



1. Landmark Consumer Protection Bill, 2019 gets Parliamentary approval

- Which consumer rights have been defined in the bill?
- How do the bill promote, protect and enforce the rights of consumers?
- Why is this Bill significant?

GS paper 2 (Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.)

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In this video, you can find detailed answers for all the above questions.

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What is the context about?



The Parliament passed the Consumer Protection Bill that seeks to establish authorities for timely and effective administration and settlement of consumer disputes. The Bill replaces the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.



The Bill defines a consumer as a person who buys any good or avails a service for a consideration. It does not include a person who obtains a good for resale or a good or service for commercial purpose



The Consumer Protection Bill 2019, already passed by Lok Sabha, was approved in the Upper House by voice vote and will replace the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.



Which consumer rights have been defined in the bill?



Six consumer rights have been defined in the Bill, including the right to:

- ✓ Be protected against marketing of goods and services which are hazardous to life and property;
- ✓ Be informed of the quality, quantity, potency, purity, standard and price of goods or services;
- ✓ Right to choose
- ✓ Right to be heard
- ✓ Be assured of access to a variety of goods or services at competitive prices; and
- ✓ Seek redressal against unfair or restrictive trade practices.



How do the bill promote, protect and enforce the rights of consumers?



The central government will set up a Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) to promote, protect and enforce the rights of consumers.



The CCPA may impose a penalty on a manufacturer or an endorser of up to Rs 10 lakh and imprisonment for up to two years for a false or misleading advertisement. In case of a subsequent offence, the fine may extend to Rs 50 lakh and imprisonment of up to five years.



It will also set up a Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission and forums at the district, state and national levels for adjudicating consumer complaints.

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Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions (CDRCs) will be set up at the district, state, and national levels.



A consumer can file a complaint with CDRCs in relation to:

- ✓ unfair or restrictive trade practices;
- ✓ defective goods or services;
- ✓ overcharging or deceptive charging; and
- ✓ the offering of goods or services for sale which may be hazardous to life and safety.



Complaints against an unfair contract can be filed with only the State and National Appeals from a District CDRC will be heard by the State CDRC. Appeals from the State CDRC will be heard by the National CDRC. Final appeal will lie before the Supreme Court.



Why is this Bill significant?



Swift remedies: Presently Consumer only have a single point of access to justice, which is time consuming. Additional swift executive remedies are proposed in the bill through Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA).



Deterrent punishment to check misleading advertisements and adulteration of products.



Product liability provision to deter manufacturers and service providers from delivering defective products or deficient services. Ease of approaching Consumer Commission and Simplification of Adjudication process. Scope for early disposal of cases through mediation.