

ECONOMICS



Consumer Rights
Class-X

The consumer in the marketplace

- We participate in the market both as producers and consumers. As producers of goods and services we could be working in any of the sectors .
- Consumers participate in the market when they purchase goods and services that they need. These are the final goods that people as consumers use.



Exploitation of consumer in the marketplace:

- unfair trade practices such as when shopkeepers weigh less than what they should or when traders add charges that were not mentioned before, or when adulterated/defective goods are sold.
- At times false information is passed on through the media, and other sources to attract consumers.



CONSUMER MOVEMENT

- In India, the consumer movement as a 'social force' originated with the necessity of protecting and promoting the interests of consumers against unethical and unfair trade practices.



Consumers International

In 1985 United Nations adopted the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection. This was a tool for nations to adopt measures to protect consumers and for consumer advocacy groups to press their governments to do so. At the international level, this has become the foundation for consumer movement. Today, Consumers International has become an umbrella body to over 220 member organisations from over 115 countries.



COPRA

- A major step taken in 1986 by the Indian government was the enactment of the Consumer Protection Act 1986, popularly known as COPRA. You will learn more about COPRA later.



CONSUMER RIGHTS

- Right to Safety
- Right to Information
- Right to Choose
- Right to seek redressal



Under COPRA, a three-tier quasi- judicial machinery at the district, state and national levels was set up for redressal of consumer disputes.

- The district level court deals with the cases involving claims upto Rs. 20 lakhs.
- the state level courts between Rs. 20 lakhs and Rs. 1 crore and
- The national level court deals with cases involving claims exceeding Rs. 1 crore.
- If a case is dismissed in district level court, the consumer can also appeal in state and then in National level courts.



LEARNING TO BECOME WELL-INFORMED CONSUMERS

- When we as consumers become conscious of our rights, while purchasing various goods and services, we will be able to discriminate and make informed choices.
- The enactment of COPRA has led to the setting up of separate departments of Consumer Affairs in central and state governments.



TAKING THE CONSUMER MOVEMENT FORWARD :

- India has been observing 24 December as the National Consumers' Day.
- It was on this day that the Indian Parliament enacted the Consumer Protection Act in 1986.
- There are today more than 700 consumer groups in the country of which only about 20-25 are well organised and recognised for their work.



- After more than 25 years of the enactment of COPRA, consumer awareness in India is spreading but slowly.
- It is often said that consumer movements can be effective only with the consumers' active involvement. It requires a voluntary effort and struggle involving the participation of one and all.





THANK YOU