

Consumer protection and unfair business practices during January, 2024

Complaints and Redressal

In the month of January, 2024, the CCAA¹ received a total of ten consumer complaints, of which four were related to service and the rest were related to goods. Of the ten, eight complaints have been resolved and the remaining two are still under investigation.

Half of the complaints were related to businesses violating service terms and conditions, with one concerning the supply of defective products, and four involving other forms of unethical business practices.

Market Surveillance

Market surveillance is conducted on a regular basis in order to ensure that the business firms practice ethical business practices and are complying to consumer protection rules and regulations. These surveillances are carried out independently or jointly with relevant regulatory agencies. (i) 180 business firms in Mongar Dzongkhag (Gyelposhing, Limithang, Yadi & Khelikhar) and (ii) 46 business firms in Lhuentse Dzongkhag (Autsho & Tangmachu).

Table 1. Areas under Market Monitoring.

| Business Type | Markets | |
|---------------------------|---------|----------|
| | Mongar | Lhuentse |
| Petroleum Retail Outlet | 2 | 2 |
| Restaurant | 53 | 16 |
| Hotel | 3 | 0 |
| Garment | 19 | 0 |
| Grocery | 74 | 23 |
| Hardware | 13 | 1 |
| Salon/BeautyParlor/barber | 4 | 1 |
| Tailoring | 6 | 1 |
| Meat Shop | 3 | 1 |
| Bakery | 1 | 1 |
| Pharmacy | 2 | 0 |
| Total: | 180 | 46 |

¹ Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority

Overall, most businesses adhered to market standards. Those that fell short were either promptly given the chance to correct their shortcomings or faced penalties in accordance with existing rules and regulations.

Action(s) Taken

A total of Nu.302,465/- were refunded to three consumers. In the mentioned Dzongkhags, a fine of Nu. 22,962 was levied on entities. These fines were imposed on 28 business firms for the sale of expired edible items.

For any consumer complaint, please contact the CCAA:

- *Call 1214 (Toll-free Number)*
- *Email to consumerservice@moice.gov.bt*
- *Visit www.ccaa.gov.bt*
- *Visit CCAA, Thimphu, during office hours*