

Department of Consumer Affairs, GoI, Hosts Regional Workshop in Chennai to Strengthen Consumer Justice in Southern States

23% complaints in National Consumer Helpline from Southern States: Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, GoI

Karnataka and Kerala State Commissions Lead with Over 100% Disposal Rates in 2025

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The Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India, organized a Regional Workshop on “Consumer Protection in the Southern States/UTs” on 13th June 2025 in Chennai to reaffirm its commitment to strengthening consumer grievance redressal mechanisms and promoting institutional efficiency.

In her keynote address, **Smt. Nidhi Khare**, Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, GoI, emphasized that the digital age requires adaptive legal and digital mechanisms. She underlined the significance of initiatives like the **Right to Repair Portal**, **e-Jagruti** and **Strengthening of National Consumer Helpline** which is speedy, hassle free and inexpensive method of redressing consumer grievances at the prelitigation stage. She also noted the regulatory steps of **CCPA** to curb dark patterns, fake reviews and misleading ads and praised the Southern States’ exemplary performance, particularly in case disposal rates. She called for continued innovation, collaboration and inclusive access to world class grievance redressal, especially through mediation and virtual hearings.

She further highlighted that in 2025, the **National Consumer Helpline** received **5.41 lakh complaints**, with **23% from Southern States**, reflecting strong regional engagement. Of **28.54 lakh cases filed nationally**, only **5.62 lakh are pending**, with Southern States accounting for just **13.34%**. She commended the region’s performance, noting **Karnataka and Kerala Commissions** disposed of more cases than filed, and several **District Commissions** achieved **100%+ disposal rates** over three consecutive years. She also reported that over **11,900 cases** were heard via **Virtual Courts**. Introducing **e-Jagruti**, an AI-powered unified platform, she noted its integration of key systems like e-Daakhil and Confonet, offering features such as chatbot-based registration, multilingual access and support for legal professionals and differently-abled users.

During the inaugural session, Justice Amreshwar Pratap Sahi, President of the NCDRC, highlighted the evolving scope of the Consumer Protection Act and the increasing shift of litigation from traditional courts to consumer commissions. He provided valuable guidance to District Consumer Commissions, urging them to adopt a more digital-friendly and tech-enabled approach to enhance efficiency and accessibility in consumer dispute resolution. Justice Sahi emphasized the importance of building digital infrastructure and leveraging technology to meet the demands of a rapidly changing environment. He also called for proactive engagement with administrative bodies to ensure effective enforcement of Commission orders and advised timely coordination in cases requiring expert opinions—such as those involving medical negligence or automobile

disputes—so that investigations do not delay justice and timely redressal for consumers is ensured.

The workshop featured four thematic technical sessions and two parallel sessions, chaired by Justice Amreshwar Pratap Sahi and co-chaired by Smt. Nidhi Khare, focusing on strengthening consumer grievance redressal across key sectors. Sessions addressed digital innovation through e-Jagriti, real estate and insurance grievance mechanisms, and medical negligence redressal, with active participation from judicial leaders, state officials, and legal experts. Parallel sessions highlighted the importance of aligning Legal Metrology enforcement with the Jan Vishwas Act, 2023, and the crucial role of the National Test House in ensuring product quality and safety through independent testing, reinforcing consumer protection and industry accountability in the Southern region.

The Department has been undertaking focused efforts for the regular monitoring of consumer cases across the country. This drive has involved organizing one-day regional workshops and State-specific meetings in various parts of India. These interactions have served as vital platforms for discussing the issue of pendency of consumer cases and identifying practical solutions for ensuring faster and more effective redressal.

Shri Bharat Khera, Additional Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India highlighted India's historical roots in ethical trade and the transformative impact of the **Consumer Protection Act, 2019**. **Shri Thiru Satyabrata Sahoo**, Principal Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu, Cooperation, Food & Consumer Protection Department, stressed the need for capacity building and training to strengthen consumer protection institutions and emphasized the critical role of policymakers in ensuring justice.

The workshop concluded with participating states and stakeholders committing to work together to strengthen consumer protection mechanisms in their respective jurisdictions. The Department of Consumer Affairs will continue to collaborate with states and other stakeholders to ensure the effective implementation of consumer protection laws, regulations and initiatives for the betterment of consumers in the Southern States/UTs and across the country.

It was attended by officials from the Ministry, Members of State Commissions, Presidents of District Commissions, Members of District Commissions and other dignitaries from the Southern States/UTs in Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Lakshadweep, Puducherry and Andaman & Nicobar Islands with also presence of the Voluntary Consumer Organizations in the region.

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