

VERY SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (1 MARK)

1. Why are rules and regulations required in the marketplace? Illustrate with few examples.

- Ans.**
- (i) Rules and regulations are required for the protection of consumers as the individual consumers often find themselves in a weak position in a market place.
 - (ii) Whenever there is a complaint regarding a good or service that had been bought, the seller tries to shift all responsibilities to the buyer. Their position usually is – “If you didn’t like what you bought, please go elsewhere.” As if the seller has no responsibilities once the sale is completed.
 - (iii) Exploitation in marketplace happens in various ways. For example, sometimes traders indulge in unfair trade practices such as when shopkeepers weigh less than what they should or when traders add charges that were not mentioned before, or when traders add charges that were not mentioned before, or when adulterated/defective goods are sold.
 - (iv) Markets do not work in a fair manner when producers are few and powerful whereas consumers purchase in small amounts and are scattered.
 - (v) This happens especially when large companies are producing these goods. These companies with huge wealth, power and reach can manipulate the market in various ways. At times false information is passed on through the media, and other sources to attract consumers.
 - (vi) For example, a company for years sold powder milk for babies all over the world as the most scientific product claiming to be better than mothers milk. It took years of struggle before the company was forced to accept that it had been making false claims. Similarly a long battle had to be fought with court cases to make cigarette manufacturing companies accept that their product could cause cancer.
 - (vii) Hence, there is a need for rules and regulations to ensure protection for consumers.

2. What factors gave birth to the consumer movement in India? Trace its evolution.

- Ans.**
- (i) In India, the consumer movement as a ‘social force’ originated as a necessity of protecting and promoting the interest of consumers

against unethical and unfair trade practices.

- (ii) Rampant food shortages, hoarding, black marketing, adulteration of food and edible oil gave birth to consumer movement in an organised form in the 1960s.
- (iii) Till the 1970s consumer organisations were largely engaged in writing articles and holding exhibitions.
- (iv) They formed consumer groups to look into the malpractices in ration shops and overcrowding in the road passenger transport.
- (v) More recently, India witnessed an upsurge in the number of consumer groups.
- (vi) Because of these efforts, the movement succeeded in bringing pressure on business firms as well as government to correct business conduct which may be unfair and against the interest of consumers at large.
- (vii) A major step was taken by the Indian government in 1986 by enacting the Consumer Protection Act 1986, popularly COPRA.

3. Explain the need for consumer consciousness by giving two examples.

Ans. The factors causing exploiting of consumers are :

- (i) Sometimes traders indulge in unfair trade practices such as when shopkeepers weigh less than what they should or traders add charges that were not mentioned before, or adulterated/defective goods are sold.
- (ii) At times false information is passed through the media and other sources to attract consumers.
- (iii) We do find bad quality products in the market because the supervision of these rules is weak and the consumer movement is also not strong enough.
- (iv) There are so many variety of goods available in the market and a new product is launched everyday. The consumer cannot have knowledge about every product as a result of which he is cheated by the seller.
- (v) So there is need for consumer consciousness.

4. Mention a few factors which cause exploitation of consumers.

Ans. The factors causing exploiting of consumers are :

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- (v) So there is need for consumer consciousness.

5. What is the rationale behind the enactment of Consumer Protection Act 1986?

- Ans.**
- (i) There was no legal system available to consumers, to protect them from exploitation in the marketplace.
 - (ii) Rampant food shortages, hoarding, black marketing, adulteration of food and edible oil were also some of the malpractices done by the traders.
 - (iii) For a long time, when a consumer was not happy with a particular brand, product or shop, he or she avoided buying that brand or would stop purchasing from that shop. It was presumed that it was the responsibility of the consumers to be careful while buying a commodity or a service.
 - (iv) It took many years for the organisations of India and world, to create awareness amongst people.
 - (v) As a result of dissatisfaction of the consumers, as many unfair practices were being practiced by the sellers the consumer movement aroused.
 - (vi) A major step was taken by the government by enacting the Consumer Protection Act 1986.

6. Describe some of your duties as a consumer if you visit a shopping complex in your locality.

Ans. As a consumer following are our duties :

- (i) When we purchase a commodity, the first thing that a consumer has to do is to check, whether the commodity is marked by ISI, AGMARK etc.
- (ii) When we purchase a commodity, we have to check the quality of it, and also the guarantee of the products and services.
- (iii) A bill has to be taken of the product that we purchase.

- (iv) If there is any defect or the product is of a sub-standard quality then, complain has to be made to the proper authorities and co-operate with them, till the culprit is punished and grievances are redressed.
- (v) Consumer must know all their rights and duties. A consumer should exercise his duties and also make a complain whenever his rights are violated by any shopkeeper / producer.

7. Suppose you buy a bottle of honey and biscuit packet which logo or mark will you have to look for and why?

- Ans.** (i) While buying many bottle of honey and biscuit packet on its cover, you might have seen a logo with the letters AGMARK.
- (ii) These logos and certification help consumers get assured of quality while purchasing the goods and services.
- (iii) The organizations that monitor and issue these certificates allow producers to use their logos provided they follow certain quality standards.

8. What legal measures were taken by government to empower the consumers in India?

Ans. To empower the consumer in India the government has taken following legal measures:

- (i) The consumer movement in India has led to formation of various organisations locally known as consumer forums or consumer protection council.
- (ii) They guide consumer on how to file cases in the consumer court.
- (iii) On many occasions they also represent individual consumer in the consumer courts.
- (iv) These voluntary organisations also receive financial support from the government for creating awareness among the people.
- (v) People living in a residential colony have boards of Resident Welfare Associations; and meted out with these people, they take up the case on their behalf.
- (vi) Under COPRA, a three tier quasi-judicial machinery, at the district, state and at national levels was set up for redressal of consumer disputes.
- (vii) A district level court deals with the cases involving claims upto Rs. 20 lakhs, the state level courts between Rs. 20 Lakhs and Rs. 1 crore, and the national level court deals with cases involving claims exceeding Rs. 1 crore.

(viii) If the case is dismissed in district level court, the consumer can also appeal in the state and then in National level courts.

9. Mention some of the rights of consumers and write the few sentences on it.

Ans. The following are the rights of consumers :

- (i) **Right to be Informed :** Every consumer has a right to be informed about the particulars of good and services that they purchase for eg. when we buy medicines, on the packets you might find direction for proper use and information relating to side effects and risks associated with the usage of that medicine.
- (ii) **Right to choose :** Any consumer who receives a service in whatever capacity, regardless of age, gender and nature of service, has the right to choose whether to continue to receive the service.
For eg. Suppose a person wants to buy a toothpaste, and the shop owners says that the she can sell the toothpaste only if the person buys a toothbrush. If the person is not interested in buying the brush, then his right to choice is denied.
- (iii) **Right to seek redressal :** Consumers have the right to seek redressal against unfair trade practices and exploitations. If any damage is done to the consumer he has the right to get compensation depending the degree of damage.
- (iv) **Right to represent :** This act has enabled the consumers to have the right to represent in the consumer court.
If any unfair trade practice is meted out to the consumer he has a right to make an appeal in the consumer court.

10. By what means can the consumer express their solidarity?

Ans. As a consumer following are our duties :

- (i) When we purchase a commodity, the first thing that a consumer has to do is to check, whether the commodity is marked by ISI, AGMARK etc.
- (ii) When we purchase a commodity, we have to check the quality of it, and also the guarantee of the products and services.
- (iii) A bill has to be taken of the product that we purchase.
- (iv) If these is any defect or the product is of a sub - standard quality then, complain has to be made to the proper authorities and co-operate with them, till the culprit is punished and grievances are redressed.
- (v) Consumer must know all their rights and duties. A consumer should excercise his duties and also make a complain whenever his rights are violated by any shopkeeper / producer.

11. Critically examine the progress of consumer movement in India.

- Ans.**
- (i) The consumer movement started as a result of a dissatisfaction of the consumer due to the unfair practices that the seller are indulged in.
 - (ii) Rampant food shortages, hoarding black marketing, adulteration of food and edible oil gave birth to consumer movement is an organised form in 1960s.
 - (iii) Till the 1970s, consumer organisation were largely engaged in writing articles and holding exhibitions.
 - (iv) They formed consumer group to look into the malpractices in ration shops and over - crowding in road - passenger transport.
 - (v) A major step was taken in 1986 by the Indian government by enacting the Consumer Protection Act (1986) (COPRA).
 - (vi) Because of all the efforts, the movement succeeded in bringing pressure on business firms as well as government to correct business conduct which may be unfair and against the interest of the consumer.

12. Say True or False :

- (a) COPRA applies only to goods.

Ans. False

- (b) India is one of the many countries in the world which has exclusive courts for consumer redressal.

Ans. False

- (c) When a consumer feels that he has been exploited, he must file a case in the District Consumer Court.

Ans. True

- (d) It is worthwhile to move to consumer courts only if the damage incurred are of high value.

Ans. False

- (e) Hallmark is the certification maintained for standardisation of jewellery.

Ans. True

- (f) The consumer redressal process is very simple and quick.

Ans. False

- (g) The consumer has the right to get compensation depending on the degree of damage.

Ans. True