

World Consumer Rights Day, 2023 to be celebrated on 15th March, 2023

Theme of the World Consumer Rights Day, 2023 is
“Empowering consumers through clean energy
transitions”

National Consumer Helpline strengthened, E-Daakhil Portal for speedy consumer grievance redressal and Right to Repair portal to empower Consumers

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The Department of Consumer Affairs will be celebrating World Consumer Rights Day, 2023 on Wednesday, 15th March 2023. The Additional Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, Mrs. Nidhi Khare in this regard interacted with media persons here today and shared that the theme of the World Consumer Rights Day, 2023 is “Empowering consumers through clean energy transitions”.

In consonance with the theme, the primary thrust is on deployment of technology to reduce dependence of traditional energy sources such as fossil fuels and enable a rapid transition to clean energy solutions that promote sustainability, security, affordability and access to consumers in the long term.

E-commerce has steadily emerged as one of the most preferred medium of shopping for consumers. At the same time, there has also been a rise in the number of e-commerce grievances registered by consumers on the National Consumer Helpline (NCH). Thus, NCH is being strengthened technologically to ensure that it not only receives more complaints but also redresses common consumer grievances of refund, replacement and deficiency in service speedily.

NCH works as an alternate dispute redressal mechanism at the pre-litigation level wherein consumers can easily register their grievances by calling ‘1915’ or through the mobile app. NCH is accessible in over 17 languages including recently added Maithili, Kashmiri and Santhali languages. It is available 24*7 through an Omni channel system which includes NCH app, email, SMS and call. There has also been a rise in the number of dockets registered on NCH. The docket count has more than doubled from a monthly average of 37,062 in 2017 to 86,674 in 2022.

To facilitate online filing of consumer complaints, the E-Daakhil Portal has been set up which provides a hassle-free, speedy and inexpensive facility to conveniently approach the relevant consumer forum, dispensing the need to travel and be physically present to file their grievance. The objective is to digitize and make it easy for consumers to access justice with the help of technology. All formats for application, review, appeal, etc. will be digitized for bringing hassle free, speedy redressal of consumer complaints, in line with the e-courts project. Mediation, which is envisaged under the Act as an alternate dispute redressal mechanism, is also being considered through online mode.

In line with the LiFE (Lifestyle for environment) movement launched by the Hon’ble Prime Minister, the

Department has initiated creation of “Right to Repair portal” to protect consumers against planned obsolescence i.e. designing a product with limited life resulting in increasing e-waste. The portal is expected to address the concerns on the price, originality and warranty of spare parts. It will enable consumers to be better informed about the product by mentioning methods to check authenticity of spare parts and information on country of origin. The link of the portal is <https://righttorepairindia.gov.in/>

The portal will carry information for enabling consumers to self-repair, knowing about authorized repairers and promoting third party repairers. The endeavor is to create an ecosystem for availability of genuine spare parts for the duration of warranty promised by the manufacturer.

The Department is also planning to organize a hackathon for designing charging solutions that work with wearable devices with an emphasis on reducing ‘electronic and electrical waste (e-waste)’ and promoting a more sustainable consumer ecosystem. Wireless charging methods are also being explored, which will help significantly in e-waste proliferation.

AD/NS

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