

CCAA Monthly

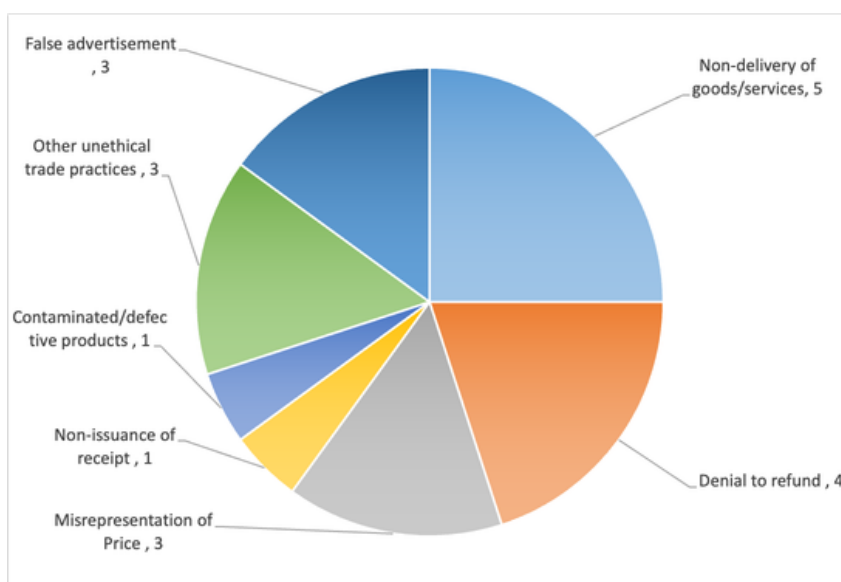
June 2026 Report

The Consumer's Ledger: Case Redressal and Market Reality

In the quiet friction between commerce and consumer rights, June brought a steady stream of grievances to the Office of Consumer Affairs and Fair Trade Practices (CCAA). A total of 25 complaints were registered over the month. Of these, 15 were successfully resolved, 5 remain under ongoing investigation, and 3 were withdrawn from the system upon realization that they fell outside the CCAA's statutory purview.

The anatomy of these disputes reveals a telling split: while 2 were registered as broad, general grievances, the remaining 18 were deeply individual, with citizens seeking direct, tangible redressal. Through mediated interventions, the CCAA facilitated a total refund of Nu. 9,340 to aggrieved buyers.

Fig 1: Nature of Consumer Complaints



Surveillance on the Ground: Market Inspection in Chhukha and Samtse

Between June 12 and June 21, 2026, CCAA conducted rigorous, unannounced market surveillance across Chhukha and Samtse Dzongkhags, auditing a total of 126 commercial establishments, including restaurants, retail shops, and fuel outlets.

The baseline of regulatory compliance proved highly satisfactory. Fuel dispensing pumps, often a source of public skepticism, maintained valid Bhutan Standards Bureau (BSB) calibrations; on-site physical tests confirmed precise, accurate dispensing measurements across all inspected locations.

| Compliance Area | Rate (%) |
|----------------------|----------|
| Receipt Issuance | 85% |
| Price Display | 80% |
| Product Labelling | 77% |
| Calibrated Scales | 76% |
| Refund/Return Policy | 10% |

While core mandatory parameters such as the issuance of receipts and the explicit display of selling prices saw commendable adherence, the landscape for voluntary consumer-centric policies remains sparse. Only one in ten businesses maintained a formal return or refund policy. While not a statutory mandate under current regulations, the CCAA continues to actively lobby and support commercial proprietors to adopt fair refund practices as a cornerstone of modern brand trust.

The Informed Citizen: Consumer Advocacy and Price Transparency

Expanding the Footprint in Chhukha

Building upon the momentum established in May, the CCAA pushed its educational campaigns deeper into Chhukha Dzongkhag this month. Advocacy teams moved through Gedu, Darla, and Tsimalakha, directly engaging an additional 1,464 consumers and 176 business proprietors. The sessions served a dual purpose: equipping citizens with an understanding of basic consumer rights and grievance mechanisms, while sensitizing merchants to their legal obligations regarding fair pricing, transparent price tags, and the mandatory issuance of receipts.

The Dynamics of the Price Watch

In the first week of June, the CCAA published its May 2026 Price Watch catalog, a monthly systematic price index covering six principal markets across Bhutan.

The data is aggregated from a network of curated partner establishments:

- Thimphu: 32 shops
- Phuentsholing: 16 shops
- Mongar: 13 shops
- Samdrupjongkhar: 10 shops
- Gelephu: 10 shops
- Trongsa: 7 shops

The philosophical core of the Price Watch is practical economics: micro-savings on everyday essential goods, when aggregated over a calendar year, yield thousands of Ngultrum back to household budgets.

By introducing this transparency, the CCAA aims to cultivate a more competitive, consumer-centric marketplace where buyers vote with their wallets. The June data is currently being synthesized for publication in the first week of July.

Simultaneously, field teams concluded the data collection phase for the 4th Quarter Market Price Information (MPI) report, which tracks 45 essential brands and product varieties across 20 major marketplaces nationwide.

Data entry is currently underway, with a formal release scheduled for early July 2026. These long-term catalogs provide a critical, evidence-based foundation for policymakers tracking macroeconomic shifts, fiscal measures, and broader market health.

Forensic Economics: Research and Publications

The Strategic Policy Briefing on the Bhutanese Egg Market

Confronted by stubbornly high market prices for table eggs, the CCAA executed a targeted market study to analyze average retail prices, benchmark them against regional trends, and isolate the structural bottlenecks driving the inflation. The findings confirmed that Bhutanese consumers face the highest egg prices in the region, driven by systemic supply-chain and structural challenges. The comprehensive study has been formally endorsed by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment (MOICE), and its strategic policy recommendations are being dispatched to relevant government agencies for structural intervention.

Deciphering the GST Friction

Six months into the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), operational frictions continue to spark consumer disputes. In June, a consumer purchasing hardware and construction materials filed a formal complaint alleging double taxation by both a wholesaler and a subsequent retailer.

A thorough investigation by the CCAA revealed that while there was no fraudulent intent to double-tax the citizen, a significant accounting error had occurred: an inapplicable tax had been levied on logistics and transportation.

This systemic oversight resulted in the consumer being overcharged by several thousand Ngultrum. The CCAA's final investigation report has recommended a direct referral to the Department of Revenue and Customs (DRC) to facilitate a refund for the buyer. Furthermore, the report formally advises the DRC to issue clear, unambiguous guidelines to the trading community on decoupling logistics charges from basic product costs, alongside mandating comprehensive per-unit cost breakdowns on commercial invoices.

Corporate Intersections: Consultations and Public Innovation

Clarifying the Electronics Supply Chain

Deceptive practices surrounding household electronics, specifically the proliferation of counterfeit television sets mislabeled as premium brands, have remained a persistent challenge for consumer protection officials. To address the root of the issue, the CCAA convened a structured bilateral consultation meeting in Thimphu on June 26, 2026, with major domestic television importers and dealers. The exercise succeeded in mapping the international supply chain of consumer electronics, tightening industry alignment on fair trade practices, and providing CCAA investigators with the technical, diagnostic insights necessary to identify counterfeit goods and deceptive marketing tactics in the field.

Digital Transformation at Civil Service Innovation Day

At the annual Civil Service Innovation Day organized by the Royal Civil Service Commission (RCSC) on June 15–16, 2026, government bodies gathered to showcase home-grown digital solutions designed to modernize public service delivery. The CCAA presented its unified digital ecosystem, which anchors two core mandates: the Consumer Complaint Management System (CCMS) and the Market Price Information (MPI) system.

The CCMS allows citizens to securely lodge formal grievances and upload evidentiary documentation from anywhere globally. The platform has fundamentally shifted how the public interacts with the agency; it now processes over 75% of all consumer complaints, rendering traditional channels like telephone hotlines, emails, and physical walk-ins secondary.

Directly integrated into this web infrastructure is the MPI portal, designed to offer real-time price transparency across commodities and locations. While the platform has successfully eliminated the printing costs of physical catalogs, the CCAA acknowledged an operational bottleneck: current resource constraints limit backend data updates for the 45 essential commodities across 22 markets to a quarterly schedule. Increasing data collection frequency to provide real-time utility remains a top organizational priority for the upcoming fiscal cycles.

Institutional Growth: Human Resource Development

As part of the civil service's wider commitment to workplace inclusivity and digital empowerment, the RCSC sponsored specialized professional development for differently-abled personnel. Karma Wangchuk, an Assistant Program Officer with the CCAA who is visually impaired, attended an intensive institutional training program at the Vision Aid Academy in Chennai, India, from June 21 to June 28, 2026.

The curriculum provided immersive training in leveraging artificial intelligence alongside advanced screen readers, foundational Python programming, digital accessibility standards, and spatial orientation and mobility. The specialized technical skillset acquired is slated to significantly optimize his workflow, allowing him to seamlessly navigate the CCAA's evolving digital systems and elevate his operational output within the agency.



www.ccaa.bt



cca@moice.gov.bt



Toll free: 1214