

MESSAGE FOR WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY

MARCH 15, 2024

Royal Government of Bhutan
Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment



The global consumer movement commemorates March 15 as World Consumer Rights Day, an occasion to elevate awareness about consumer rights and necessities. Established in 1983 and orchestrated by Consumers International, the day provides an opportunity to advocate for respect and protection of all consumers' rights. The theme for World Consumer Rights Day 2024, Fair and Responsible Artificial AI for Consumers, is timely, when we live in an era of AI revolution. Generative AI encompasses AI capable of generating unique content such as text, images, video or audio in response to a prompt. Its adoption among consumers has surged, particularly with the emergence of generative AI chatbots that can produce responses in natural language resembling human-written text.

Generative AI is poised to revolutionize people's lives, affecting how we work, communicate and access information. Conversely, this technology poses risks to consumers too, in the way of:

- **Incorrect Information:** Chatbots may provide inaccurate or misleading information, potentially leading consumers to make decisions based on flawed data;
- **Privacy Concerns:** Chatbots have the capability to collect and store personal data, raising privacy concerns if not handled securely;
- **Security Risks:** Malicious actors may exploit vulnerabilities in chatbots to access sensitive information or disseminate malware;
- **Automation Bias:** Consumers might overly rely on information generated by chatbots, potentially resulting in errors or overlooking critical details.

Consumers have the right and expect access to accurate and trustworthy information from all sources and today, we reiterate and call upon consumer organizations globally to enhance their capacity to understand, monitor and address risk areas for consumers emanating from generative AI. We advocate for the implementation of consumer education on benefits and risks of AI, proper use of AI technology and robust safeguards in all consumer-facing generative AI chatbots.

It is imperative that developers and deployers of generative AI bear the primary responsibility for addressing potential harms, ensuring consistent application of this responsibility globally. We call upon policymakers to enact legislations and the regulators to set clear rules for accountability and liability concerning risks resulting from generative AI.

Finally, we advise all consumers to use generative AI responsibly by critically evaluating information from chatbots, verifying facts and being aware of potential harms.

Let us use AI intelligently and responsibly, ensuring that it not only protects consumers' rights but helps to empower consumers. Together, speaking in one voice, we can drive meaningful and lasting change to enhance consumer welfare and protect their rights worldwide.

Happy World Consumer Rights Day!!!

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