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Bhutanese Consumer News – August, 2024

*'a satisfied consumer is the best
business strategy of all'*

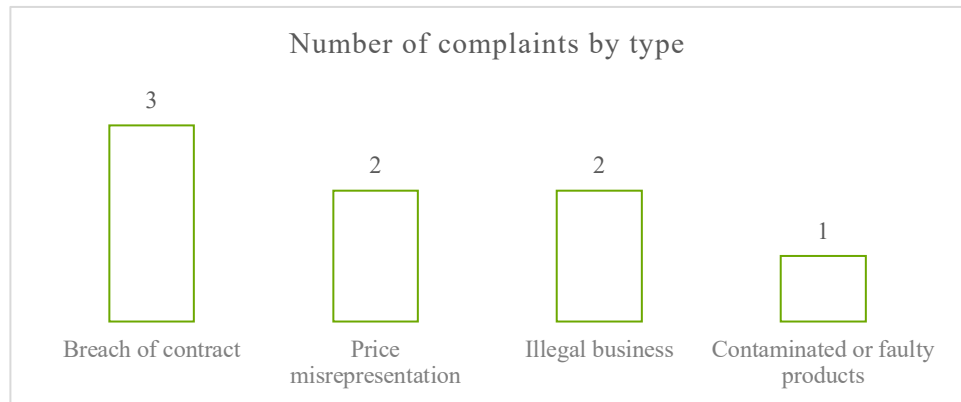
How well do you know consumer protection? (answers on next page)

- (1) What is the consumer complaint toll free number?
- (2) What does the Latin phrase 'caveat emptor' mean?
- (3) What was Competition & Consumer Affairs Authority's old name?
- (4) Who is credited with this quote 'Competition is not only the basis of protection to the consumer, but it is incentive to progress'?
- (5) What is a Pyramid Scheme?



A. Complaints & Redressal

A total of 11 complaints were made to CCAA during the month of August, comprising of 10 individual complaints and a general complaint. Of these, 6 have been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainants, while two complaints were withdrawn due to absence of evidences from complainants to prove wrongdoing by business. The remaining three cases are at various stages of investigation and mediation.



Complaints were either resolved through the facilitation of replacement or repairs. A major output was the successful negotiation between a prominent vehicle dealer and the 45 complainants on August 28, 2024; wherein the dealer agreed to replace the faulty engine part of the vehicles at no cost to the owners and also extend the vehicle warranty period to another two years.

WORD OF THE MONTH

consumer *noun*

according to the Consumer Protection Act, 2012, consumer is 'a natural person who buys goods and services for personal, family or household use with no intention of resale'

'in e-commerce, your prices have to be better, because the consumers have to take a leap of faith in your product'

ANSWERS

1. 1214
2. Let the buyer beware
3. Office of Consumer Protection (OCP)
4. Herbert Hoover, 31st President of the US
5. A pyramid scheme is a deceitful system of profiteering based on recruiting ever-increasing number of members or investors. The promoters recruit members, who in turn recruit more members, and so on. There may be no real products on offer and money is made by promoters from membership or registration fees.

For any complaint, contact us:

- Call 1214 (Toll-free Number), or
- E-mail to consumerservice@moice.gov.bt or
- Visit www.ocp.gov.bt and 'File a Complaint', or
- Visit CCAA HQ, Thimphu during office hours

B. Market Surveillance

During the month, which happened to be one of the wettest period so far, the Market Surveillance Team focused on the following sectors and locations.

▪ Petroleum Retail Outlets (PRO) in Thimphu

To ensure that quality is as per standard and volume is accurately dispensed, fuel at all PROs in Thimphu were inspected. (<https://ccaa.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/PRO-Inspection-Report.pdf>).

▪ Grocers of Dangrina, Thimphu

Following the tragic flash flood at Dechencholing, the Team immediately carried out inspections of the retail shops in Dangrina to ensure there was no price gouging as a result of disruptions in the supply chain. (<https://ccaa.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Report-on-Market-Monitoring-in-in-Dangrina.pdf>).

▪ Fruit & Vegetable (F&V) Vendors at Kaja-Throm, Thimphu

Surveillance to check if all F&V vendors are compliant to the minimum standards started on August 26, 2024. As the report is being written, a total of 61 vendors were covered. The surveillance will continue and full report of the surveillance will be made in the following month.



C. Other notable milestones of the month

▪ Market Price Information data input goes online

In a shift towards greater efficiency during consolidation and reporting of market prices of essential commodities, 10 employees of the Regional Office of Industry, Commerce & Employment (ROICE) were trained at the CCAA on how to directly enter prices into the MPI system hosted on the CCAA's official website.

▪ Endorsement of Competition Bill by Governing Board

After a lot of effort on drafting, multiple rounds of consultations at various levels and further refinement, the Competition Bill was finally endorsed by the CCAA Governing Board. The draft bill is now being translated to be submitted to legal vetting by the Office of Attorney General (OAG) prior to submission to the *Lhengye Zhungtshog*.

