



# CCAA MONTHLY

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Volume 2/ Issue 3/

September 30, 2025

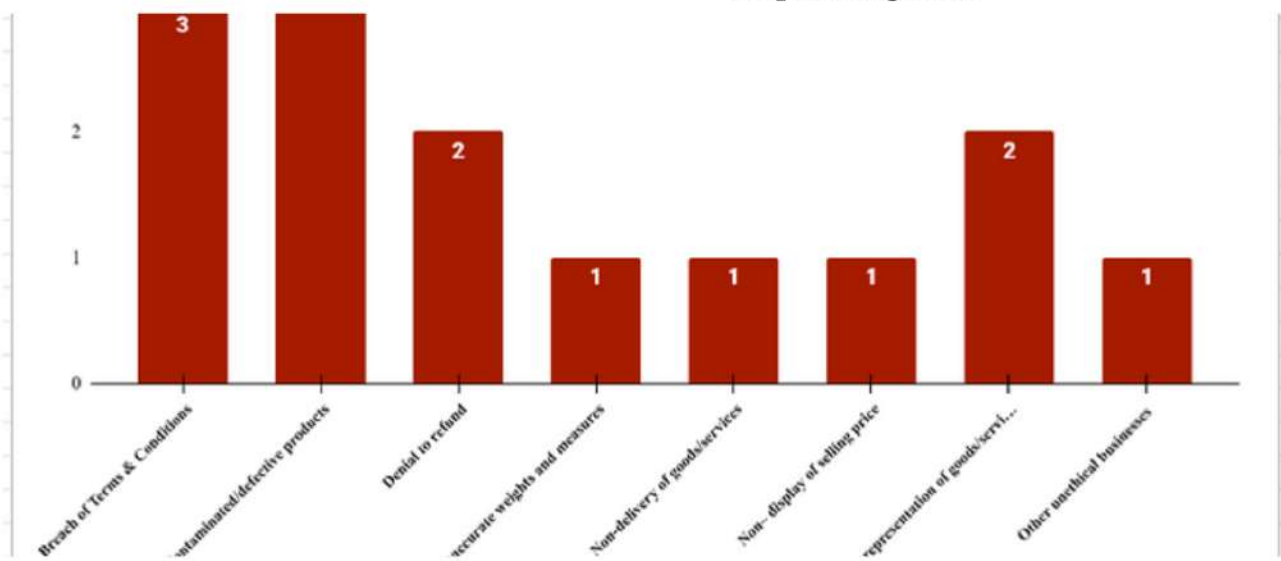
## KEEPING MARKETS FAIR: Inside CCAA's September Push for Consumer Protection

From market surveillance in remote towns to educating consumers on their rights, the Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (CCAA) had a busy September. The agency's monthly roundup reveals a wide range of activities aimed at strengthening consumer rights, improving business compliance, and ensuring fair trade across Bhutan.

### COMPLAINTS THAT MATTER

Consumer complaints are often the first signal of trouble in the marketplace. In September, the CCAA received 15 formal complaints from the public. Six of these were resolved swiftly, while nine remain under investigation.

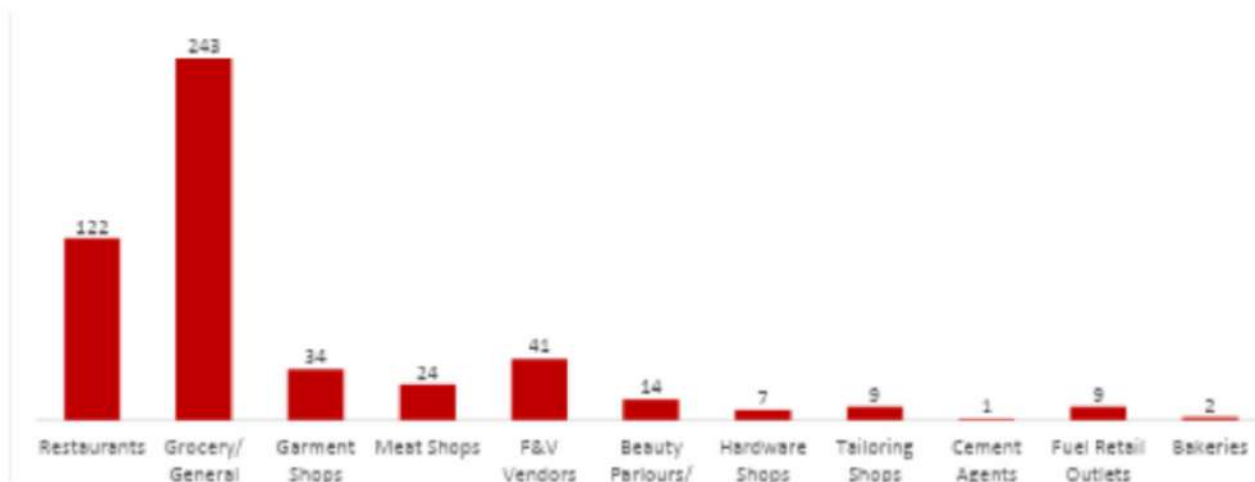
One case stood out: allegations that certain brands of imported edible oil were consistently under-filled. Consumers claimed the volume printed on the packaging didn't match what was inside. The CCAA, working with the Bhutan Standards Bureau (BSB), launched a joint investigation that is now nearing completion. If confirmed, the findings could lead to regulatory action and tighter oversight of imported goods.



## SURVEILLANCE ON THE GROUND

Ensuring that businesses follow the rules isn't just about responding to complaints—it's about proactive monitoring. The Consumer Protection Act of 2012 sets clear standards: receipts must be issued for purchases over Nu. 100, weighing devices must be calibrated, prices must be clearly displayed, and products must carry proper labeling.

In September, CCAA inspectors visited 507 businesses across Gasa (20), Punakha (251), and Wangduephodrang (236). These inspections didn't just check for receipts and price tags—they also looked at broader issues affecting consumer safety and welfare. The goal: to uphold market integrity and ensure that consumers get what they pay for.





## VENDORS GET A REFRESHER

On September 1, CCAA officials headed to Kaja Throm, Thimphu's largest fresh produce and dairy market, for an advocacy session. More than 220 vendors attended the meeting, which focused on compliance with the Consumer Protection Act.



Kaja Throm is a major hub for fruits, vegetables, dried meat, and fish-both local and imported. Vendors were reminded of their legal obligations: use certified weighing scales, label products accurately, display prices clearly, and issue receipts for every transaction. Officials warned that failure to comply could result in penalties based on the value of goods sold.

The session also served as a platform to educate vendors about consumer rights and how customers can lodge complaints. It was a reminder that fair trade isn't just good ethics-it's the law.



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## RETHINKING MEAT PRICING

For years, members of the Bhutan Meat Vendor's Association (BMVA) followed a uniform pricing system. While it created stability, it also stifled competition and kept prices rigid.



On September 2, the CCAA hosted a training session in Thimphu to help meat vendors transition to independent pricing. Sixty-five vendors attended the workshop, which covered cost-based pricing methods and the benefits of a competitive market-better service, improved product quality, and more room for business growth.

One vendor shared his perspective: "We always thought fixing one price was fair to everyone, but now I see it limited our own business potential. With this knowledge, I can set my own price based on my costs and compete by offering better service."

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## PROTECTING BHUTANESE CRAFTSMANSHIP

Bhutan's craft markets are known for showcasing local artistry-but not all products are what they seem. On September 16, the CCAA teamed up with the Department of Media, Creative Industry and Intellectual Property (DOMCIP) to conduct an advocacy session for craft retailers in Thimphu.



The session focused on protecting the integrity of the Authentic Bhutanese Craft (ABC) market, which has faced recent challenges from imported goods being falsely marketed as locally made. Seventy-two retailers attended the program, where they were briefed on legal requirements for labeling, pricing, and truthful representation.

The CCAA emphasized that joint inspections will continue to ensure compliance and protect both consumers and genuine artisans.



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## PROTECTING YOUNG CONSUMERS

Consumer awareness starts early. On September 29, the CCAA visited Druk Higher Secondary School to conduct a youth advocacy program. The session engaged 121 participants-110 students and 11 teachers-and covered topics such as unfair trade practices, anti-competitive behavior, and online shopping risks.

Students were encouraged to read product labels, compare prices, demand receipts, and report unsafe products. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Mendrel Jime Yusel (Class 9A) said the segment on “consumer rights and checking expiry dates” was especially helpful. Tenzin Chimi (Class XII Science) appreciated the focus on consumer responsibilities, while Class X student Tshering Phuntshok Namgyal found the fair trade discussion insightful. Science teacher S.P. Bajgai noted the importance of checking gas cylinder expiry dates-something many overlook.



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## WRAPPING UP

September was a month of meaningful progress for the CCAA. From resolving consumer complaints and inspecting markets to educating vendors and empowering students, the Authority continued its mission to protect Bhutanese consumers and promote fair business practices. With expanded outreach and stronger enforcement, the CCAA remains committed to building a marketplace that is transparent, accountable, and safe for all.

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### Need Help or Want to Report a Concern?

☎ Toll-Free: 1214

✉ Email: [consumerservice@moice.gov.bt](mailto:consumerservice@moice.gov.bt)

🌐 Website: [www.ccaa.gov.bt](http://www.ccaa.gov.bt)

🏢 Walk-in: During office hours