



# Government of India

## Department of Consumer Affairs



## Overview of Consumer Affairs



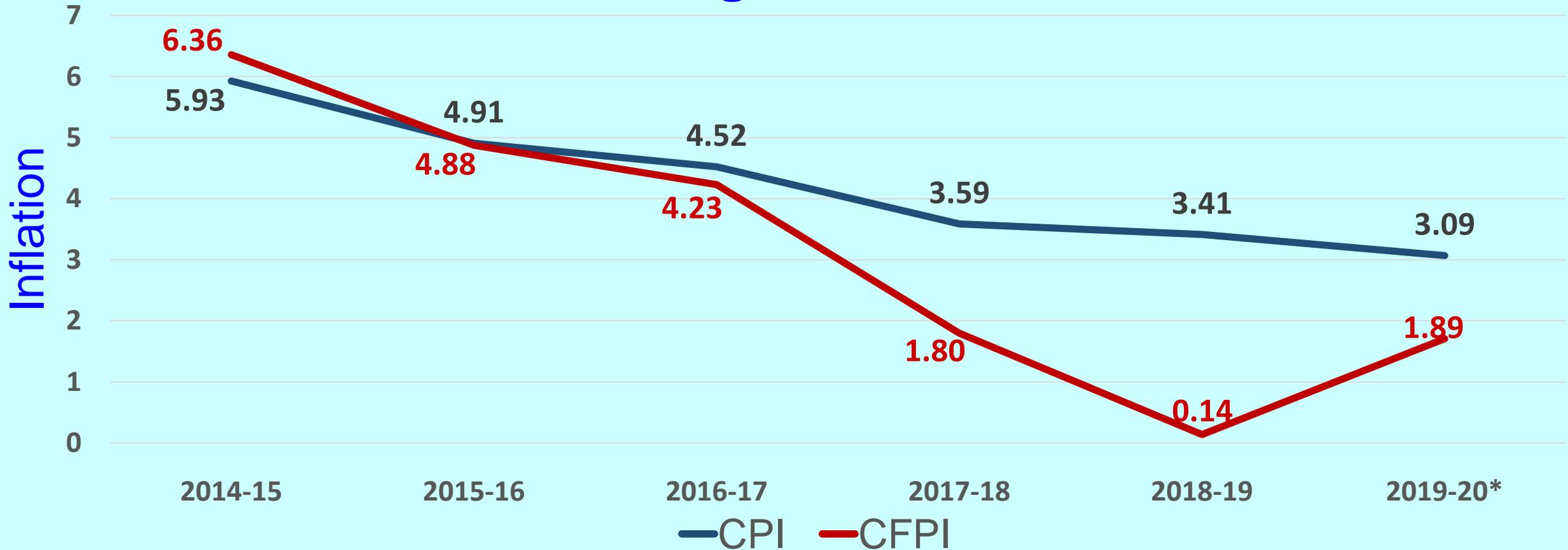
# PRICE MONITORING & AVAILABILITY

- **Monitoring prices of 22 essential food items from 109 centers**
  - **Cereals, pulses, edible oils, vegetables etc.**
- **Analyze prices and availability for policy recommendations**
- **Apprise decision making bodies of the price trends :**
  - **High-Level Committees of Ministers**
  - **Committee of Secretaries; Inter-Ministerial Committee**
  - **PSFMC**



# INFLATION RATE IN LAST 5 YRS.

## Annual Average CPI and CFPI Inflation



\* April-July, 2019; CFPI contributes 39% to CPI



# PRICE STABILIZATION FUND (PSF)

- A corpus fund of ₹14,610 cr.
- Covers pulses, onions and potatoes
- Buffer of pulses and onions for supplies during period of lower availability
- Interest-free working capital advance to
  - Central Agencies ( NAFED, FCI,SFAC,MMTC,STC)
  - State/UTs for State PSF: 50:50 (75:25 for North East Region)
- Financial assistance to West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana & Odisha
- Proposals from A&N, Assam, Jharkhand, Puducherry, TN & Tripura



# BUFFER STOCKS UNDER PSF

- **56,689 MT Onions procured in 2019-20 under PSF**
- **14 LMT pulses buffer created in 2019-20**
- **Priority to States/UTs in allocation from Buffer**
- **States requested to provide demand – response awaited**
- **Release of onions from buffer initiated in identified markets for price moderation**



# ISSUES

- **Role of States crucial in**

- **Ensuring regular and accurate reporting**
- **Improved regional coverage**
  - ✓ **States with lower numbers may identify additional centres**
- **Reporting price on all seven days of the week**
- **3<sup>rd</sup> party verification of price data**

- **Crowd Sourcing**

- **States may encourage stakeholders (FPS, consumer cooperatives, VCOs ) to participate**



# ISSUES

- **Other States/UTs may also consider setting State/UTs level PSF**
- **States/UTs may take benefit of buffer stocks available with Gol**
- **Recent rise in Tur Price -**
  - **States/UTs offered 2 LMT Tur from buffer for retailing & Welfare Schemes – may place their requirement**
- **States offered onions from Gol buffer for price management**
  - **Demand awaited from States/UTs**



# THE ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES ACT, 1955

- Ensuring adequate availability of EC at fair prices
- Central Govt. (concerned Miny./Dept.) empowered to:
  - Regulate by licences, permits, etc., the production, storage, transport, distribution, disposal, acquisition, use or consumption of, any EC
  - Control price at which EC may be bought or sold
  - Require any manufacturer/ trader to sell stock of EC to Govt.
  - Collect information, statistics
- Powers delegated to States/UTs to issue licence for storage, transport and for data collection (except for fertilizers)
- Powers for manufacturing, production and price not delegated for ECs



# ISSUES

- **Recent changes for ease of doing business**
  - **Renewal of licences for at least 5 years**
  - **Contract farming purchaser exempted from stock limit**
- **Suggestion from States on**
  - **Review penal provisions**
  - **Amendments required if any in EC Act and PBMMSEC Act to promote ease of doing business with particular focus on Foodstuff**



# ISSUES

- **Multiple Government Agencies**
  - ✓ **Police**
  - ✓ **Civil supplies**
  - ✓ **Agriculture**
  - ✓ **Legal Metrology**
  - ✓ **Health**
- **Regular coordination needed**
- **Create separate department of Consumer Affairs in States**



# CONSUMER PROTECTION

- **Quasi- judicial machinery set up under CP Act**
  - ✓ > 600 consumer fora at district and State level
  - ✓ NCDRC in New Delhi
- **States responsible for appointment of Members and President of District Fora and State Commission**
- **States also responsible for providing staff, funds to DFs and SCs**
- **DoCA responsible for NCDRC**



# MOVING TOWARDS BETTER CONSUMER PROTECTION

## CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT 2019

- Simplified Dispute Resolution Process
- Alternate Dispute Redress through Mediation
- Filing from place of residence
- E-filing and Videoconferencing for hearing



- Product Liability
- Provision for Rules for new age consumer issues:
  - e- Commerce & Direct Selling



# MOVING TOWARDS BETTER CONSUMER PROTECTION

## Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA)

- Executive agency to provide relief to a class of consumers
- To prevent unfair trade practices
- Recall of unsafe goods and services
- Impose penalties on Manufacturers/ Endorsers/Publishers of Misleading Advertisements



# STRENGTHENING INFRASTRUCTURE OF CONSUMER COMMISSIONS

- **Financial assistance to States for**
  - **Construction of building including mediation Cell**
  - **Acquiring non-building assets**
- **For computerisation of functioning**
  - **Computer hardware/software**
  - **Technical manpower**

# CONFONET

- **Computerisation and Computer Networking of Consumer Fora**
- **Centralized Online Case Monitoring System software**
  - **Generation / easy retrieval of Causelist, Notices, Orders/ judgements**
  - **MIS for backend users**
  - **SMS/ e-mail alerts for next date of hearing**
  - **Display Board, dashboard for public**
- **Computer HW,SW and technical manpower provided to > 600 Consumer Fora**
- **5 year old HW being replaced in 415 Consumer Fora**
- **E-filing module being developed**

# NATIONAL CONSUMER HELPLINE

- Helps consumers by resolving complaints
- Provides information, guidance to consumers
- 60 Helpdesks at IIPA, Delhi
- 6 Zonal helplines at Ahmadabad, Bengaluru, Guwahati, Jaipur, Kolkata and Patna for regional language support
- Access via toll-free number 14404, Website, SMS, UMANG App, NCH App
- Convergence with more than 550 companies.
- Handles about 60,000 grievances per month



# ISSUES

- **Vacancies of president and member**
- **Adoption of Model Rules for Qualification, Pay and Allowances of State Commissions and District Fora, by States**
- **Suggestions on framing of e-Commerce rules – draft guideline circulated for Consumer Protection**
- **Suggestion on framing on rules under CP Act 2019**
- **Delay in furnishing UCs**
- **Ensuring of entry of old physical cases into CONFONET system**
- **Details of implementing agency for fund transfer through PFMS**



# BUREAU OF INDIAN STANDARDS (BIS)

- **Established as statutory body by BIS Act, 1986 ; covered goods**
- **30 yr old Act replaced by BIS Act, 2016**
  - **covers goods, systems, services**
  - **Mandatory Hallmarking of precious metal articles**
  - **Multiple conformity assessment schemes for EOB**
  - **Other agencies also permitted to issue Certificate of Conformity**
  - **Essential requirements for mandatory certification**
  - **Standard Mark for BIS license only**
- **Represents India in the ISO and IEC activities**



# ISSUES

- **The BIS (Hallmarking) Regulations 2018**
  - **Grant of certificate of registration to the jewellers**
  - **Recognition to A&H Centres**
  - **Licence to the manufacturers engaged in refining of precious metal(s)**
- **Finalization of draft QCO on mandatory HM**
- **QCOs by Minys. to bring more products under mandatory certification - toys, helmets, pr. cooker, LPG stove, safety of heavy machinery**
- **Adoption of National Building Code by States**
- **Upgrade infra. –Br. Offices in unserved areas, fin. assistance to labs, etc.**



# LM ( PACKAGED COMMODITIES ) RULES

- Act provides for declarations on pre-packaged commodities to protect consumers
- Rules specify the declarations –
  - Name and address of manufacturer/ importer incl. country of origin if imported
  - Common, generic name of the commodity
  - Net qty. in std. unit of W or M or no. of commodity in the package
  - MRP incl. all taxes
  - Month and year of manufacture/ pre-packing or import ( except food articles, Seeds and cosmetics)



# LM ( PACKAGED COMMODITIES ) RULES

- “ Best before or Use by date, month and year” in case of commodity becoming unfit for human consumption with time
- Consumer Care Number
- Every e-Commerce entity to ensure the mandatory declarations are displayed
- Industrial and institutional customers exempted
- Package size upto 25 kg. for 19 items ( biscuit, bread, edible oil, paint etc. of mass consumption)
  - Package size upto 50 kg. for fertilizers and cement
  - More items can be added



# ISSUES

- **2 new RRSLS to be set up at Varanasi and Nagpur**
- **States to ensure font size, contrast and grouping at 1 place of the mandatory declaration**
- **Dual MRP prohibited**
- **Action against over charging (more than MRP)**



# CONSUMER AWARENESS (JGJ)

- Implementation through BoC, DD, AIR, NFDC, LS TV etc.
- Participation in popular fairs / festivals in rural and backward areas
- Celebration of National Consumer Day (24 Dec) and World Consumer Rights Day (15 Mar)
- Focused campaigns in SC/ST areas and in NE region
- On social media through Twitter handles @consaff and @jagograhaakjago and Facebook page @Consumer Advocacy
- Proposals from States solicited



# CONSUMER WELFARE FUND (CWF)

- Created under the Central Excise Act (CEA), 1944; Rules framed in 1992
- To promote welfare and protect interests of consumers, create consumer awareness and strengthen consumer movement in the country
- CWF now setup under CGST Act, 2017 and CGST Rules, 2017
- Non-lapsable Public Fund
- Fin. assistance to VCOs/Institutions/Govt. bodies by inviting proposals 'online'
- The window for 'Call for Proposals' under Consumer Welfare Fund (CWF) is open from 26.08.2019 to 25.09.2019.
- The amount of Consumer Welfare (Corpus) Fund has been enhanced from the present ₹10.00 Cr to ₹20.00 Cr on the ratio between Centre and the State.



**Thank You**

