



Wishing You a Bright and Prosperous 2025!

Dear Readers,

As we welcome 2025, we extend our warmest wishes to all of you for a year filled with happiness, fulfillment, and prosperity. Your continued support and trust have been invaluable, and we are excited to embark on another year of growth and collaboration.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to delivering efficient and effective consumer services, and we are grateful for the opportunity to serve you. We look forward to your ongoing guidance and feedback as we work together to meet your needs and exceed your expectations.

Here's to a successful and rewarding year for all!

CCAA RECEIVES 11 CONSUMER COMPLAINTS IN DECEMBER, MAJORITY UNDER INVESTIGATION

The Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (CCAA) handled a total of 11 complaints in December, including 10 individual cases and one general complaint. Of these, 4 were resolved, while 7 are still under active investigation.

Breach of contract was the most common issue reported, followed by complaints concerning contaminated or defective products. The high number of contract-related complaints highlights the importance for consumers to carefully review the terms and conditions before finalizing any purchase or agreement.

The CCAA continues to encourage consumers to be vigilant and informed about their rights and the terms of goods or services they acquire.

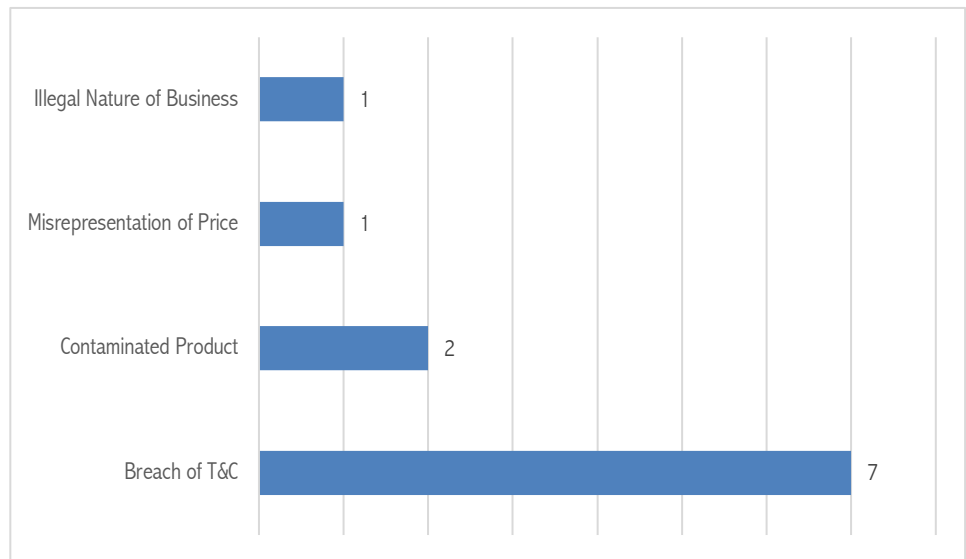


Fig1: Number of complaints by type

ROUTINE INSPECTIONS ENSURE QUALITY STANDARDS IN GELEPHU AND SARPANG MARKETS

Over the course of the past month, a total of 316 businesses across Gelephu Thromde and other areas within Sarpang Dzongkhag underwent thorough inspections aimed at ensuring consumer safety and market compliance. The inspections, conducted by the Consumer Protection & Competition Enforcement (CPCED) focused on a variety of establishments, including groceries, hardware stores, petroleum retail outlets (PROs), and hotels and restaurants.

The primary objective of the surveillance was to verify that the products and services offered to consumers meet the required market standards. Inspectors evaluated the quality and safety of goods and their business practices.

By focusing on essential service sectors, including food, fuel, and daily household supplies, the initiative seeks to enhance market transparency and protect public interest. The full report of the findings can be accessed in full at [this link](#).

These routine inspections are part of ongoing efforts by CCAA to maintain a fair and reliable marketplace for consumers while holding businesses accountable to established regulations.

STUDY REVEALS ISSUES WITH TILLER SPARE PARTS IN BHUTAN'S AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

A recent study has highlighted concerns over the quality and reliability of spare parts for tillers, a crucial component of the agricultural machinery used by farmers across Bhutan. Complaints from farmers regarding poor quality parts and inconsistent supply have prompted the CPCED to conduct an investigation into the matter.

The findings of the study revealed issues related to the quality and durability of tiller spare parts. The report also underscored the lack of reliable supply, which can lead to operational delays, particularly in remote areas.

To address these challenges, the study recommended several key interventions from the government. Among the suggested measures are the establishment of quality standards for tiller spare parts, more frequent and robust quality checks, and financial support for dealers, particularly to supply to remote regions. These initiatives aim to improve the reliability of spare parts and ensure that farmers have access to the necessary tools to maintain their machinery. The full study and its recommendations can be accessed through the [link to the report](#).

BHUTANESE DELEGATION VISITS GERMANY TO EXPLORE GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND ECO-LABELING PRACTICES

A delegation of four officials from CCAA and the Bhutan Standards Bureau (BSB) traveled to Germany from December 15 to 21, 2024, to study the country's advanced practices in Green Public Procurement (GPP) and eco-labeling.

The visit was part of Bhutan's ongoing project on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), which aims to enhance sustainable public procurement and promote eco-friendly products through certification systems. During the week-long trip, the delegation sought to learn from Germany's success in integrating environmental considerations into public procurement policies, exploring how eco-labeling can encourage the purchase of sustainable goods and services in both public and private sectors.

Key objectives of the visit included understanding the framework for Germany's GPP initiatives, gaining insights into its eco-labeling systems, and identifying practical strategies that could be adapted to Bhutan's own procurement processes. These lessons are expected to play a crucial role in shaping future policies aimed at promoting sustainability, reducing the environmental impact of government purchases, and supporting local green businesses. The insights gained from Germany's experiences will be useful in advancing Bhutan's own efforts to adopt environmentally responsible production and consumption practices .

Pic. 1: Members of delegation with members from other countries



EMPOWERING CONSUMERS IN SARPANG AND GELEPHU: ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION PROGRAM REACHES OVER 800 PARTICIPANTS

A consumer protection advocacy and education program was successfully held in Sarpang Dzongkhag and Gelephu Thromde from December 25 to 31, 2024, reaching a total of 476 consumers and 325 business entities. The initiative aimed to raise awareness about consumer rights and responsibilities, while fostering a culture of ethical business practices in line with the Consumer Protection Act of 2012 and the Consumer Protection Rules and Regulations (CPRR) of 2015.

During the week-long program, participants were educated on a range of topics, including their rights under Bhutan's consumer protection laws, the responsibilities of both consumers and businesses, and the ethical practices that should guide marketplace interactions. Special attention was given to emerging issues, such as the growing risks and opportunities of e-commerce businesses.

The advocacy also focused on educating consumers about potential scams, including pyramid schemes and Ponzi schemes, highlighting the importance of vigilance when engaging in online transactions. With the increasing shift to digital platforms, the program emphasized how consumers can better protect themselves from falling victim to fraudulent activities.

.The successful outreach is part of the CCAA's ongoing efforts to ensure that consumers are well-informed and empowered to make safe, responsible choices in an increasingly complex marketplace.



Pic II: Consumer empowerment in action

CCAA PUBLISHES INFORMATION FACTSHEETS TO COMBAT CONSUMER ISSUES

Despite growing advocacy efforts through workshops, and media campaigns, limited awareness around consumer rights and protection remains a challenge in Bhutan. To address this gap, the Consumer Empowerment & Economics Division (CEED) of the CCAA has launched a new initiative aimed at providing accessible, subject-specific information through factsheets.

In December 2024, the CCAA released two factsheets focusing on two of the most prevalent consumer issues currently affecting the country: the rise of pyramid schemes and online scams, as well as consumer disputes arising from breaches in the general terms and conditions of sales for goods and services. The factsheets, titled *“Pyramid Schemes – What They Are and How to Spot Them”* and *“Understanding Terms and Conditions Before Making High-Value Purchases”*, aim to educate consumers on how to recognize these common pitfalls and protect themselves from potential harm.

Available in both Dzongkha and English, the factsheets are accessible through the CCAA’s official Facebook page. The initiative seeks to raise awareness and empower consumers by providing clear, concise guidance on identifying fraudulent schemes and understanding the fine print in sales agreements.

The CCAA hopes that by making these resources widely available, consumers will be better equipped to navigate the marketplace safely and make informed decisions. The agency encourages individuals to read, share, and spread the information within their communities to ensure broader reach and impact.

The image displays two factsheets from the Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (CCAA) of Bhutan. The top factsheet is titled 'Pyramid Schemes: What They Are & How to Spot Them' in Dzongkha. It explains that a pyramid scheme is an illegal business model that generates revenue primarily by recruiting participants rather than by selling products or services. It lists several red flags, such as high entry fees, promises of high returns, and recruitment-driven earnings. The bottom factsheet is titled 'Understanding Terms and Conditions Before Making High-Value Purchases' in English. It discusses the importance of reading and understanding the terms and conditions of sales agreements, particularly for high-value purchases, to avoid disputes and financial loss. Both factsheets include contact information for the CCAA and its website.

CCAA FACILITATES CONSUMER REDRESSAL, SECURES OVER NU. 1 MILLION IN REFUNDS FOR CONSUMERS

In December 2024, the CCAA successfully addressed a range of consumer complaints, employing various methods including mediation, facilitating refunds and correcting unfair business practices.

One of the most notable achievements of the month was the facilitation of refunds totaling Nu. 1,061,813 to consumers who had been wronged by businesses. The refunds were part of the CCAA's ongoing efforts to protect consumer rights and ensure that businesses adhere to ethical practices and fair treatment of their customers.

Through these comprehensive redressal mechanisms, the CCAA continues to work towards enhancing consumer trust and maintaining a fair marketplace in Bhutan. The CCAA's continued intervention highlights its commitment to safeguarding consumer interests and holding businesses accountable for their actions.

For any suggestions, queries or consumer complaints, please contact us:

- Contact us at: 1214 (Toll-Free)/ 338336/ 338337
 - Walk-in during office hours
- Email us at: consumerservice@moice.gov.bt
 - Visit us at: www.ccaa.gov.bt