

# Consumer Protection Act, 2019 comes into force, includes e- commerce also

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The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 comes into force from 20 July, with its salient features including the establishment of the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) to promote, protect and enforce the rights of consumers.

While briefing the media about the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 through video conference, the Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan said that this new Act will empower consumers and help them in protecting their rights through its various notified rules and provisions like Consumer Protection Councils, Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions, Mediation, Product Liability and punishment for manufacture or sale of products containing adulterant / spurious goods.

## **Key Highlights**

- Under this act every e-commerce entity is required to provide information relating to return, refund, exchange, warranty and guarantee, delivery and shipment, modes of payment, grievance redressal mechanism, payment methods, security of payment methods, charge-back options, etc. including country of origin which are necessary for enabling the consumer to make an informed decision at the pre-purchase stage on its platform.
- E-commerce platforms have to acknowledge the receipt of any consumer complaint within forty-eight hours and redress the complaint within one month from the date of receipt under this Act. It is further added that the New Act introduces the concept of product liability and

brings within its scope, the product manufacturer, product service provider and product seller, for any claim for compensation.

- The New Act provides for simplifying the consumer dispute adjudication process in the consumer commissions, which include, among others, empowerment of the State and District Commissions to review their own orders, enabling a consumer to file complaints electronically and file complaints in consumer Commissions that have jurisdiction over the place of his residence, videoconferencing for hearing and deemed admissibility of complaints if the question of admissibility is not decided within the specified period of 21 days.
- The Minister said an Alternate Dispute Resolution mechanism of Mediation has been provided in the new Act. This will simplify the adjudication process. A complaint will be referred by a Consumer Commission for mediation, wherever scope for early settlement exists and parties agree for it. Mediation will be held in the Mediation Cells to be established under the aegis of the Consumer Commissions. There will be no appeal against settlement through mediation.
- The New Act also introduces the concept of product liability and brings within its scope, the product manufacturer, product service provider and product seller, for any claim for compensation. The Act provides for punishment by a competent court for manufacture or sale of adulterant/spurious goods. The court may, in case of first conviction, suspend any licence issued to the person for a period of up to two years, and in case of second or subsequent conviction, cancel the licence.
- Under this new Act, besides general rules, there are Central Consumer Protection Council Rules, Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission Rules, Appointment of President & Members in State/District Commission Rules, Mediation Rules, Model Rules and E-Commerce Rules and Consumer Commission Procedure Regulations, Mediation Regulations and Administrative control over State Commission & District Commission Regulations.

**SOURCE:***Livemint*