

Indian Institute of Public Administration, Karnataka Regional Branch, Bengaluru

'Trainers' Training Program' on 'Consumer Protection and Related Issues'

A Report

Background

The Indian Institute of Public Administration [IIPA], Karnataka Regional Branch [KRB] has taken the initiative of sensitizing the public about their rights and responsibilities as Consumers. Consumer Protection is one of the focus areas of IIPA/KRB for the past few years. To reach a wider audience, the IIPA/KRB decided to organize a Trainers' Training Program on Consumer Protection in Bengaluru followed by Outreach programs in selected Districts of Karnataka. The Trainers' Training Program for those organizations/individuals actively engaged in consumer protected and related issues was organized on 24th December 2024, at IAS Officers Association, Infantry Road, Bengaluru. A brief report of the proceedings of the program is given below.

Proceedings

The Trainers' Training Program on 'Consumer Protection and Related Issues' commenced with a welcome address by Shri. Y.G. Muralidharan, coordinator for the training program.

The program was inaugurated by Dr. Krishna, Chairman, Karnataka State Food Security Commission. In his inaugural address he focused on the need for strengthening consumer protection in the State. He highlighted the Six consumer rights and corresponding responsibilities of consumers. Dr. Krishna highlighted the need for a strong consumer movement in the State to ensure that consumers get their food entitlements.

Shri T M Vijay Bhaskar, Chairperson of IIPA – KRB in his Presidential address stated that IIPA wished to reach out to districts through the participants and raise awareness about consumer protection. He requested active participation.

Smt Sujata Hosamani from the Commissionerate of Food and Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs spoke on the steps being taken by Government for consumer protection.

The program consisted of Two technical sessions and one 'Open House Discussion'. The first session started with a presentation on 'Role of Standards in Consumer Protection' by Ms. Nagavalli, Standards Promotion Officer, Bureau of Indian Standards, Bengaluru Regional Branch. She explained how standards are made and its necessity for protecting consumers. The Second presentation was on the by Shri. Manjunath Bommanakatti, President of the Uttara Kannada District Consumer Grievance Redressal Commission spoke on 'Framework of Consumer Protection Act, 2019' explaining the various provisions of the CPA-2019, supported by the decisions of the Consumer Commissions.

Dr. Gayathri Bai, Professor at the BMS College of Law, Bengaluru spoke about the Rules relating to Misleading advertisements, E-Commerce and the functioning of Central Consumer Protection Authority [CCPA]. She cautioned consumers about the Rules framed under the CPA-2019 for E-Commerce and urged the consumers to be careful while purchasing online. She emphasized the need for educating consumers about misleading advertisements.

Shri. Chetan, Food Analyst, State Public Health Institute, Bengaluru spoke on 'Ensuring Safe Food to Consumers' and explained the various provisions relating to Safe food in the Food Safety and Standards Act [FSSAI], the consumer grievance redressal system and said that Designated Officers are available in each district and consumers can approach them for any complaint about unsafe foods.

In the Second Technical Session, Mr.H.S.Raju, Assistant Controller, Legal Metrology Department, explained the various provisions relating to Packaged commodities. In the last session, Shri. Bhaskar Rao, Assistant Drugs Controller, Bengaluru, explained the provisions relating to Drugs and Cosmetics and the action that it takes if medicines are sold over the price fixed by it.

In the last session, participants gave feed back about the presentations and also discussed the ways in which the lessons learnt could be taken down to the general public in their respective regions. The discussion was moderated by Shri. Vijay Bhaskar and assisted by Shri. Y.G. Muralidharan. It was decided that about ten district levels awareness building/outreach programs may be organized. The participants came forward to hold the programs in their districts. A Plan of Action was drawn up. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by Shri. Y.G. Muralidharan and Shri. Rajkumar Rayee, representing the Mangaluru District Consumer Information Centre.

