

**MINUTES OF THE 31<sup>st</sup> MEETING OF THE CENTRAL CONSUMER PROTECTION  
COUNCIL (CCPC) HELD ON 17<sup>th</sup> APRIL, 2017 AT NEW DELHI**

The 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Central Consumer Protection Council (CCPC) was held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2017 in the Committee Room "C", Vigyan Bhavan Annexe, New Delhi. The list of participants is at **Annexure-I.**

2. Welcoming the participants, Secretary, Food & Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs, in her opening remarks, mentioned the initiatives the Department has undertaken towards consumer protection and welfare, such as introduction of the Consumer Protection Bill, 2015 to further strengthen the consumer protection measures, enhancing the capacity of the National Consumer Helpline for effective redressal of consumer grievances by increasing the number of Desks from 14 to 60, proposal for setting up of six zonal helplines in different regional languages, Model Guidelines on Direct Selling, organisation of Consumer Mela and Swachhata Pakhwada, international co-operation in the field of Conformity Assessment, curbing the menace of misleading advertisements by constituting an Inter-Ministerial Committee, joint publicity campaigns under 'Jago Grahak Jago' campaign, etc. She expressed the hope that the deliberations in the meeting would come up with innovative ideas to further strengthen the consumer movement in the country.

3. In his address, the Hon'ble Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Vice-Chairman of the Council, observed that Consumer Protection Act mandates formulation of "Consumer Protection Councils" at District, State and National Level with an objective to advise the Governments at the Centre and in the States on better protection of the rights and interests of consumers. But many a time these Councils remain inactive and defunct without making any major contribution to consumer welfare. The Members of this Council have a very significant role to play in the Council. Their advisory and recommendatory role will help in formulating the future road map in protecting the interests of the consumers in a better way.

4. Hon'ble Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, the Chairman of the Council, observed that the intention of the meeting was to hear the views and suggestions of the Members of the Council in the interest of consumers. Thereafter, the items on the agenda were discussed and following recommendations were made by the Council:

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: Confirmation of the Minutes of the 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CCPC held on 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2016.**

The minutes were confirmed.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: ACTION TAKEN ON THE MINUTES OF THE 30<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF CCPC**

Action taken on the decisions taken in the 30th Meeting of CCPC were noted and after deliberations the Council recommended as follows:

- (i) Efforts should be made to increase the number of companies in the convergence programme of the National Consumer Helpline.
- (ii) Efforts should also be made to integrate all the State Consumer Helplines with the national portal at CCS, IIPA.
- (iii) The Department of Consumer Affairs should write to all the State Governments to strengthen the State Consumer Helplines and integrate with the INGRAM system.
- (iv) It was informed that it has been decided to close the Grahak Suvidha Kendras and in their place to set up six Zonal Consumer Helplines at Ahmedabad, Patna, Kolkata, Guwahati, Jaipur and Bengaluru. It is expected that the process of setting up the Zonal helplines would be completed in three months.
- (v) The matter regarding provision of drinking water as per standards was discussed. It was mentioned that WHO guidelines exist on the subject. Upon verification, it was brought out that BIS had also formulated standards on Drinking water in 2012. Department of Consumer Affairs would write to concerned Central Ministries and the State Governments to consider implementing the Indian Standards formulated by BIS.

- (vi) Panchayat level institutions should be associated with raising of consumer awareness.

### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: Report of the Working Groups of the CCPC**

It was informed that in the last meeting of the CCPC four Working Groups from amongst the members of CCPC were constituted on Product safety, Food Adulteration, Misleading Advertisement and Consumer Advocacy. It was also informed that only two of the working groups were ready with presentation or a report.

It was observed that since there were no conveners for the Working Groups, meetings of the Working Groups could not be held on a regular basis. It was decided that a Deputy Secretary from the Department would be attached with each Working Group to assist the Working Groups in organizing the meetings and rendering any other secretarial assistance. The two groups which are not yet ready with their reports, will forward the same within the next two months.

A presentation was made by the Working Group on Food Adulteration. A copy of the presentation is enclosed (**Annexure-II**).The points were taken into consideration by the Council and the same would be forwarded to the concerned Divisions of the Department for further follow up.

The Working Group on Product Safety suggested issue of guidelines on product safety. It was also suggested that 'services' should be included in the ambit of the Working Group and the Working Group be renamed as 'Working Group on Product and Services Safety". The suggestion was accepted and the Council wanted the submission of a formal report within two months.

Some of the major suggestions of the Working Group on 'Misleading Advertisements" were that for every advertisement the manufacturer/producer/service provider should give an undertaking that the advertisement is not misleading and the information is true. A large number of advertisements have an asterisk (\*) with terms and conditions applicable remark. But the consumers are never told or made aware about the terms and conditions which

lead to serious problems after purchase. It should be made mandatory for the manufacturer/dealer /seller to reveal the terms and conditions to the consumers before purchase. The manufacturer/dealer/seller should also advertise as to how one can know the terms and conditions. Government should set up a Regulator for Advertisements who should scan the content of the advertisement before being released and also take up complaints regarding misleading advertisements from the consumers. The Central Council recommended that the report be examined by the Department of Consumer Affairs for implementation.

Prof. Ashok Patil, a member of the Working Group on Consumer Advocacy, submitted a report consisting of suggestions from his end, in which he submitted that

- (i) The State Governments should have separate Department of Consumer Affairs.
- (ii) There should be coordinational relationship/ cooperation/ discussion/ understanding among Business Associations with Ministry of Consumer Affairs at the Central level/State levels; Consumer Chairs; Research Centers and NGOs.
- (iii) There is need for establishment of at least one bench of E-Consumer Forum/Commission in each State.
- (iv) There is need for more Cooperation/commitment of Business Entity/Associations towards Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) through Mediation.
- (v) There is a need for strict adoption of 'United Guidelines on Consumer Protection' in legislation as well as in consumer policies.

The Group was told to submit its report in two months.

#### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: Agenda Points suggested by Members**

- (i) Prof Suresh Misra of IIPA suggested for capacity building of Panchayati Raj Institutions and other Rural Development Functionaries to spread

consumer awareness in the rural areas. He proposed that this can be done by involving the State Institute Rural Development (SIRD's) to train the members of the Panchayati Raj institutions and other functionaries. The SIRD's and ATI's of various states may introduce a module on Consumer Protection and Welfare. Such activities can be funded by Department of Consumer Affairs under a scheme.

- (ii) Dr. Anant Sharma of Jaipur suggested for organizing a National Consumer Awareness Yatra involving the State Governments and the voluntary consumer organisations starting from 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2017 till 24<sup>th</sup> December, 2017.
- (iii) The Department of Consumer Affairs would examine the suggestions made and initiate follow up action.

#### **ITEM NO. 5: Any other item with the permission of the Chair**

The following issues were also discussed:

- (i) Dr. Anant Sharma mentioned that as per the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, the Central Government is to nominate 10 Members to the State Consumer Protection Councils. It was recommended that the Department should write to those States where State Consumer Protection Councils are yet to be constituted/re-constituted.
- (ii) Ms. Pushpa Grimaji, Member, suggested that she had submitted a detailed concept note on Food Adulteration two years ago to the Department and requested the Department to examine the suggestions. She also observed that database should be developed on food adulteration indicating the items which are mostly found adulterated, the place of adulteration, districts etc.
- (iii) Suggestions were made for amending the Consumer Protection Rules regarding the membership of VCOs on the CCPC, so that affiliation to Consumer International may not be included as qualification criteria.

Follow up action to examine the suggestions would be taken by the Department.

- (iv) The next meeting of the Central Consumer Protection Council would be held after six months.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.

**ANNEXURE- I**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE 31<sup>st</sup> MEETING OF CCPC HELD ON 17 APRIL  
2017 IN VIGYAN BHAWAN ANNEXE, NEW DELHI**

1. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, Hon'ble Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India .... In Chair
2. Shri C.R. Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India ... Vice-Chairperson
3. Smt. Preeti Sudan, Secretary, Department of Food and Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs, Government of India ... Member-Secretary
4. Shri Ashish Bahuguna, Chairperson, FSSAI
5. Shri A.K.Bhalla, Director General Foreign Trade
6. Shri Pankaj Kumar, Secretary, Food and Consumer Protection, Government of Bihar
7. Shri H.L.Upendar, Deputy Director General, BIS
8. Shri Anil Jauhri, CEO, NABCB/QCI
9. Shri S.Hanumantha Rao, Joint Registrar, NCDRC
10. Smt. Rajdeep Kaur, Deputy Secretary, Consumer Affairs, Government of Punjab
11. Shri M.Thangaraj, DMI Head Office, Faridabad
12. Prof. Suresh Misra, Chair Professor, Centre for Consumer Studies, IIPA, New Delhi
13. Prof. Ashok R. Patil, Chair on Consumer Law and Practice, National Law School India University, Bengaluru
14. Smt Pushpa Girimaji
15. Smt. Nirmala Desikan, Consumer Association of India
16. Shri Uday Mawani, Consumer Education and Research Centre, Ahmedabad
17. Dr. Anant Sharma, Jaipur
18. Shri Binod Ashish, New Delhi
19. Shri, Deepak Saxena, CUTS

**Officers from the Department**

1. Smt. Madhulika P.Sukul, Additional Secretary, Consumer Affairs

2. Shri P.V. Rama Sastry, Joint secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs
3. Shri Anil Bahuguna, Joint Secretary, Consumer Affairs
4. Shri Sanjeev Hans, Private Secretary to Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
5. Shri R.C. Meena, OSD to Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
6. Shri Dharmesh Makwana, Director, Department of Consumer Affairs
7. Shri Satish Kumar, Technical Director, NIC, Deputy Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs
8. Shri S.S.Thakur, Director, Department of Consumer Affairs
9. Shri Bani Brata Roy, Deputy Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs
10. Shri Premraj Kuar, Deputy Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs
11. Shri Surendra Singh, Deputy Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs
12. Shri G.C. Rout, Deputy Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs
13. Shri N. Natarajan, Principal Systems Analyst, Department of Consumer Affairs