

CONSUMER COMPLAINTS, REDRESSAL, AND MARKET SURVEILLANCE

Biannual Report (July 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024)

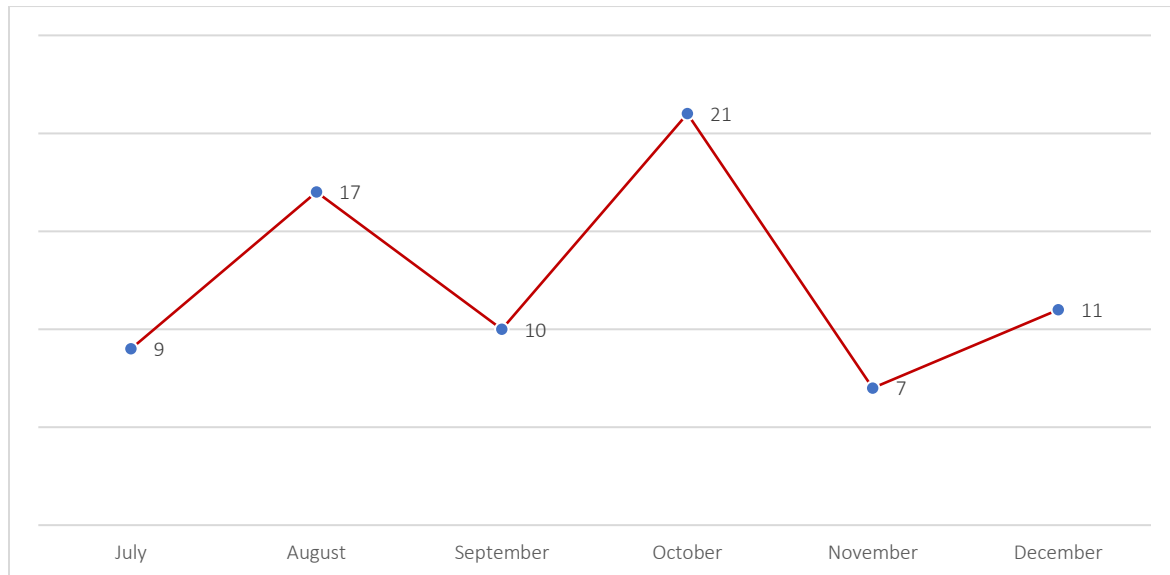
A. Introduction

This biannual report provides an overview of the consumer complaints received, the redressal actions undertaken, and the market surveillance activities carried out to ensure compliance with ethical business practices. The report covers the period from July 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024, and highlights the agency's efforts in protecting consumer rights and promoting fair market conditions.

B. Consumer Complaints & Redressal

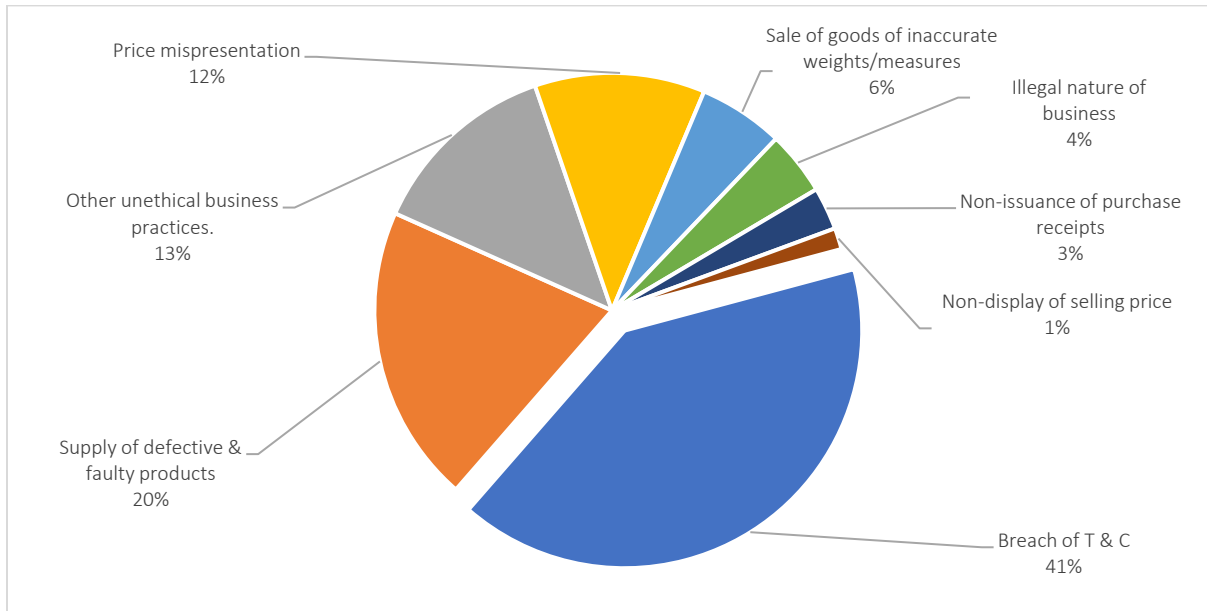
During the reporting period, the agency received a total of 75 consumer complaints, comprising 50 individual consumer complaints and 25 general grievances. On average, the agency handled 12.5 complaints per month, with the highest number of complaints recorded in October 2024 and the lowest in November 2024.

Figure I: Monthly Breakdown of Consumer Complaints



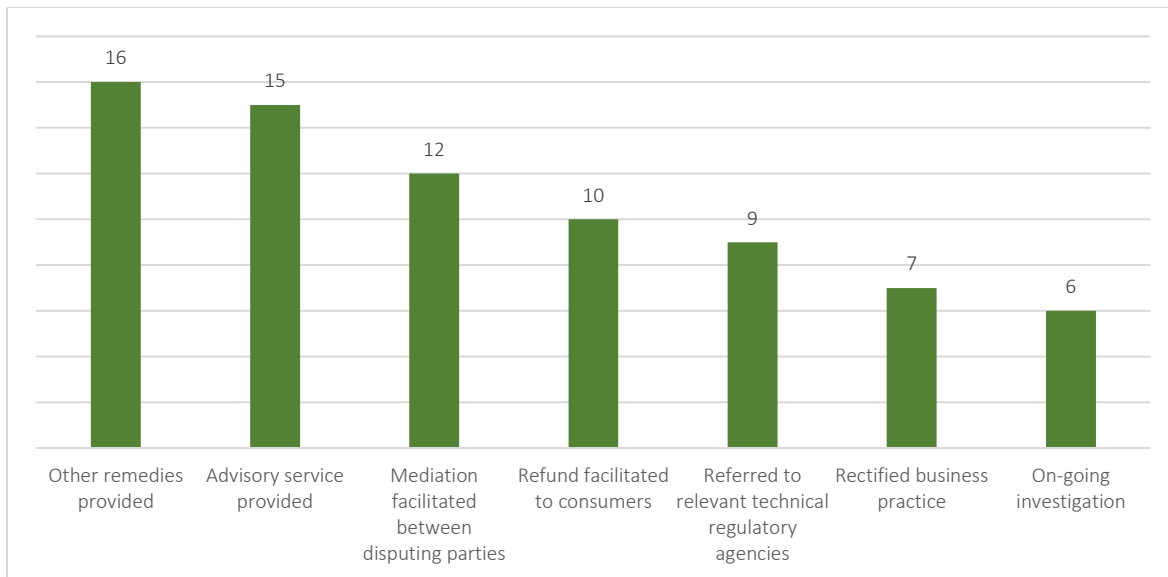
The nature of these complaints varied widely, with the most common issues being breach of contract (41%), supply of defective or faulty products (20%), misrepresentation of prices of goods (12%) and the sale of underweight goods (6%).

Figure II: Proportion of Complaints by Type of Offense



Redressal actions were tailored to the type and nature of the complaint. For straightforward cases, the agency provided consumers with information about their rights or referred them to specialized regulatory bodies. More complex cases required in-depth investigations, which sometimes led to fines, penalties, formal mediation, dispute settlements, or legal action.

Figure III: Consumer Redressal Actions



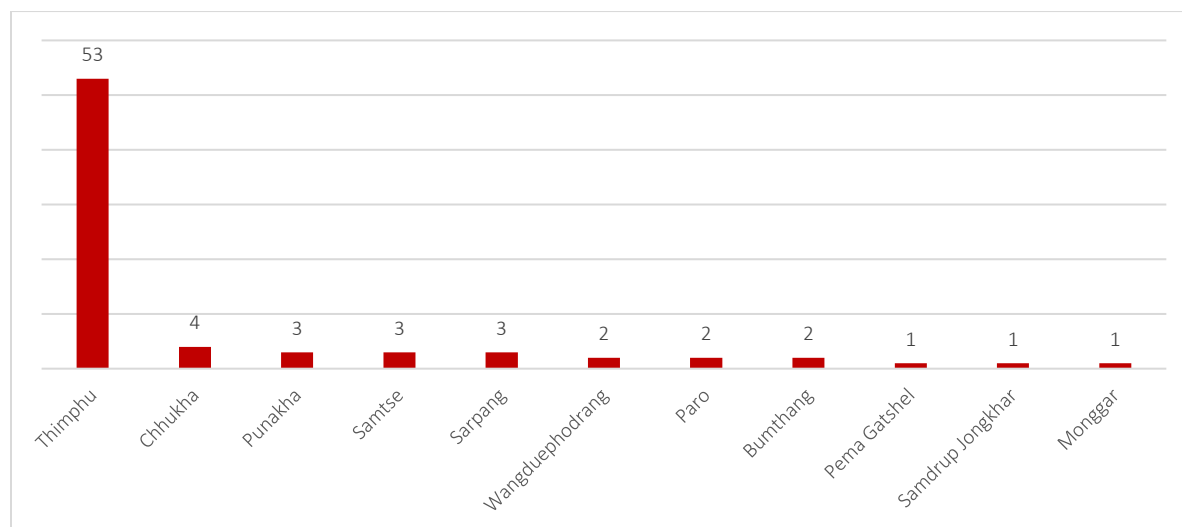
The largest category of redressal actions, labeled as "Other Remedies Provided," involved a wide range of tailored solutions for specific cases. This flexibility enabled the agency to address a variety

of issues, including conducting investigations and recommending government interventions such as policy changes or financial and technical support in certain sectors.

In total, the CCAA facilitated refunds amounting to Nu. 1,117,843 to consumers affected by unethical business practices during the reporting period.

Consumer complaint patterns varied by Dzongkhag, with Thimphu Dzongkhag accounting for 70% of the total complaints. Notably, there were no complaints recorded in 11 Dzongkhags. While this may be partially attributed to lower awareness of consumer rights in rural areas, it likely reflects the smaller population size and limited volume of business transactions in these regions. To address this, the agency has been actively conducting consumer awareness campaigns through both in-person outreach and media channels, including BBS, Kuensel, and various social media platforms.

Figure IV: Distribution of Complaints by Dzongkhag

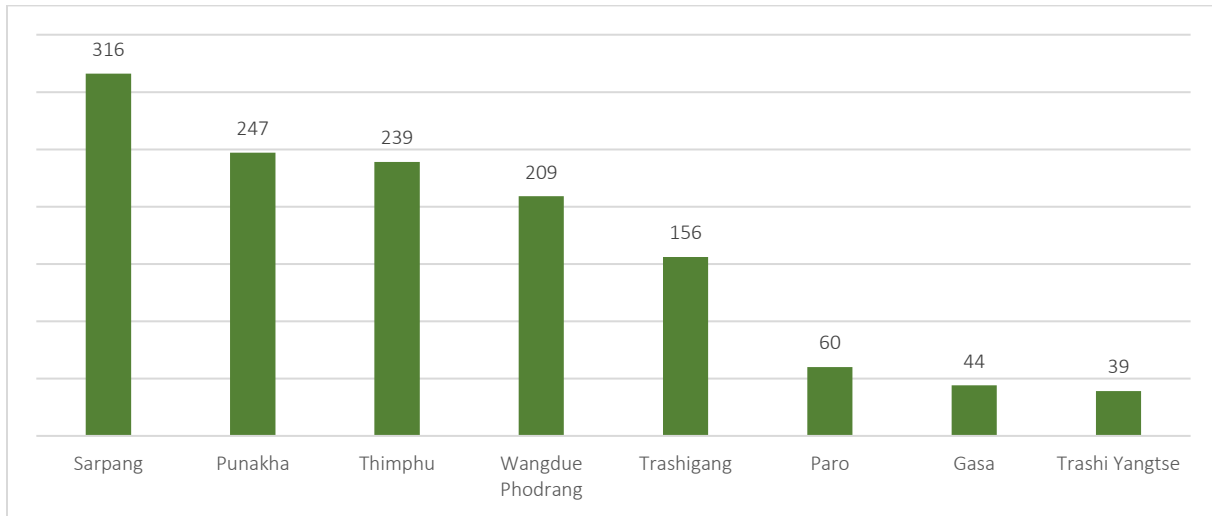


C. Market Surveillance

The agency conducted market surveillance across 1,305 businesses in over 8 Dzongkhags. This initiative ensures that businesses comply with the minimum standards set forth in the Consumer Protection Act (CPA) 2012 and the Consumer Protection Rules and Regulations (CPRR) 2015.

Due to resource limitations, comprehensive coverage of all businesses and Dzongkhags is not feasible each year. Therefore, market surveillance activities are prioritized to ensure that all key marketplaces are adequately monitored over time. For this period, the focus was on 8 Dzongkhags, including Thromde towns.

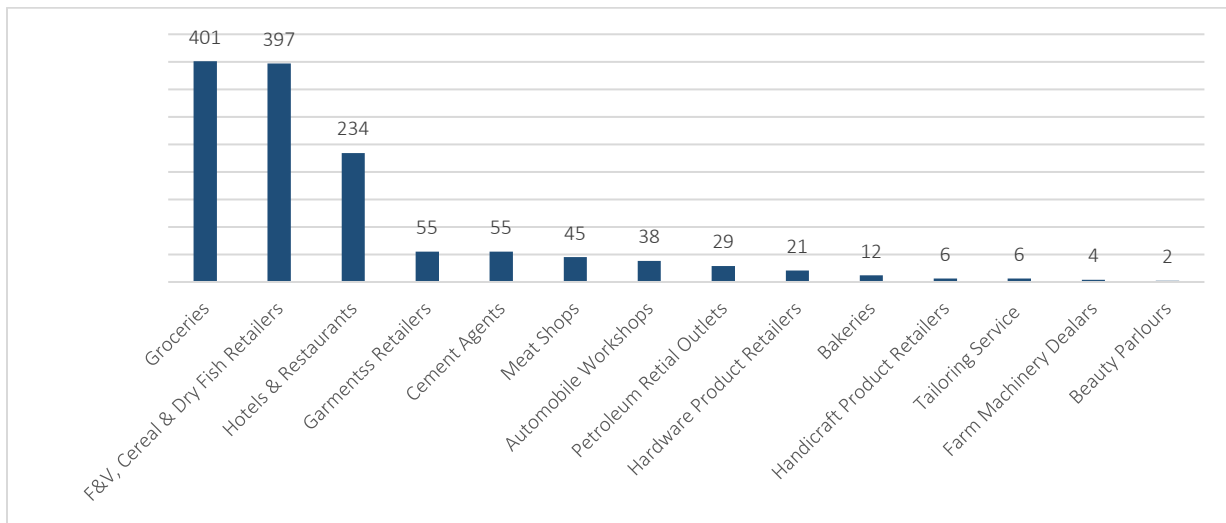
Figure V: Number of Businesses Inspected by Dzongkhag



The selection of businesses for inspection is based on the frequency of consumer interactions and the potential risks of consumer harm in particular sectors. Grocery stores and general retailers (e.g., those selling food items such as fruits, vegetables, and cereals) are the most common and frequently visited business types, and as such, more of them were covered. Similarly, hotels and restaurants were closely monitored due to their widespread use by consumers.

As the economy grows and consumer purchasing power increases, the demand for other goods and services is also expanding. In response to the growing number of private ownership of vehicles and construction activities, the CCAA is increasingly prioritizing the monitoring of petroleum retail outlets, hardware stores, and cement suppliers to ensure quality of goods remains uncompromised.

Figure VI: Breakdown of Businesses Inspected by Type



D. Conclusion

The CCAA remains committed to delivering high-quality services to consumers. Moving forward, the agency will continue to focus on proactive market surveillance, consumer advocacy, and efficient redressal processes to protect consumers from unethical business practices.

As the business environment evolves with the increasing adoption of digital technologies, the agency recognizes the need to adapt its practices to remain effective in safeguarding consumer interests. These technological advancements offer both opportunities for enhanced consumer benefits and new risks that require careful oversight. The CCAA will continue to monitor these trends and adapt its strategies to remain relevant and effective in its role as a public service agency.