

Goyal

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Piyush Goyal

The Centre on Friday said it will soon finalize a proposal to decriminalize the Legal Metrology Act in order to reduce compliance burden for businesses and consumers.

In his virtual address on the occasion of National Consumer Day, Union Minister Piyush Goyal said there is a need to decriminalize the Legal Metrology Act in such a way that both consumer interest is protected and traders or businesses are not harassed.

"This, we will finalize at the earliest," the Food and Consumer Affairs Minister said.

The Legal Metrology Act 2009 enforces standards related to weights and measures.

In its present form, the law prescribes imprisonment, in addition to fine, for second or subsequent offence.

On the draft amendment to the Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) rules, the minister said the government has received "very good" feedback from various stakeholders.

The feedback is being examined to finalize the draft, he said, adding that the amendments have been proposed to curb unfair trade practices on e-commerce platforms and protect the interest of consumers.

Besides, the government has come out with rules on mediation, direct selling and misleading advertisements.

Some changes have also been made in the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011.

So far, the government has notified 10 rules and six regulations under the Consumer Protection Act 2009.

The work is underway in framing a few more rules on different sectors affecting consumers, he added.

Stating that the government is open to suggestions to make laws and rules simple and effective, the minister said a facility 'e-Dakhil' recently launched for e-filing of consumer complaints is gaining popularity.

More than 40,000 complaints have been registered on this platform.

However, the awareness about this platform needs to be enhanced so that more and more consumers take advantage of it, he said.

Even the e-mediation process has begun.

Efforts are being made to ensure the complainant is able to easily appeal online and attend court hearings via video conferences for quicker redressal of grievances, he added.

To ensure the 'country of origin' of products sold on e-commerce platforms is written clearly, the minister asked central and state officials to strictly monitor such websites and sensitize the stakeholders.

It is not acceptable if 'Made for India' is written, he said and added that the details of 'country of origin' should be displayed as per the Indian law.

He also stressed on the need to create more awareness about the use of safety items like helmets and pressure cookers having 'quality ISI mark' across the country.

Consumer Affairs Secretary Leena Nandan, Additional Secretary Nidhi Khare and Joint Secretary Anupam Mishra were among others present in the virtual meeting.