



Protecting the welfare of Costumers

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[Prelims: Current events of national and international importance;

Mains: GS Paper-II: Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations and potential, citizens' charter, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures]

Why in news?

- Government has set up the Consumer Welfare Fund (CWF) to promote and protect the welfare of the consumers.
- It has constituted under the extant Consumer Welfare Fund (CWF) Guidelines, 2019.

Important takeaways

The Government has taken various steps to promote and protect the welfare of the consumers by creating awareness and strengthening consumer movements:

- A Pan-India consumer awareness campaign "Jago Grahak Jago" through print, electronic, outdoor and social media through various agencies/ organizations/ Ministries like All India Radio, Doordarshan, National Film Development Corporation, Bureau of Outreach & Communication, Department of Posts etc.
- Participation in various fairs/festivals/events to generate awareness among the consumers living in rural and backward areas of the country.
- Providing grant-in-aid to States/UTs to generate awareness in regional languages.

- Dissemination of consumer awareness messages through social media.
- Celebration of World Consumer Rights Day/National Consumer Day.

Consumer Protection Act

- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 (CP Act 2019) has been implemented in July 2020. The new Act covers e-commerce transactions; it allows electronic filing of complaints, hearing and/or examining parties through video-conferencing for procedural ease and reduces inconvenience.
- The act introduced the concept of product liability bringing within its scope, the product manufacturer, product service provider and product seller for any claim for compensation, imposition of penalty on the manufacturer/endorser for a false or misleading advertisement.
- The act prohibits the manufacturers and endorsers from endorsing a particular product or service, for mediation as an 'Alternate Dispute Resolution Mechanism' for making the process of dispute adjudication simpler & quicker and reduces pressure on Consumer Commissions.
- Under the CP Act, 2019, in July 2020 the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has been set up under Consumer Protection Act. Also, a National Consumer Helpline (NCH) with toll free number 1800-11-4000 or short code 14404 has been set up to handle the consumer grievances.
- Consumer awareness programmes are organized through the network of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) Offices across the country for promoting the concept of standardization, certification and quality consciousness among consumers as well as manufactures.