

# PETROLEUM SECTOR

## What is the petroleum sector?

India is the third largest consumer of petroleum products, after the US and China. The oil and natural gas sector has huge potential and contributes over 15% to India's GDP. Both public sector and private sector supply domestic LPG. The Public sector companies which supply domestic LPG are Indian Oil Corporation Ltd with their subsidiary company IBP (Indo Burma Petroleum), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd, and Bharat Petroleum Ltd.

The consumers should be aware of the following grievance redressal systems in case of complaints against these corporations providing LPG and PNG.

## What are the grounds available for complaints?

The major complaints from the users of LPG are as follows:

- At the time of new connection, dealers are insisting that the customer must take various appliances (like gas stove at Dealers' choice, Rubber hose and other allied equipment).
- Delay in supplying gas cylinders is a major problem for all gas suppliers. Dealers are not entertaining the phone calls and not registering the customer booking.
- Gas cylinder is less in weight or not fully filled.
- Tedious formalities in booking a new gas connection.

The complaints against PNG are as follows:

- Abnormal delay in getting new connection
- Billing problem
- No appropriate complaint registering centre (CRC).
- Delay in attending complaints etc.

## What are the grounds for complaints to not be accepted?

There are various situations which might cause the complaint to be rejected. These include situations where the consumer is unable to file an appeal against an order within a period of three months, where the complaint is based on a frivolous cause of action, where the complaint falls outside the jurisdiction of the authority approached, and when the complaint has been filed under

wrong sections of the act, and other such situations. This requires careful reading of all acts and regulations.

*What are the modes or methods of complaint available?*

The consumer may first reach the service provider. Customer care number of some companies

Indian Oil- 1800-2333-555

Bharat Petroleum- 1800-22-4344

Bharat Gas- 7715012345

2. Emergency helpline no.- 1906

The multilingual LPG Emergency Helpline was dedicated to the nation on 1.1.2016 by the Hon'ble Minister of PNG. This facility is available 24\*7 operations with 2 shifts 12 hours each for attending emergency LPG leakage complaints.

3. MoPNG e-Seva

reach out to the portal @MoPNGeSeva on Facebook or @MoPNG\_eSeva on Twitter and response will be sent back at the earliest.

4. Approaching any other appropriate judicial or quasi-judicial body:

The complainant is free to take the service provider to a court or any other suitable venue (judicial or quasi-judicial). The proceedings in consumer commissions are not mired by the niceties of procedure, allowing the complainant to file a complaint for himself. As a consumer, the aggrieved party can take the service provider to the appropriate consumer commission, based on the pecuniary and territorial jurisdiction. The jurisdictions of the various consumer commissions are as follows-

a) District Commission: The aggrieved consumer can reach out to the District Commission under section 34 of the CPA, 2019, which provides that the district commission shall entertain matters where the value of the goods or services paid as consideration does not exceed more than one crore rupees.

b) State Commission: In cases where the value of the goods or services paid as consideration is more than one crore, but less than 10 crores, the consumer can approach the State Commission. Moreover, in cases of unfair contracts, the State Commission has original jurisdiction and the consumer can be directly approached. An appeal against the order of the District Commission can also be made under section 47 of the CPA, 2019.

c) National Commission: The National Commission can entertain matters where the value of goods or services paid as consideration exceeds 10 crores. Section 58 also provides that complaints against unfair contracts can be entertained by NCDRC when the amount of value paid exceeds 10 crores. The NCDRC also has appellate jurisdiction against the orders of any State Commission and Central Authority.

Moreover, it must also be kept in mind that section 100 of the CPA, 2019 provides that the remedy under CPA is in addition and not in derogation of other available remedies.

#### 5. Central Consumer Protection Authority

If the commission finds violations of rights of consumers or in notice of trade practices which is unfair it can inquire or cause an inquiry, either on receipt of complaint or suo moto or as directed by Central Government. If the commission finds, after preliminary inquiry, of an existence of a prima facie case of consumer rights violation or it is in notice of any unfair trade practice or any wrong or inaccurate advertisement which is prejudicial to public interest or to the interests of the consumers, it can order an investigation by the District Collector or by Director General.

The consumer can complain to the District Collector of the respective district for investigation and subsequent proceedings by the CCPA. He/she/they can also submit a complaint via email, at [com-ccpa@nic.in](mailto:com-ccpa@nic.in).

#### What are the regulatory bodies in this sector?

Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas

Petroleum and Natural gas Regulatory Board

#### What are the rules, Acts, and Guidelines that govern this sector?

1. The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006

<http://www.pngrb.gov.in/pdf/Act/pngrbact.doc>

2. Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order 2000

[http://jkln.nic.in/pdf/LPG\\_regulation\\_of\\_distribution.pdf](http://jkln.nic.in/pdf/LPG_regulation_of_distribution.pdf)

3. Petroleum Act, 1934- [https://legislative.gov.in/sites/default/files/A1934-30\\_0.pdf](https://legislative.gov.in/sites/default/files/A1934-30_0.pdf)

*What are the landmark judgements in this sector?*

1. Auva Gas Agency through Paul Roluahpuia v. Consumer Union, Vairengte South Branch, Mizoram

The district fora had directed the agency to compensate the consumers for over pricing and repair all defective items. The appeal was filed to the state commission but it was dismissed as the reasons for condonation of delay was not accepted. A revision petition was filed in NCDRC. This was dismissed and the NCDRC upheld the decision of the district and state commissions.

2. M/S Jagdev Gas service v. Bansi Lal Taneja

NCDRC held that the OP must ensure that gas refills are supplied to Complainant as per the norms at regular intervals.

*What is the format of the complaint to be made under this sector?*

<https://cdrc.gujarat.gov.in/images/pdf/1-CC-Eng.pdf> - DCDRC format.

<https://cdrc.gujarat.gov.in/images/pdf/1-CC-Eng.pdf> - SCDRC format.

<https://ncdrc.nic.in/cc.html> - NCDRC format.

*What are the important links and resources?*

INGRAM-

[https://consumerhelpline.gov.in/faq-details.php?fid=Liquefied%20Petroleum%20Gas%20\(Cylinders\)](https://consumerhelpline.gov.in/faq-details.php?fid=Liquefied%20Petroleum%20Gas%20(Cylinders))

MoPNG E-SEWA- <https://www.mopnge-seva.in/>

Click on the three lines on the right hand corner> click on marketing division> programs, schemes and initiatives- <https://mopng.gov.in/en#>

Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board- <https://pngrb.gov.in/eng-web/index.html>