

Consumer Affairs



Basic objective of the Consumer Affairs Department is to ensure proper weighing and packaging of consumer goods, to promote awareness, safeguard the interest of the consumers and to assist redressal mechanism of the grievances of the consumers through Consumer Redressal Fora at District level and in Kolkata.

The Department functions through the following offices:

1. State Commission & District Forum
2. Directorate of Legal Metrology
3. Directorate of Consumer Affairs & Fair Business Practices.

State Commission & District Forum :

State Commission & District Forum promote consumer awareness, safeguards the interest of the consumers and assists in the redressal of consumer grievances. In order to achieve these ends and to comply with the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, one State Commission with an Additional Bench at Kolkata and 21 (twenty one) district Fora covering all the districts including 2 (two) extra Fora one at Kolkata and the other at Siliguri. have been setup. One Circuit Bench of Jalpaiguri Forum at Alipurduar has also been setup.

In all the Fora, including the State Commission at Kolkata, so far 98,419 cases have been filed since inception of which 92,356 (94%) have been disposed and 6,063 (6%) were pending as on 29.02.2012.

Implementation of 'Computerisation and Computer Networking of Consumer Forum in the Country (CONFONET)', a Government of India project for interlinking of all the Fora countrywide, is complete except Howrah Forum for which required fund has already been placed during the current financial year.

Directorate of Legal Metrology :

The Directorate of Legal Metrology implements following Acts/Rules, namely :

1. The Legal Metrology Act, 2009
2.
 - a. The Legal Metrology (General) Rules, 2011
 - b. The Legal Metrology (Numeration) Rules, 2011
 - c. The Legal Metrology (National Standards) Rules, 2011
 - d. The Indian Institute of Legal Metrology Rules, 2011
 - e. The Legal Metrology (Approval of Models) Rules, 2011
 - f. The Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011
 - g. The West Bengal Legal Metrology (Enforcement) Rules, 2011.

Above Act and Rules help in safeguarding interests of consumers against fraudulent use of weights and measures and suppression of valuable information, or misrepresentation, on packaged products and they are implemented through the Directorate of Legal Metrology.

Task forces at Kolkata and Districts have been constituted and regular enforcement drives are being conducted by the Legal Metrology directorate in different markets. Legal action has been taken against unscrupulous traders for fraudulent use of weights and measures .

The Legal Metrology Directorate has realized 13,41,00,976/- as verification and compounding fees etc. and no. of traders covered was 4,05,948 and Seizures Made was 3,010 during the year 2011 - 2012.

27 numbers of computers have been installed in different

districts for upgradation of the operation of the Legal Metrology Directorate with updated inputs.

G.I.S. (Geographical Information System) on identification of markets of West Bengal has been completed.

Upgradation of Secondary Standards Laboratory at Kolkata (Presidency Division) at Siliguri (Jalpaiguri Division) has been made during the Year 2011-12.

2 vehicular Mobile Kits for cheking the Weigh Bridge in and around districts have been activated.

Setting up of a Secondary Standard Laboratory at Chinsurah under Burdwan Division is also under consideration.

To cover maximum traders in the state a detailed delimitation proposal for inspectorial units of the Legal Metrology Directorate has been prepared.

Directorate Of Consumer Affairs & Fair Business Practices:

The main function of this Directorate is to increase consumer awareness on different aspects. It also redresses consumer grievances through the process of mediation. Complaints under the Consumer Protection Act are also filed by the Directorate on behalf of the Government.

The CA&FBP has 3(three) divisional offices in 3 (three) divisions, one regional office in each district and one additional regional office each in Barrackpore and Durgapur sub-divisions.

Achievement for current financial year (2011-12)

1. Organised awareness programmes through camps, seminars-cum-group discussion,workshops, Tableau (Mobile display van) , street dramas, magic shows, talking doll shows and regular awareness programmes with Self Help Groups, Clubs & Associations. Total no. of programmes held in the year 2011-12 (upto January'12) is 9365.
2. Essay writing, poster illustration, slogan writing and sit & draw competition among the school students for consumer awareness on the occasion of National Consumer Day were organized throughout West Bengal.
3. Organised training programmes on consumer education for Departmental staff and members of NGOs & VCOs by three Divisional offices of this Dte.
4. "Kreta Surksha Mela" was organished at Netaji Indoor Stadium, Kolkata on & from 16.09.11 to 18.09.11.

Various topics related with C.P. Act and other consumer friendly acts and rules have been discussed by the resource persons and cultural programmes were also held .

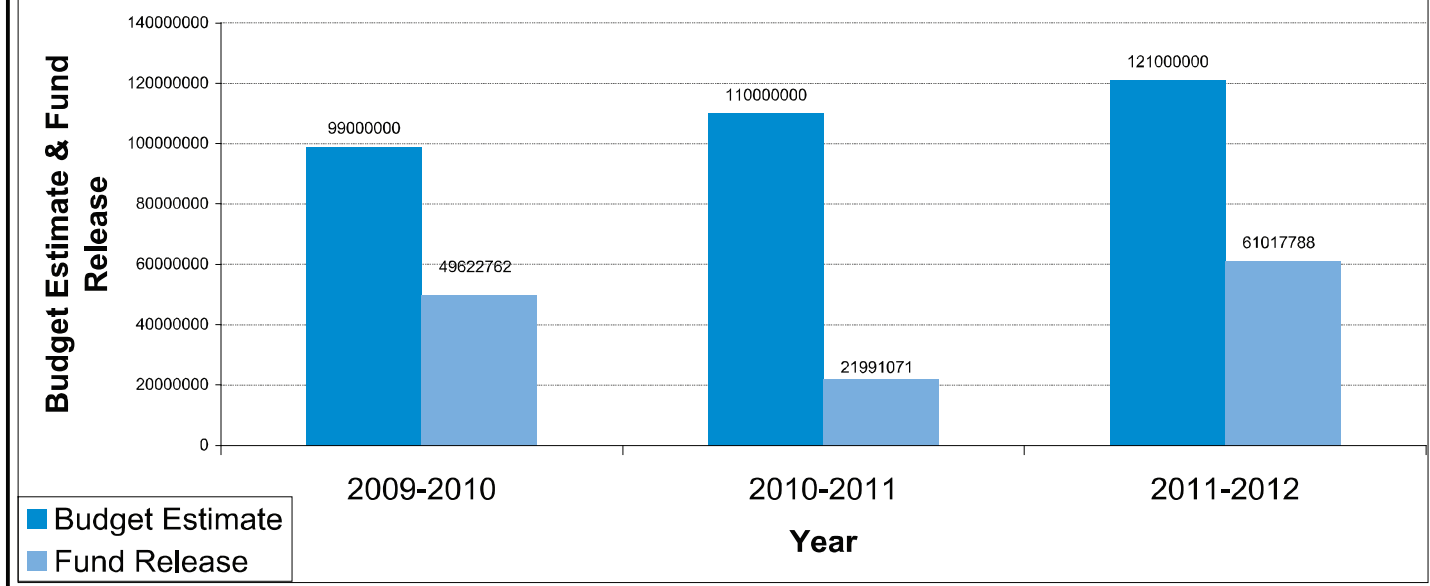
5. Participated in different fairs throughout West Bengal during the last winter season. Poush Mela in Birbhum, Rash Mela in Coochbehar, Jalpesh Mela in Jalpaiguri, Gangasagar Mela and Sundarban Yuba Utsab in South 24 Pgs. were held and participated by our R.Os.
6. Organised Special awareness programmes during important festivals like Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Jagadhatri Puja, Saraswati Puja & Idd with great enthusiasm throughout West Bengal.
7. Leaflets and booklets were Published in Bengali, Hindi, English and Urdu languages containing basic information on consumer awareness.
8. Two editions of "Upabhokta Samachar", quarterly news letter of Consumer Affairs Department, were published containing different topics in Bengali, English & Urdu languages.
9. Special programme has been taken up to install hoarding at blocks, sub divisions and district headquarters, containing basic information to aware the consumers. In Kolkata, 12 no. of hoardings has been installed in front of 12 important market places.
10. Live phone in programmes broadcasted through F.M. Gyanvani Radio on consumer protection and consumer rights.
11. Live phone in programmes are being telecast through Doordarshan Kendra (D.D. Bangla) Kolkata on consumer awareness titled "Kena Katar Sat Satero"- every Friday from 8.30 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. The Regional Offices also conducted same type of programmes through the local cable channels.
12. Steps has been taken to install "Touch Screen Kiosks" at different important malls & markets with improved software.
13. Sponsored the members of NGOs/ VCOs for study in Certificate on Consumer Protection course at IGNOU every year. 50 such members were sponsored during the year 2011-12.
14. World Consumer Rights Day-2012 was observed all over the State of West Bengal and centrally at Star Theatre, Hatibagan, Kolkata. The programme was inaugurated by Swami Jitatananda of Alam Bazar Math, Ram Krishna Mission. Other dignitaries included Hon'ble Ministers of different Departments of the Government of West Bengal. In this

connection a State Level Sit & Draw Competition was organised at Nati Binodini Sarani and 1st, 2nd & 3rd winners were awarded cash prize of Rs. 10,000/-, Rs, 5,000/- and Rs. 3,000/- respectively to encourage the students on consumer awareness. Besides prizes were awarded to the best 3 (three) Regional Offices of the Directorate of CA & FBP and best 3 (three) non-tax revenue earning Districts of Legal Metrology Directorate.

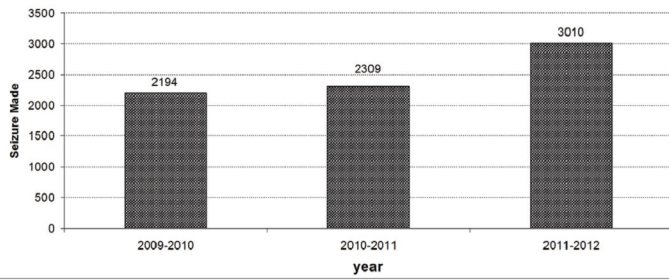
15. Resolved consumer complaints through mediation before the complainant would lodge their complaint at the Consumer Forum. In all the Regional offices of West Bengal and Headquarters of this Directorate. 1887 no. of complaints were received within January, 2012 & 971 no. of complaints were redressed in favour of the consumer.
16. Steps have been taken in joint collaboration with GIZ & FICCI to minimize the number of long pending cases through mediation lying at the district Fora, State Commission etc.
17. Special Task Forces were created in Kolkata and in the districts with the Legal Metrology Directorate. Consumer Welfare Officers actively participated to curb the Unfair Trade Practices.

18. An awareness programme for the protection of investors from unscrupulous financial organization, especially NBFC, was held on 13th December'11 at RBI Auditorium, Kolkata in joint collaboration with RBI & CA Department. SEBI & Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Govt. of India were also associated with that programme. Such type of awareness programmes will be also organized by these master trainers in all Gram Panchayats, Blocks and all wards of the Municipalities to make the common people aware.
19. Meeting was held with all Medical Insurance Companies operating in the state along with their TPAs. Representatives of IMA, Insurance Agents' Association were also present in that meeting. Protection of the interest of the consumer patients & to minimize the harassment were discussed and steps to be taken to give redressal to them as far as practicable.
20. A special drive has been taken for setting up 1,000 'Consumer Clubs' in schools and colleges throughout the State. Already 616 institutions expressed their interest.

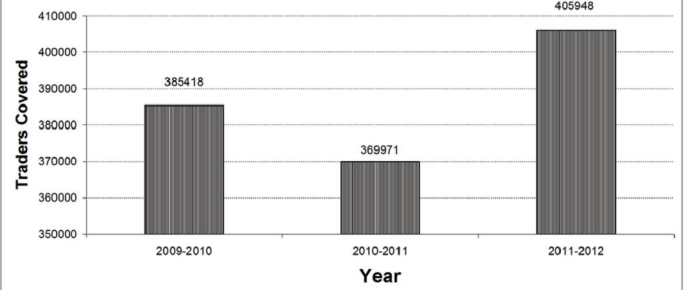
**Comparative Statement of Fund Utilised under State Plan
Head of Account for the year 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12
respectively Under Demand No. 10**



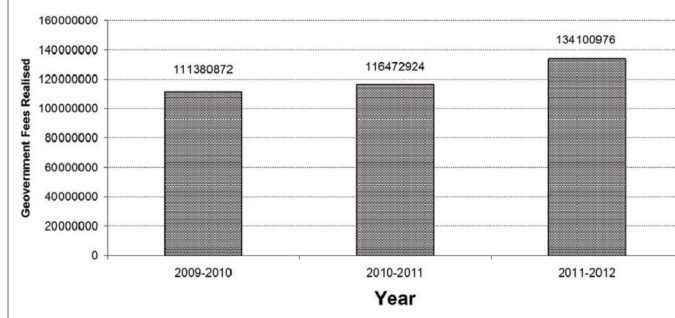
Number of Seizures Made during the Years 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012



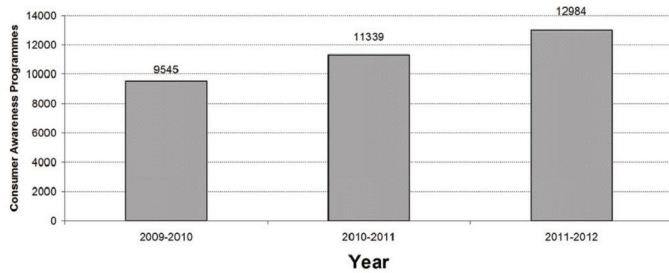
Number of Traders Covered



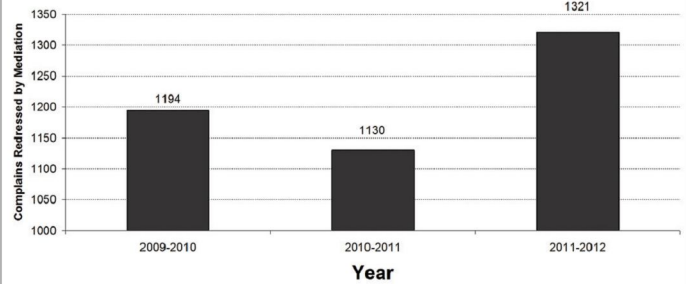
Total Government Fees Realised



Number of Consumer Awareness Programmes



Number of Complaints Redressed by Mediation



Number of Counselling

