumer should take active part in the set-up of Consumer Protection activity in spreading awareness among consumers regarding their well being and their rights.

(8) Environmental Protection : Every consumer should contribute to environmental protection. After the use of goods, the wastes should be disposed without spreading dirt or pollution. This is the primary responsibility of the consumer.

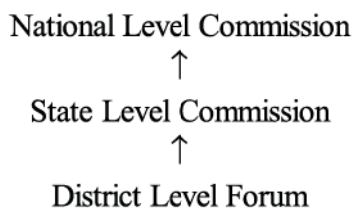
(9) No Involvement in Unethical Activities : When consumer is making purchase, he must follow legal matters. He should not involve himself in black marketing, hoarding of goods or any such kind of unethical practices. Thus, for customers first condition is to fulfill all the responsibilities before he should insist for his legal rights.

11.2.3 Grievances Redressal Organizations : A three layer mechanism has been set-up for complaint redressal of the consumers. These three levels are at the District Level, State Level and National Level. Generally, a consumer is the one who uses goods or services.

If there is any defect in product, consumer can take the help of dispute settlement organization.

He can register complaint individually or in the capacity of a representative of consumer Association at the District, State or Central level as the case may be. If the grievances are common, the consumers can do so collectively too. If the consumer is dead his legal heirs or his representative can do so. The main objective of maintaining the three tier redressal system is to make it fast and economical.

Three-Tier Redressal System :



(A) District Level Forum : This is the basic or primary level. At the district level, every State Government set up this forum. There are atleast three members appointed by the State Government, one as the President and there should be atleast two more. The President should be legally qualified and experienced. Out of these three, atleast one should be a woman member. If the price and compensation demanded for the disputed product or service is ₹ 20 lakhs or less, the redressal process can take place at the District Level Forum. After receiving the complaint, the District Level Forum sends it to the other concerned party by the district level forum. If needed, the district forum can send the product for the laboratory for testing. The district level forum listens to both the parties and if needed gets the product tested in the laboratory and based on the statement of the laboratory solves the dispute. If either of the parties is not happy with the judgement, then he can appeal at the State Level Commission for re-examination within 30 days of the judgement of District Level Forum.

(B) State Level Commission : It is the responsibility of the State Government to set up a State Level Commission. Atleast Three members including one as President should be appointed who should be legally qualified. There should be atleast one woman member. If the price and compensation demanded for the disputed product or service is more than ₹ 20 lakhs and equals to or less than ₹ 1 Crore, the redressal process can take place at the State Level Commission. Any consumer who has dissatisfaction over the judgement of the District Level Forum can apply to the State Level Commission within a period of 30 days. After receiving the complaint, the State Level Commission sends it to the accused. It listens to both the concerned parties, if needed it will send the product to the laboratory for testing. The consumer redressal will be taken on the basis of the presentation of both the parties and report of the laboratory. If any party is not statisfied with the State Level Commission, then within 30 days of the judgement of State Level Commission, it can appeal for re-examination with the National Level Commission.

(C) National Level Commission : The responsibility of setting up this commission lies with the Central Government. Along with one President, atleast four other members are appointed and thus there will be atleast five members. The President will be either existing or a retired judge of the Supreme Court. Out of the members appointed, atleast there will be one woman member. If the price and compensation demanded for the disputed product or service is more than ₹ 1 Crore, the National Level Commission can be approached. Any party who is not satisfied with the judgement of the State Level Commission will be handled by the National Level Commission. When a complaint is registered with the National Level Commission, it will be sent to the accused party. The National Level Commission listens to the arguments of both the parties and if it is needed will get the product tested in a laboratory and considers the report to settle the dispute. If the judgement of the National Level Commission does not satisfy either of the parties, they can appeal for re-examination with the Supreme Court in due course of time.

This directly implies that if the parties concerned are not satisfied with the dispute settlement of District Level Forum, they appeal to the State Level Commission within 30 days of the judgement of District Level Forum and if they are dissatisfied with the State Level Commission, they can go to the National Level Commission within 30 days of the judgement of State Level Commission and if the parties concerned are not satisfied with the dispute settlement of National Level Commission, they can knock the doors of Supreme Court within reasonable time limit after the judgement of National Level Commission.

11.2.4 Available Remedies / Reliefs for Consumers : If the consumer court accepts the complaint, it can allow one or more reliefs out of the following in the favour of consumer :

- (1) It can direct to remove the defects existing in the product or the service.
- (2) It can direct to refund the money for the defects in the product or the service.
- (3) It can order to exchange defective product with the new (fresh) product.
- (4) If due to the negligence on part of the seller, there the consumer has to suffer any loss or injury, he can be compensated for the same.
- (5) If the case so demands, penalty also can be imposed on the seller.
- (6) Unfair and prohibitive business practices can be stopped and can order not to repeat the same in future.
- (7) Production and sales of harmful products can be stopped.
- (8) Harmful products can be stopped from being sold.
- (9) If defective product or deficiency in service is found, atleast 5% of amount of total sales should be ordered to deposit in Consumer Protection Fund or to any institution or person working with the objective of utilizing the amount for a specific purpose.
- (10) It can direct to remove misleading advertisements and introduce improvised advertisements.
- (11) It can order to make reasonable payment to the affected party (Consumer) by way of compensation.

11.3 Means & Methods of consumer Awareness

Consumer himself, industrial units, government and private institutions together are working towards consumer awareness. Most of the consumers are not aware of their rights and responsibilities and in the event of exploitation, they have no idea regarding what types of efforts should be taken. Consumers are made aware of their rights and responsibilities by various consumer awareness programmes. When consumers' rights are violated, necessary information and legal aid are extended to them. Every year, 15th March is celebrated as World Consumer Rights Day.

(1) Lok Adalat : Most industrial units organize Lok Adalat for the genuine complaints of their consumers. The consumer represents his case in this court. Redressal is done mostly then and there itself. This Lok Adalat enables quick effective redressal of the consumer complaints at a low cost. e.g. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) organizes Lok Adalat frequently.

(2) Public Interest Litigation-PIL : Every one is not capable enough to file complaints individually in a court either because of economic reasons or due to lack of time. There are certain aspects which affect an entire society rather than an individual or groups of individuals. An affected person or a group or any common man of the society can write an application on a plain paper to the High Court of the concerned State or directly to the Supreme Court. If the court feels the application to be relevant, it can be converted into a case and after hearing the arguments of both the parties, judgement is given by the respective court.

(3) Eco Friendly Products : Those industrial units which produce their products with very less pollution, are allowed to use "Eco Mark" which is given by the Environment Department of the government of India. Due to this "Eco Mark", consumers will be encouraged to purchase that product and this, in turn, will give impetus to such industries which protect environment.

Role of Consumers' Union and Non Government Organizations (NGOs) : In India a number of consumers' union and Non-Government Organisations are actively working towards maintaining and protecting the interests of consumer. NGOs that are non-profit making organizations

are set up to improve public welfare. They have their own independent constitution. They are free from Government interference. They work towards maintaining and protecting the welfare of consumers. The various functions of these organizations are :

- (1) Educating about the rights of consumers through seminars, conferences and workshops.
- (2) Publishing periodicals, notices, booklets etc. to spread awareness regarding consumers' problems legal awareness, eligibility of compensation and other favourable information.
- (3) Consumers are informed about the comparison of various products and services available in the market, quality analysis by the authorised laboratories and their reports.
- (4) Support to provide the consumers legal informations and aid for the legal formality.
- (5) Essential support is provided to the consumers to oppose unethical, exploitative and unfair sales practices of the sellers.
- (6) Complaints are registered in the consumer court to protect the interest of the consumer.
- (7) All required assistance is provided to a consumers who want, to complain in the Consumer Court.
- (8) Consumers' satisfaction and their related information are compiled and published.
- (9) Films and informations are released to educate consumers.
- (10) Consumer education programmes are organized in schools and colleges. and students are educated for consumer protection.
- (11) Awareness is created against food adulteration.
- (12) To provide support to Government institutions which work towards spreading consumer awareness.

A number of institutions working in the field of consumer awareness and out of that some are mentioned below :

- (1) Consumer Education and Research Centre (CERC), Ahmedabad.
- (2) Consumer Protection Council (CPC), Ahmedabad.
- (3) Voluntary Organisation in Interest of Consumer Education (VOICE), Delhi.
- (4) Consumer Guidance Society of India (CGSI), Mumbai.
- (5) Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS), Jaipur.

Consumer Co-ordination Council, (CCC), Delhi co-ordinates the work of various other institutions working for consumer protection. Various private agencies which work towards consumer protection are members of Consumer Co-ordination Council. Consumer awareness activity is also done by Consumer Department of Government of India who, by advertisements under the heading 'Jago Grahak Jago', and providing National Consumer Helpline (NCH) tollfree number, web site, etc. help the consumers.

In India, much is being done in the field of consumer awareness. Rise in education has resulted in an increase in consumer awareness regarding their rights. Consumer rights have been included in the syllabus of school and college syllabi. Necessary changes have been made in legal provisions. Work is going on speedily towards resolving the disputes of consumers in consumer court. In this way work is going on in the direction of consumer awareness, but there is scope for more work as India is a big country with a high population.

What did you learn from this chapter ?

Meaning of Consumer Protection : Providing shield to consumer from the unethical, exploitative and unlawful practices of sellers or manufacturers.

The Exploitation of consumers can be categorised under three heads : (1) Physical and Mental Exploitation (2) Economic Exploitation (3) Against Public Interest.

Meaning of Consumer : According to the Consumer Protection Act a consumer is “a person who receives goods or services against an exchange the pays or agrees to compensate partly or fully or promises to compensate on a future date or has participated in some future payment plan. Any user of the product or service who uses it on the basis of the permission of the purchaser is a consumer. But the one who purchases on a resale basis or for further production is not included under the definition of a consumer.”

Importance of Consumer Protection :

Importance of consumer protection from the view point of business : (1) Use of Public Resources and Wealth (2) Social Responsibility (3) Part of the Society (4) Impression on the Society (5) Consumers’ protection is good for business (6) Principle of Trusteeship and consumer protection

Consumer protection from the view point of consumer : (1) Extensive Exploitation of Consumers (2) Ignorance of Consumers (3) Lack of Unity among Consumers.

Consumer Protection Act - 1986 :

Rights of the Consumers : (1) Safety (2) Information (3) Choice (4) Representation (5) Redressal (6) Consumer Education.

Additional Rights of Consumers through United Nations Organization Directive : (i) Basic Needs (ii) Hygienic Environment.

Responsibilities of Consumers : (1) Conscious use of rights (2) Beware of misleading advertisements (3) Care during purchase (4) Solicit for a bill (5) Solicit a high quality (6) Registering of genuine complaints (7) Spread of consumerism (8) Environmental protection (9) No involvement in unethical activities.

Dispute Settlement Institutions According to Consumer Protection Act :

(1) District Level Forum : When the price and compensation demanded for the disputed product or service equals to or is less than ₹ 20 lakhs, it will be dealt by District Level Forum for its listening and settlement. In District Level Forum, atleast 3 members are appointed by state government, out of whom one is the President and one should be a woman member. If either of the parties is not satisfied by the judgement of the District Level Forum, then within 30 days, it can appeal to the State Level Commission for reconsideration.

(2) State Level Commission : If the price and compensation demanded for the disputed product or service is more than ₹ 20 lakhs but equals to or less than ₹ 1 crore, the State Level Commission listens the dispute and settles it. If any party is dissatisfied by the judgement of the District Level Forum and if it is brought to the State Level Commission, it will be heard by them. The State Government appoints atleast 3 members out of which one will be the President and one should be a woman member. If any party is not satisfied with the judgement of the State Level Commission, then within 30 days, it can appeal to the National Level Commission for reconsideration.

(3) National Level Commission : If the price and compensation amount demanded for the disputed product or service exceeds ₹ 1 Crore, the National Level Commission listens to the dispute and settles it. If either party is not satisfied by the judgement of the State Level Commission, it will be handled by the National Level Commission. Atleast five members are appointed by the Central Government out of which one is the President and one should be a women member. Any party can appeal to the Supreme Court in reasonable time if they are not satisfied by the judgement of National Level Commission.

11.2.4 Available Remedies / Reliefs for Consumers : If the consumer court accepts the complaint, it can allow one or more reliefs out of the following in the favour of consumer : (1) It can direct to remove the defects existing in the product or the service. (2) It can direct to refund the money for the defects in the product or the service. (3) It can order to exchange defective product with the new (fresh) product. (4) If due to the negligence on part of the seller, there the consumer has to suffer any loss or injury, he can be compensatee for the same. (5) If the case so demands, penalty also can be imposed on the seller. (6) Unfair and prohibitive business practices can be stopped and can order not to repeat the same in future. (7) Production and sales of harmful products can be stopped. (8) Harmful products can be stopped from being sold. (9) If defective product or deficiency in service is found, atleast 5% of amount of total sales should be ordered to deposit in Consumer Protection Fund or to any institution or person working with the objective of utilizing the amount for a specific purpose. (10) It can direct to remove misleading advertisements and introduce improvised advertisements. (11) It can order to make reasonable payment to the affected party (Consumer) by way of compensation.

Means & Method of consumer Awareness : (1) Lok Adalat (2) Public Interest Litigation (3) Eco -Friendly Products

Consumers' Unions and the role of Non-Government Organization : Non profit earning consumers' unions and non government organizations work for maintaining and protecting the interest of the consumers. Their work includes (1) Educating about the rights of consumers through seminars, conferences and workshops. (2) Publishing periodicals, notices, booklets etc. to spread awareness regarding consumers' problems legal awareness, eligibility of compensation and other favourable information. (3) Consumers are informed about the comparison of various products and services available in the market, quality analysis by the authorised laboratories and their reports. (4) Support to provide the consumers legal informations and aid for the legal formality. (5) Essential support is provided to the consumers to oppose unethical, exploitative and unfair sales practices of the sellers. (6) Complaints are registered in the consumer court to protect the interest of the consumer. (7) All required assistance is provided to a consumers who want, to complain in the Consumer Court. (8) Consumers' satisfaction and their related informations are compiled and published. (9) Films and informations are released to educate consumers. (10) Consumer education programmes are organized in schools and colleges. and students are educated for consumer protection. (11) Awareness is created against food adulteration. (12) To provide to Government support institutions which work towards spreading consumer awareness.

Institutions Working in the Field of Spreading Consumer Awareness : (1) Consumer Education and Research Centre-(CERC), Ahmedabad (2) Consumer Protection Council-(CPC), Ahmedabad (3) Voluntary Organization in the Interest of Consumer Education-VOICE, Delhi (4) Consumer Guidance Society of India-(CGSI), Mumbai (5) Consumer Unity and Trust Society-(CUTS), Jaipur etc. Consumer Co-ordination Council (CCC), Delhi compiles and co-ordinates the activities of all other institutions working on consumer protection.

Exercise

1. Select the correct alternative and write answer to the following questions :

- (1) When was the Consumer Protection Act passed ?
(A) 1956 (B) 1932 (C) 1986 (D) 2015
- (2) Who has introduced the principles of Trusteeship ?
(A) Jawaharlal Nehru (B) Subhash Chandra Bose
(C) Indira Gandhi (D) Gandhiji
- (3) Out of the following, which has not been included in the Consumer Protection Act 1986, as consumers' right ?
(A) Protection (B) Basic Needs (C) Awareness (D) Choice
- (4) Which one of the following options is not included as Redressal Forum according to the Consumer Protection Act ?
(A) Lok Adalat (B) District Level Forum
(C) State Level Commission (D) National Level Commission
- (5) How many members exist in the District Level Forum ?
(A) Total 3 (B) Atleast 3 (C) Atleast 5 (D) Total 5
- (6) Members of which commission are appointed by the Central Government ?
(A) District Level (B) State Level (C) National Level (D) International Level
- (7) In which court, can the public interest litigation be filed ?
(A) Criminal Court (B) Civil Court (C) District Court (D) Supreme Court
- (8) With which consumer protection organizational set up, Ahmedabad is connected ?
(A) Consumer Education and Research Centre (B) Consumer Guidance Society of India
(C) Consumer Unity and Trust Society (D) Consumer Co-ordination Council
- (9) Which organization works towards compilation and co-ordination of the work of the various institutions working for consumer protection ?
(A) Consumer Protection Council (B) Consumer Protection and Research Council
(C) Consumer Co-ordination Council (D) Consumer Unity and Trust Society
- (10) Which of the following is not done by consumer protection institutions ?
(A) Educating the people regarding consumer rights
(B) Publish information which has consumer interest
(C) List of consumers given to the industries (D) Protect the interest of consumers

2. Answer the following questions in one sentence each :

- (1) Who is the king of the market in a free market system ?
- (2) Under which heads can consumer exploitation be divided ?
- (3) According to the principles of Trusteeship who is the important person in an organization ?
- (4) Which two rights are favoured by the United Nations Organisation in its directive for the consumer ?
- (5) What proof should compulsorily be produced by the consumer to prove his purchase ?

- (6) If the complainant is not satisfied by the judgement of District Level Forum, then to whom should he appeal for reconsideration and within what period ?
- (7) If the complainant is not satisfied by the judgement of State Level Commission, then to whom should he appeal for reconsideration and within what period ?
- (8) If the complainant is not satisfied with the judgement of the National Level Commission, then to whom should he appeal for reconsideration and within what period ?
- (9) In which courts can public interest litigation be filed ?
- (10) Give full forms of the following abbreviations :
 (i) CERC (ii) CPC (iii) VOICE (iv) CGSI (v) CUTS (vi) CCC (vii) NCH

3. Answer the following questions in short :

- (1) What are the ways in which producers can exploit the consumers to increase their sales of goods and services ?
- (2) Explain about consumers' exploitation.
- (3) Write a note on the Principles of Trusteeship and Consumer Protection.
- (4) Explain consumer protection from the point of view of consumers.
- (5) How does Lok Adalat help in creation of consumer awareness ?
- (6) Write in brief about Public Interest Litigations (PIL).

4. Answer the following questions in brief :

- (1) State the importance of consumer protection from the viewpoint of business.
- (2) What are the rights made available to consumers as per the Consumer Protection Act ?
- (3) Define consumer and state who can complain to the dispute settlement institutions ?
- (4) How is consumer awareness created ?

5. Answer the following questions in detail :

- (1) Explain the responsibilities of consumers according to Consumer Protection Act.
- (2) Explain the 3 tier dispute settlement system according to the Consumer Protection Act.
- (3) What types of relief and compensation are available to the consumer according to Consumer Protection Act ?
- (4) Explain the working of Consumer Protection Institutions and Non-Government Organizations for protection and maintenance of consumers' interest.

