

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4488
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.08.2025

ISSUES RELATED TO CONSUMER AFFAIRS IN AMRITSAR AND BORDER BELT REGIONS

4488. SHRI GURJEET SINGH AUJLA:

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

- (a) whether the Government has conducted an assessment of consumer rights violations, unfair trade practices or price exploitation in border regions like Amritsar and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the people of the country are facing lots of health problems due to the rampant adulteration of essential food items, especially in dairy, grains and packaged goods and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) the prices of essential commodities often fluctuate sharply in border regions especially in Amritsar and nearby areas due to supply chain challenges;
- (d) whether the Government commit to a special consumer affairs strategy for the border region especially in Amritsar and the entire border belt to ensure that citizens are not exploited by unfair trade practices, adulteration or illegal market activities; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e) : Department of Consumer Affairs is continuously working for consumer protection and empowerment of consumers by enactment of progressive legislations. With a view to modernize the framework governing the consumer protection in the new era of globalization, technologies, e-commerce markets etc., the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was repealed and Consumer Protection Act, 2019 was enacted.

Salient features of the new Consumer Protection Act, 2019 are establishment of a Central Consumer Protection Authority(CCPA); simplification of the adjudication process in the Consumer Commissions such as enhancing pecuniary jurisdiction of the Consumer Commissions, online filing of complaint from the Consumer Commission having jurisdiction over the place of work/residence of the consumer irrespective of the place of transaction, videoconferencing for hearing, deemed admissibility of complaints if admissibility is not decided within 21 days of filing; provision of product liability; penal provisions for manufacture/sale of adulterated products/spurious goods; provision for making rules for prevention of unfair trade practice in e-commerce and direct selling.

The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides for a three tier quasi-judicial machinery at District, State and National level commonly known as “Consumer Commissions” for protection of the rights of consumers and to provide simple and speedy redressal of consumer disputes including those related with unfair trade practices. The Consumer Commissions are empowered to give relief of a specific nature and award compensation to consumers, wherever appropriate.

Further, as per Section 38 (7) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, every complaint shall be disposed of as expeditiously as possible and endeavour shall be made to decide the complaint within a period of three months from the date of receipt of notice by opposite party where the complaint does not require analysis or testing of commodities and within five months, if it requires analysis or testing of commodities.

To serve the interest of speedy justice to the end consumers, Consumer Protection Act states that no adjournment shall ordinarily be granted by the consumer commissions unless sufficient cause is shown and the reasons for grant of adjournment have been recorded in writing by the Commission.

Section 90 and 91 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provide for punishment for manufacturing for sale or for storing or selling or for distributing or importing any product containing an adulterant or spurious goods, which includes imprisonment or fine depending on the extent of injury to the consumer.

Under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), an executive agency, came into existence on 24.07.2020. It is designed to intervene, to prevent consumer detriment arising from unfair trade practices and to initiate class action(s), including the enforcement of recalls, refunds and return of products. Its core mandate is to prevent and regulate false or misleading advertisements which are prejudicial to the public interest.

The National Consumer Helpline (NCH) administered by the Department of Consumer Affairs has emerged as a single point of access to consumers across the country for their grievance redressal at a pre-litigation stage. Consumers can register their grievances from all over the country in 17 languages including Hindi, English, Kashmiri, Punjabi, Nepali, Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Maithili, Santhali, Bengali, Odia, Assamese and 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- WhatsApp (8800001915), SMS (8800001915), email (nch-ca@gov.in), the NCH app, the web portal (consumerhelpline.gov.in) and the Umang app, as per their convenience. 1110 companies, who have voluntarily partnered with NCH, as part of the 'Convergence' programme directly respond to these grievances according to their redressal process and revert by providing a feedback to the complainant on the portal.

Also, Department of Consumer Affairs monitors the daily prices of 38 essential food commodities submitted by the 566 price monitoring centres including 15 districts from Punjab across the country. The prices of food commodities tend to be volatile as they are affected by several factors, such as seasonality in production, adverse weather conditions, supply chain disruptions, rise in international prices etc. Sometimes slight disruptions in the supply chain or crop damage due to adverse weather condition etc. lead to spike in the prices of agri-horticultural commodities. The Daily Retail Prices of 38 Commodities in Punjab especially in Amritsar and nearby areas are at **Annexure**.

To ensure the availability of safe food products to the consumers across the country, FSSAI conducts regular surveillance, monitoring, inspection and random sampling of various food products throughout the year by the officials of Food Safety Departments of the respective States/ UTs and Regional offices of FSSAI to check compliance with the quality and safety parameters and other requirements as laid down under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and Regulations made thereunder.

Further, FSSAI has Risk Based Inspection System (RBIS) where frequency of inspection is decided based on risk associated with Food businesses and thus, mandates annual inspection. Moreover, it also specifies mandatory sampling while inspecting the premises.

In cases of non-compliance to the statutory requirements, penal action is initiated against the defaulting Food Business Operators (FBOs) as per the provisions for Offences & Penalties laid under FSS Act, 2006. The details of enforcement activities of food samples analyzed, found non-conforming and penalties etc in the past 3 years are as follows :-

Details of Enforcement activities undertaken in last 3 Years									
Year	No. of Samples Analyzed	No. of Samples found non-conforming	Non-Conforming Samples			Civil Cases		Criminal Cases	
			Unsafe	Sub Standard	Labelling defects/ Misleading/ Miscellaneous	Decided with Penalty	Penalties Realized (Cr Rs.)	No. of Convictions	Penalties Realized (Cr Rs.)
2022-23	177511	44626	6579	21917	16130	28464	33.23	1188	2.75
2023-24	170513	33808	6782	22603	4423	29586	74.12	1161	2.67
2024-25	170535	34388	7945	22516	3931	30142	35.74	1265	3.03

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4488 TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.08.2025 REGARDING ISSUES RELATED TO CONSUMER AFFAIRS IN AMRITSAR AND BORDER BELT REGIONS.

Daily Retail Prices of 38 Food Items in Punjab as on 13 Aug 2025																
Commodities	Qty	Amritsar	Ludhiana	Bathinda	Barnala	Hoshiarpur	Faridkot	Mansa	Sri Muktsar Sahib	Dera Bassi	Sangrur	Ropar	Amargarh	Fatehgarh Sahib	Ferozepur	Kapurthala
Rice	1 Kg	40	37	40	40	36	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	45	40	43
Wheat	1 Kg	28	27	28	26	29	28	27	26	27	27	28	27	35	28	30
Atta (Wheat)	1 Kg	32	35	32	31	35	32	33	32	31	31	33	32	40	32	35
Gram Dal	1 Kg	90	89	88	92	85	88	90	85	88	83	88	85	87	88	88
Tur/Arhar Dal	1 Kg	123	133	120	113	116	127	127	125	125	129	123	130	138	119	121
Urad Dal	1 Kg	131	130	132	113	109	132	128	123	130	129	128	130	122	115	125
Moong Dal	1 Kg	117	118	115	105	113	117	117	115	120	110	117	110	110	114	115
Masoor Dal	1 Kg	90	100	92	98	104	93	92	98	93	89	93	90	100	90	92
Sugar	1 Kg	46	45	46	47	51	46	45	45	46	45	46	45	43	45	45
Milk @	1 ltr	55	62	55	65	66	55	65	63	60	60	61	60	60	64	63
Groundnut Oil (Packed)	1 Kg	220	212	220	216	222	227	NR	209	NR	220	212	225	212	220	219
Mustard Oil (Packed)	1 Kg	196	200	200	179	191	201	179	183	192	195	191	192	181	184	192
Vanaspati (Packed)	1 Kg	165	167	165	159	183	167	172	161	170	158	166	159	183	164	166
Soya Oil (Packed)	1 Kg	154	161	154	126	138	132	152	130	159	148	155	145	154	143	154
Sunflower Oil (Packed)	1 Kg	183	183	187	165	136	183	176	174	NR	162	NR	154	176	190	179
Palm Oil (Packed)	1 Kg	NR	NR	132	124	141	134	135	124	NR	140	137	132	109	137	154
Gur	1 Kg	57	58	57	50	57	57	60	54	57	48	58	48	53	60	57
Tea Loose	1 Kg	272	285	267	293	288	283	277	277	257	263	277	250	287	274	277
Salt Pack (Iodised)	1 Kg	29	27	29	30	25	29	29	28	28	28	29	28	27	28	28
Potato	1 Kg	20	22	20	20	19	19	24	22	19	20	21	18	15	20	18
Onion	1 Kg	28	28	27	29	25	27	28	27	23	25	27	25	25	26	28

Tomato	1 Kg	68	80	70	67	78	63	80	80	70	60	70	60	80	73	75
Bajra (whole)	1 Kg	37	37	35	31	41	36	35	30	40	35	37	36	34	31	44
Jowar (whole)	1 Kg	40	48	38	40	30	42	41	53	38	45	42	45	45	40	56
Maida (wheat)	1 Kg	40	39	40	40	42	39	39	39	35	40	40	40	33	40	38
Ragi (whole)	1 Kg	58	62	57	NR	63	55	62	72	63	67	57	NR	65	61	62
Suji (whole)	1 Kg	39	42	40	41	42	39	38	39	40	40	41	40	40	40	39
Besan	1 Kg	93	97	92	92	97	92	92	90	88	88	92	85	85	98	97
Desi Ghee	1 Kg	639	560	635	674	625	650	637	602	637	611	634	604	551	615	626
Butter (Pasteurised)	100 gm	60	57	60	60	56	60	60	60	60	58	60	60	53	58	60
Eggs	1 Dozen	70	64	70	68	66	68	63	71	72	70	71	66	73	73	72
Brinjal	1 Kg	40	48	37	40	35	40	53	58	40	50	52	50	36	35	42
Black Pepper (whole)	100 gm	95	88	97	93	99	95	90	92	97	89	93	95	97	87	93
Coriander (whole)	250 gm	39	37	40	37	49	37	41	36	42	40	38	40	47	47	38
Cummin Seed (whole)	100 gm	37	42	34	37	45	35	39	34	38	46	39	49	50	34	44
Red Chillies (whole)	100 gm	28	23	28	29	34	28	26	25	37	32	26	27	33	22	32
Turmeric (powder)	50 gm	13	20	13	15	15	14	16	13	17	15	15	15	15	14	15
Banana	1 Kg	50	47	47	50	59	50	57	50	50	50	53	50	48	50	49
