



National Consumer Helpline

“India’s Frontline of Consumer Protection”

Key Takeaways

- National Consumer Helpline Facilitates refunds of **₹2.72 Crore** in July 2025 by resolving **7,256** consumer grievances.
- **E-commerce Tops** refund grievances with **₹1.34 Crore** redressal.
- National Consumer Helpline receives **3,981** GST Reforms 2025 related calls; **31%** are queries and **69%** grievances.
- Call volumes have grown more than tenfold, rising from **12,553** in December 2015 to **1,55,138** in December 2024.
- The average number of monthly complaint registrations has increased from **37,062** in 2017 to **1,70,585** in 2025.
- The number of **convergence partners** has steadily increased from **263** in 2017 to **1,142** companies till Sept,2025.

Introduction

A consumer from Nalanda in Bihar faced hardship when ration was not provided for four months despite holding a valid ration card. Efforts to get help locally did not succeed. The consumer then approached the National Consumer Helpline, which ensured that the ration supply was restored. Expressing gratitude, the consumer shared, “Main aapko kis lafzon mein, kin words mein dhanyavaad karu sir. Aapke madhyam se mera ye problem solve hua hai. Main bahut zyada khush hoon. Aapka bahut-bahut dhanyavaad, aapki team ka, ye Rashtriya Upbhokta Helpline ka.”

In another incident, a consumer from Gurgaon in Haryana complained about a gas cylinder received from an authorised agency that weighed less than expected. With no solution offered by the agency, the consumer turned to NCH. The issue was promptly resolved. Appreciating the swift action, the consumer said, “Issue toh solve ho gaya hai, ye bahut achhi baat hai. Aap turant action lete ho aur time pe solution dete ho iska.”

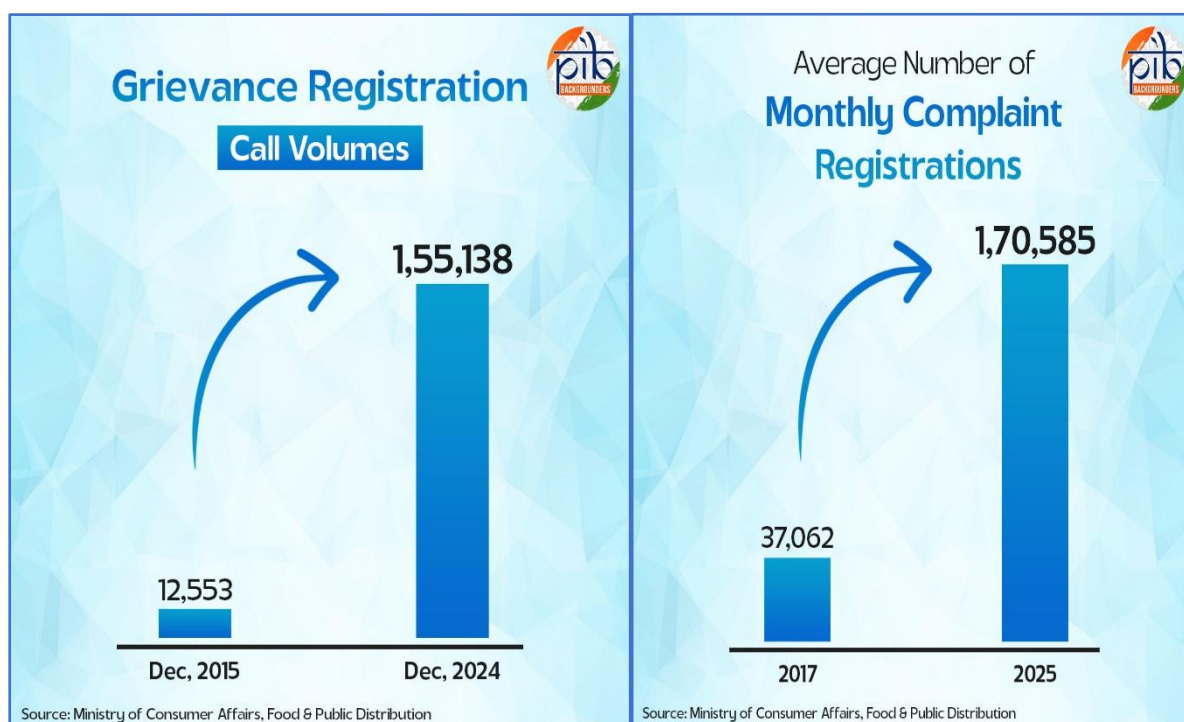
These are not just isolated success stories but clear examples of how the **National Consumer Helpline** acts as a lifeline for ordinary citizens. **The National Consumer Helpline** is a flagship initiative of the Department of Consumer Affairs to guide consumers, resolve grievances and create awareness about their rights. It operates through the portal consumerhelpline.gov.in, which functions as the Integrated Grievance Redress Mechanism. The platform brings together consumers, government agencies, regulators, ombudsmen, companies and call centres on a single system.



Through this mechanism, consumers can register complaints online and seek resolution at the pre-litigation stage. If they remain unsatisfied, they still have the option to approach the Consumer Commissions. The portal also serves as a knowledge platform to inform citizens about their responsibilities while protecting their rights.

Progress in Consumer Redressal

The reach and efficiency of the helpline has been significantly enhanced by leveraging technology. Call volumes have grown more than tenfold, rising from **12,553 in December 2015 to 1,55,138 in December 2024**. The platform currently receives **over one lakh complaints per month** reflecting the growing consumer trust. The average number of monthly complaint registrations has increased from **37,062 in 2017 to 1,70,585 in 2025**. With the introduction of digital modes, nearly **65%** of consumer grievances on the helpline are registered through online and digital channels. Grievance registration via **WhatsApp** has shown a significant growth from **3% in March 2023 to 20% in March 2025**.



Further, In **July 2025**, the National Consumer Helpline successfully facilitated refunds totalling **Rs. 2.72 crore** by resolving **7,256 consumer grievances** across **27 different sectors** which increased from **1079 consumer grievances** with total refund of **Rs. 62 lakhs in April 2025**. The **e-commerce sector for July 2025** accounted for the **largest number** of refund-related complaints, with **3,594 cases** resulting in refunds worth **₹1.34 crore**. The **Travel and Tourism sector** followed, with refunds amounting to **₹31 lakh**.

Under the **Convergence initiative**, companies partner with the National Consumer Helpline on a voluntary and free-of-charge basis to ensure that customer grievances are resolved quickly and amicably. Complaints are forwarded in real time, and companies are expected to respond within **30 days**.

The number of **convergence partners** has steadily increased from **263 in 2017 to 1,142 companies** till **Sept,2025**, strengthening collaborative mechanisms for timely grievance redressal.

Partnering with NCH offers several advantages.

- Companies can address consumer grievances proactively, preventing disputes from escalating.
- This approach enables faster and mutually satisfactory resolutions, benefiting both customers and the company.
- It helps improve customer retention and build loyalty through better service.
- Participation promotes strong corporate governance and demonstrates a commitment to social responsibility.

The Department also identifies companies that receive a high volume of complaints but are not yet part of the Convergence initiative, and engages with these companies to join the Convergence initiative voluntarily. Partner companies receive real-time complaint data, allowing them to resolve issues quickly and fairly, which enhances transparency, accountability, and consumer confidence. Grievances are systematically forwarded to ensure timely action, and the fully online, user-friendly onboarding process encourages wider industry participation while reducing the burden on formal adjudicatory mechanisms.

National Consumer Helpline Empowers Students in Refund Disputes

As of Feb 2025, the Department of Consumer Affairs has secured refunds worth **₹1.56 crore** for more than **600 students** enrolled in Civil Services, Engineering and other courses, after coaching centres failed to honour their refund commitments. The action, enabled **through grievances filed on the National Consumer Helpline**, ensured timely redressal of issues such as unfulfilled services, cancelled classes and unfair practices, while also mandating coaching institutes to adopt transparent, student-friendly refund policies.

A JEE aspirant from Jamshedpur was denied a course despite proof of payment, but with the support of the **National Consumer Helpline** the refund was secured. Grateful for the swift resolution, the student shared, “**Refund RECEIVED, Thank You.**”

NCH Integrated with Next-Gen GST Reforms 2025

The Department of Consumer Affairs has aligned the **National Consumer Helpline** with the **Next-Gen GST Reforms 2025**, which were approved at the 56th meeting of the GST Council chaired by the Union Finance Minister in Sep 2025, and are in keeping with the vision outlined by the Prime Minister in his Independence Day 2025 address. To manage the rise in consumer queries and complaints expected after the introduction of revised GST charges, rates and exemptions from 22 September 2025, a dedicated category was created on the INGRAM portal. This category covers major sectors such as **automobiles, banking, consumer durables, e-commerce, fast moving consumer goods and others**, where consumers can directly register GST related complaints.

Since the implementation of the **Next-Generation GST Reforms 2025**, the **National Consumer Helpline** has logged **3,981 calls** concerning **GST issues** as of **2nd Oct 2025**. Of those, **31% were queries** and **69% were formal grievances** handled for further action.



Out of the total, **1,992 grievances** have been forwarded to the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) for further action, while **761 grievances** have been referred in real time to the relevant convergence partner companies for direct resolution.

Several key sectors have emerged where consumers are seeking clarity and action following the GST changes:

- A notable share of grievances were related to **milk pricing**. Many consumers reached NCH believing that milk companies ought to reduce milk prices in light of revised GST rates, but it was clarified that **fresh milk is already exempt** from GST and **UHT milk** has now also been exempted.
- Another large cluster of complaints involved **electronic goods** purchased online. Consumers alleged no benefit was passed on despite GST reductions. The investigation highlighted that rate reductions (**from 28% to 18%**) apply to items like **TVs, ACs, monitors and dishwashers**, while some items like **laptops, refrigerators and washing machines were already taxed at 18%**.
- Complaints also came in about **domestic LPG cylinders**. People said prices had not decreased. It was clarified that the GST rate on domestic **LPG remains at 5%**.
- Some complaints involved **petrol pricing**, where people expected reductions. But petrol sits outside the GST regime altogether.

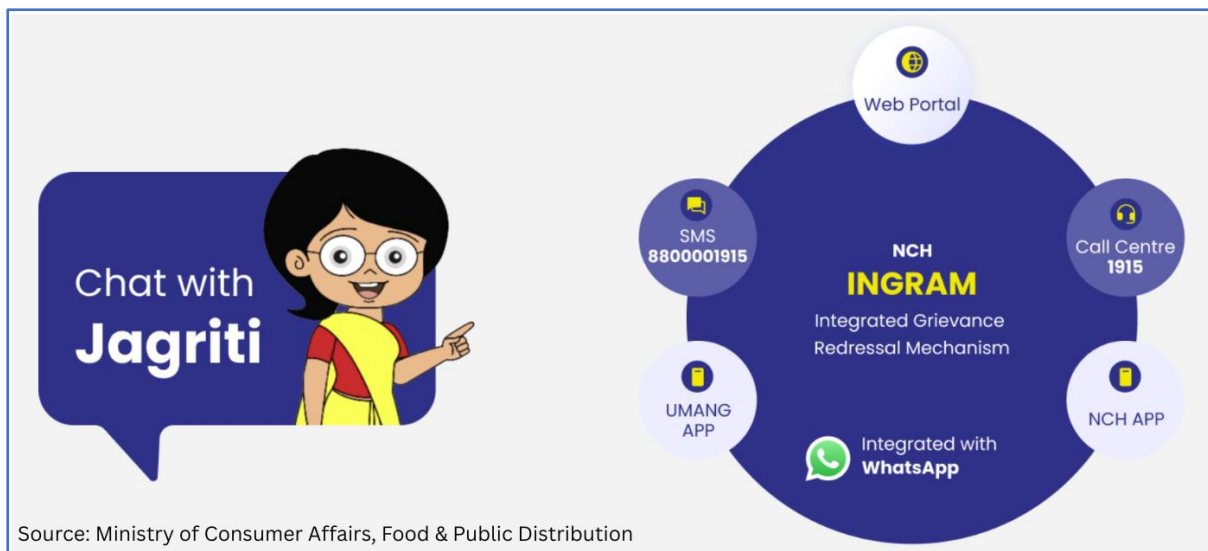
The first week of GST-related grievance reporting shows that consumers are engaging actively with the redressal system, reflecting growing awareness and confidence in the mechanisms set up by the Department of Consumer Affairs.

How one Registers his/her Grievance?

Consumers can register their grievances with the National Consumer Helpline through multiple channels:

- Call the toll-free numbers **1800 11 4000** and speak directly with an agent. Grievances can be registered in **17 languages via toll-free number 1915**.
- Register on the portal consumerhelpline.gov.in. After a one-time signup and email verification, a user ID and password will be created. With these credentials, consumers can log in, lodge complaints and upload supporting documents.
- Send an **SMS to 8800001915** and the team will get back to the consumer.
- Use **WhatsApp** to raise the grievance.
- Lodge complaints through the **NCH mobile app**.
- Access the service on the **UMANG app**.

Further, a dedicated feedback mechanism has been introduced, encouraging consumers to share suggestions via <https://consumerhelpline.gov.in/public/feedback>. The feedback received is systematically reviewed and analysed, serving as a vital input for continuous improvement in line with consumer needs.



Conclusion

The National Consumer Helpline has established itself as a vital platform for protecting consumer rights and ensuring fair business practices. By providing timely grievance redressal, facilitating collaboration between consumers, companies and authorities, and leveraging technology for greater efficiency, NCH empowers individuals to seek justice without lengthy legal processes. Its proactive approach strengthens transparency, builds trust in the system, and promotes a culture of accountability, making it an indispensable tool in India's consumer protection framework.

References

Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution

National Consumer Helpline

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PIB Press Release

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