

National Consumers Day on 24.12.2015

INTRODUCTION

The nation celebrates National Consumers Day every year on 24th December, of every year. A citizen is a consumer by birth. The entire population of 125 crores in India constitutes the multitude of consumers. Consumers are basic to an economy, because in Keynesian economic parlance the aggregate effective demands determines the level of economic activities of a country. Therefore it is widely held that consumer is the king who oils the wheels of industry, commerce and business. Constitution of India guarantees to us and aims at both economic and social justice. In order to highlight the importance of consumer and to draw the national attention to the rights, welfare and issues facing the consumers, the National Consumers Day is celebrated every year.

Increasing consumerism is a strong indicator of a growing economy. It speaks of higher propensity to spend from the disposable income adding to the aggregate effective demand, which oils the wheels of investment, leads to increased spate of economic activities, growth in employment and increased income at the hands of consumers. Increased economic activities, though initially stokes rising prices and erodes purchasing power of the consumers, it smoothens once the increased investment results in flow of output in the economy.

An important aspect of growing economic activities has been the strides achieved in technology, boosting up trade and commerce on the newer platform of e-commerce/ online shopping rapidly. However, day by day, the consumers are exposed to newer and newer challenges. They run the risk of being swindled of their money, cheated with spurious and substandard goods, and their safety has been at stake.

Today the morning soup of NDTV news dished out information of police having arrested a criminal lady who defrauded crores of rupees of people who saved their money with her, lured by the promise of 5% monthly interest. The Sharada scam is also a glaring example. It is an irony that despite a continuous campaigning by the public agencies to make people/ consumers aware of the deceptive designs, they still fall a prey to such traps. Deficiency in service has been a common complaint of the consumers. Frauds in housing, education and other sectors have often led to a lot of resentment and litigations. Adulteration of food, edible oils, milk, milk products etc have also been a major concern for enforcement authorities, central or states.

PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS

An interaction with an average consumer brings to light the common perception that he is helpless at the hands of the industry and business and is at the receiving end. The common grievance is that the Government is doing nothing in this direction. For small grievances like overpricing, substandard and adulterated goods and deficiency of services for small purchases, they prefer to ignore than wasting time, energy and money hopping from one agency to the other in the absence of an efficient, convenient and user friendly mode to channelize their grievance and trust in the system to redress their grievances. It is only when the stake in the purchase is high, they write to the central government for redresses of all their grievances.