



National Consumer Helpline receives 188 complaints from consumers against charging service charge by restaurants/hotels during year the 2016-17

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During the last financial year 2016-17, the National Consumer Helpline received 188 complaints from consumers where they have been asked to pay Service Charge by restaurants/ hotels. The complaints are taken up with the hotels and restaurants concerned.

The Department of Consumer Affairs issued guidelines on 21st April, 2017 on fair trade practices related to charging of service charge from consumers by hotels/ restaurants. As per these guidelines, the bill presented to the customer may clearly display that service charge is voluntary, and the service charge column of the bill may be left blank for the customer to fill up before making payment. A customer is entitled to exercise his/her rights as a consumer, to be heard and redressed under provisions of the Act in case of unfair/restrictive trade practices, and can approach a Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission/Forum of appropriate jurisdiction.

The Consumer Protection Bill, 2015 seeks to establish a Central Consumer protection Authority, an executive agency, which will look into unfair trade practices.

This information was given by Shri C.R. Chaudhary, the Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha today.

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