

1. PRICE MONITORING CELL

Over all Inflation Rate

The year 2008-09 witnessed a spurt both in overall inflation and in the prices of food articles. However, the inflation moderated since November, 2008 mainly due to recession in industrial sector. The overall availability and prices of essential commodities have generally remained satisfactory during the year 2008-09 except for rice, some pulses and edible oil. The annual rate of inflation in terms of Wholesale Price Index (WPI) number recorded a decrease of 1.18% during the year 2008-09 (March 2008-March 2009) as compared to 7.5% in the corresponding period a year ago. However, the WPI of the Food Articles stood at 7.54%. The WPI of all commodities became negative (-1.01%) since the month of June, 2009. The modest increase in the inflation rate in the year was mainly attributed to the increase in prices of some essential commodities like cereals, pulses (arhar and masur), and of late in potato and onions etc. Inflation of food articles is a matter of concern.

1.2 The annual rate of inflation in the WPI of selected essential commodities along with their weight, and contribution to the overall inflation over one year as on 3.10.2009 are given below:

COMMODITY	WEIGHT	INFLATION RATE 3/10/2009	Inflation Rate A Year Ago 4/10/2008
Milk	4.37	10.03	7.9
Sugar	3.62	45.52	13.58
Rice	2.45	14.47	7.58
Wheat	1.38	4.46	7.04
Hydrogenated vanaspati	0.8	0	9.97
Rape & Mustard oil	0.49	-12.84	25.67
Potatoes	0.26	78.27	-17.12
Gram	0.22	-4.07	6.36
Atta	0.21	0.79	3.01
Maize	0.19	19.82	9.35
Groundnut oil	0.17	-3.98	-4.8
Tea	0.16	2.33	70.54

Arhar	0.13	52.87	11.04
Moong	0.11	26.95	18.6
Urad	0.1	21.24	-2.31
Onions	0.09	9.23	-39.72
Masur	0.04	16.9	21.12
Salt	0.02	-2.35	26.75
Total	14.8	--	--

A statement showing the variation in WPI of 27 selected essential commodities as on 3.10.2009 over different periods is given at **Annexure – I**.

General Trends in Prices of Essential Commodities

2. During the current year, prices of most essential commodities have generally remained within reasonable levels barring pulses (except for gram dal), sugar, rice, potato and onions. Rise in domestic prices is owing to the combined effect of factors such as, growing demand on account of increase in population and income, hardening of international prices, changes in consumption pattern, adverse weather and climate change, increase in crude oil prices, improvement in income and living standards and increase in freight rates as well as increase in Minimum Support Price (MSP). Reasons for inflation in some food articles mainly pulses (except gram dal), sugar, potato are listed below:

(i) In case of pulses, as per the 4th Advance Estimates, the domestic production of pulses has marginally declined to 14.66 million tonnes during 2008-09 as compared to 14.76 million tonnes during 2007-08 (Final Estimates). Domestic prices of pulses have risen mainly on account of the supply-demand mismatch in the individual varieties of pulses. The gap in the demand and availability of the commodity is being bridged through imports. Import of pulses for the period of 2008-09 was 2.43 million tonnes (Source : DGCI&S) . The details of the pulses production (2007-08 & 2008-09) as per the Fourth Advance Estimates released by Department of Agriculture and Cooperation are given in the Table below:

Pulses Production (2007-08 & 2008-09) Fourth Advance Estimates (Million tonnes)

S.No.	Pulse Type	2007-08	2008-09
1	Tur	3.08	2.31
2	Urad	1.46	1.11
3	Moong	1.52	1.01
4	Gram	5.75	7.05
5	Other Pulses	2.95	3.18
6	Total Pulses	14.76	14.66

(ii) Sugar prices have increased during the year 2008-09 mainly due to decline in area and productivity of sugarcane; shift in acreage from sugarcane to other foodgrain crops such as wheat, owing to higher MSP of the latter; drop in sugar recovery by half percentage point to 9 per cent ; poor availability of cane leading to a fall in crushing duration from 210 to around 150 days; and due to the diversion of cane towards jaggery production this year as cane growers were given higher prices by Gur manufacturers. The sugar production is estimated at 150 lakh tonnes during 2008-09.

(iii) **Potato:** During the year 2008-09 potato production was lower in the states of Bihar, West Bengal and M.P because of late blight disease and lesser availability of water. A shortfall of about 2 lakh tonnes is anticipated in the current kharif crop which is around 15 lakh tonnes.

(iv) **Onions:** During the year 2008-09 onion production was sufficient to meet the demand. However, recent floods in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra have caused damage to kharif crop and prices of onions have increased sharply. The situation is likely to improve after late kharif crop is harvested and brought to the markets.

Review of Prices of Essential Commodities

3. The price situation is reviewed periodically at high-level meetings such as the Cabinet Committee on Prices (CCP) and the Committee of Secretaries.

4. Government has procured a record 58.53 million tonnes of foodgrains (33.30 million tonnes of rice & 25.23 million tonnes of wheat) as on 30.9.2009. Even after keeping the minimum buffer stock, there is enough foodgrains to intervene in the market to keep the prices at reasonable level. Government has also decided to create a Strategic Reserve of 5 million tonnes of wheat and rice. This is in addition to the buffer stock held by FCI every year. Government has also maintained the Central Issue Price (CIP) for rice at Rs.5.65 per kg for BPL and Rs.3 per kg for AAY) and wheat at Rs.4.15 per kg for BPL and Rs. 2 per kg for AAY since July 2002 and has thus protected the families living below Poverty line (BPL) and beneficiaries of Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY). Government has taken a number of steps to improve domestic availability and moderate inflation as briefly listed below:-

Short Term Measures taken by Government

A. 1. Fiscal Measures

(i) Reducing import duties to zero – for rice, wheat, pulses, edible oils (crude) and sugar; and maize (under TRQ of 5 lakh tonnes per annum, beyond which 15% duty will apply);

(ii) Reducing import duties on refined & hydrogenated oils & vegetable oils to 7.5%;

(iii) Allowed import of raw sugar at zero duty under O.G.L. upto 1.8.2009 by sugar mills (notified on 17.4.2009). This has since been extended up to 31.3.2010.

(iv) Allowed import of white/refined sugar by STC/MMTC/PEC and NAFED upto 1 million tonnes by 1.8.2009 under O.G.L. at zero duty (notified on 17.4.2009). This has since been extended upto 30.11.2009.

(v) Levy obligation removed in respect of all imported raw sugar and white/ refined sugar.

2. Administrative Measures

(vi) The export of edible oils is permitted in branded consumer packs of up to 5 kgs, subject to a limit of 10,000 tonnes up to 31st Oct, 2009.

(vii) Banning export of edible oils and pulses (except kabuli chana).

(viii) No changes in Tariff Rate Values of edible oils;

(ix) Imposition of stock limit orders in the case of rice, paddy, pulses, sugar, edible oils and oilseeds;

(x) Using Minimum Export Price (MEP) to regulate exports of onion (averaging at \$300 per tonne for October 2009);

(xi) Distribution of one million tons of imported edible oils to States/UTs at a subsidy of Rs.15/kg.

(xii) To augment availability of pulses, the Public Sector Undertakings (namely, STC, MMTC, and PEC) and NAFED were permitted to import and sell pulses under a scheme and losses, if any, up to 15% are reimbursed by the Government.

(xiii) Distribution of imported pulses to State Governments for supply through PDS at a subsidy of Rs.10 per kg.

(xiv) Government permitted sugar factories to sell processed raw sugar in the domestic market and fulfill export obligation on ton to ton basis.

(xv) Release of adequate quantities of non-levy sugar.

(xvi) Banning of future trade in key essential commodities.

(B) Medium Term Measures:

In the medium term, Government has taken initiatives such as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP), Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM), National Food Security Mission (NFSM) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVY) to improve production and productivity in agriculture.

Annexure-I

PERCENTAGE VARIATION IN THE WHOLESALE PRICE INDICES OF SELECTED COMMODITIES DURING THE LAST WEEK, FORTNIGHT 4 WEEKS, OVER THE FINANCIAL YEAR AND IN ONE YEAR ENDING 3/10/2009 AND IN CORRESPONDING PERIOD IN 2008

Commodity	Commodity Weight	PERCENTAGE VARIATION									
		OVER 1 WEEK		OVER THE FORTNIGHT		OVER 4 WEEK		OVER THE FINANCIAL YEAR		OVER THE YEAR	
		3/10/2009 26/9/2009	4/10/2008 27/9/2008	3/10/2009 19/9/2009	4/10/2008 20/9/2008	3/10/2009 5/9/2009	4/10/2008 6/9/2008	3/10/2009 28/3/2009	4/10/2008 31/3/2007	3/10/2009 4/10/2008	4/10/2008 6/10/2007
ALL COMMODITIES	100	-0.5	-0.7	-0.6	-0.7	0	-0.8	5.8	13.9	0.9	11.5
I PRIMARY ARTICLES	22.02525	-1.4	-0.4	-1.3	-0.1	-0.7	Steady	9.6	16.7	8.3	12.9
(A) Food Articles	15.40246	-1.7	0.2	-1.8	0.7	-1	0.8	13.5	14.1	13.3	10.2
a1. Cereals	4.40629	-0.4	1	-0.2	0.9	Steady	0.7	3.9	10.4	11.9	7.4
Rice	2.44907	0	2.3	0	2.2	0	2	2.8	12.6	14.5	7.6
Wheat	1.38408	-0.4	-0.6	0	-0.6	0.7	-0.7	2.6	7.9	4.5	7
Jowar	0.22189	-0.1	Steady	0.1	0.3	0.1	-0.2	15.7	20	16.4	6.4
Bajra	0.11044	-1.9	2.3	-3.2	0.9	-4.7	1.4	4.6	1	29	7.9
a2. Pulses	0.6032	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.6	-1.3	-0.5	17.3	4.4	20.6	8.8
Gram	0.22365	-0.5	-0.1	-0.3	-0.6	-1.5	-0.9	2.4	5.3	-4.1	6.4
Arhar	0.13466	-0.8	-0.6	-1.3	-0.3	-3.7	0.1	35.6	19.6	52.9	11
Moong	0.11225	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.3	1.2	-0.6	22.7	-3.2	26.9	18.6
Masur	0.03645	-0.6	0.2	-0.3	0.6	0.1	-0.4	11.2	43.3	16.9	21.1
Urad	0.09619	0.6	-0.9	0.5	-2.2	-1.2	-0.2	15.4	-10.6	21.2	-2.3
b1. Vegetables	1.45869	-13.2	0.7	-14.1	4.2	-12.3	1.3	63.5	43.6	23.2	12.8
Potatoes	0.25647	-1.5	0.1	-0.4	1.3	0.5	-1	100.7	17.6	78.3	-17.1
Onions	0.09372	5.5	-2.5	0	3.1	3.7	3	-8.9	9.2	9.2	-39.7
c. Milk	4.36708	1.2	Steady	1.2	0.8	1.2	1.4	7	13.2	10	7.9
Milk	4.36708	1.2	Steady	1.2	0.8	1.2	1.4	7	13.2	10	7.9
Fish-Marine	0.39328	0	Steady	0	Steady	-7.8	6.4	-5.7	30.3	-11.4	16.4
Mutton	0.44499	2	Steady	2	Steady	4	Steady	27.7	15.8	28.9	17.4
Chillies(dry)	0.18866	Steady	0.4	0.4	-0.2	0.4	0.8	-4.7	29.3	7.7	19.8
Tea	0.15739	Steady	-1.7	2.3	0.1	2.2	9.6	30.3	75.9	2.3	70.5
II FUEL,POWER,LIGHT & LUBRICANTS	14.22624	-0.1	-1.3	-0.1	-1.3	0.6	-1.3	7.6	15.8	-6.8	14.5
Coke	0.01115	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	30.7	Steady	30.7
Kerosene	0.68928	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady
III MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS	63.74851	-0.2	-0.6	-0.4	-0.6	Steady	-1	3.6	12.1	0.9	9.8
Atta	0.20629	Steady	0.6	Steady	0.6	Steady	0.6	0.3	2.3	0.8	3
Sugar, Khandsari & Gur	3.92876	2.1	0.4	1.1	0.4	2.3	-0.3	28.7	2.9	43.9	7.9
Sugar	3.61883	2.4	0.4	1.2	0.4	2.4	-0.5	31.1	7.9	45.5	13.6
Gur	0.05979	1.8	-1.3	4.7	0.2	5.1	5.1	15.9	17.3	39	15.9
Salt	0.02126	Steady	1.1	2.2	1.1	2.2	1.1	4.2	25.8	-2.3	26.8
h. Edible Oils	2.75515	-1.5	-0.5	-1.6	-0.1	-1.8	-2.1	-3.3	16.6	-8.1	11.2
Hydrogenated vanaspati	0.79891	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	12.4	Steady	10
Rape & Mustard oil	0.48566	-4.5	-0.4	-4.6	0.5	-3.6	-0.3	-8.4	32.2	-12.8	25.7
Coconut oil	0.17207	-8	0.2	-8.8	0.2	-8.3	-1.7	-15.4	28.4	-23.1	31.2
Groundnut oil	0.1744	0.8	-0.1	0.2	-0.7	-1.2	-3.5	2.4	5.4	-4	-4.8
(C) Textiles	9.79992	0.1	-0.2	0.4	-0.1	0.8	-1.9	3.1	5.2	3.1	6.3
a2. Cotton Cloth (Mills)	0.90306	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	Steady	2.5	2.9	3.7

2. CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT, 1986

One of the most important milestones in the area of consumer protection/ consumer movement in the country has been the enactment of Consumer Protection Act, 1986. This Act was enacted to better protect the interests of Consumer by creating an alternative disputes resolution mechanism exclusively for consumers. It is one of the most progressive and comprehensive piece of legislations having a separate three-tier quasi judicial consumer dispute redressal machinery at the national, state and district levels.

The Salient Features of the Act are as under:

- 1) The Act enshrines six rights of consumers namely, Right to Safety; Right to be informed; Right to choose; Right to be heard; Right to seek redressal & Right to consumer education.
- 2) The provisions of the Act are in addition to and not in derogation of the provisions of any other law for the time being in force.
- 3) It is an umbrella legislation covering all goods & services, excluding only commercial transactions from the purview of the Act.
- 4) A consumer can seek redressal against any manufacturer and trader of goods/service provider, so long as the goods purchased or service availed of was for a consideration.
- 5) The Act provides for simple, inexpensive and timely redressal of consumer complaints.
- 6) The provisions of the Act are not only compensating in nature but also preventive and punitive in character.
- 7) The Act provides for establishing a three-tier consumer dispute redressal machinery at the national, state and district levels commonly known as National Commission, State Commission and District Forum respectively. As on date 621 District Fora, 35 State Commissions and One National Commission have been established in the country.
- 8) The Act also provides for setting up of Consumer Protection Councils at the Central, State, District level, which is an advisory body to promote and protect the rights of the consumers.

As per the reports made available by the National Commission, on 12.10.2009, the total number of cases filed and disposed of in the National Commission, State Commissions and District Fora, since inception, are as given below:-

Sl. No.	Name of Agency	Cases filed since inception	Cases disposed of since inception	Cases Pending	% of total Disposal
1.	National	60119	51762	8357	86.10

	Commission				
2.	State Commissions	480083	369360	110723	76.94
3.	District Fora	2710731	2463136	247595	90.87
	Total	3250933	2884258	366675	88.72%

Though the responsibility of establishing consumer fora at the District and State levels are that of the States/UTs, the Central Government has been implementing the following plan schemes for improving the functioning of consumer fora.

- (a) **CONFONET:-** A scheme for “computerization and computer networking of Consumer Fora in the country” with an outlay of Rs. 48.64 crore was launched through National Informatics Centre (NIC) as a turnkey project during the Xth Plan from 2004-2005. Under this scheme, all Consumer Fora in the country are being computerized and connected through a network for exchange of information which would help Consumer Fora in quicker disposal of cases and also allow consumer to access the status of their cases. Under the scheme, NIC is providing the necessary hardware, system software, developing application software and will provide maintenance as well as necessary training to the officials of the Consumer Fora. **CONFONET** scheme has now been extended into the XIth Plan with a total outlay of Rs.25.69 crore. In the XIth Plan greater stress is being laid upon continued HR support by means of technical support personnel (TSPs) as well as training.
- (b) **Strengthening the infrastructure of Consumer Fora:-**The Central Government has been extending financial assistance to States/UTs for strengthening the infrastructure of consumer fora so that minimum level of facilities are made available at each consumer forum, which are required for their effective functioning. These include construction of new building of the consumer fora, carrying out additional/alteration/renovation remuneration of existing buildings and grant for acquiring non-building assets such as furniture, office equipment etc. A total amount of Rs.159.00 crore has been released to States/UTs from 1995-96 to 2008-09.
- (c) A new building is being constructed by the CPWD at INA Complex, New Delhi, to provide Office accommodation to the National Commission, at an overall cost of Rs. 19.90 crore. The building is likely to be completed by June, 2010.

3. CONSUMER WELFARE FUND (CWF)

Introduction: - The Central Excise and Salt Act, 1944 was amended in 1991 to enable the Central Government to create a Consumer Welfare Fund where the money, which is not refundable to the manufacturers, etc. is being credited. Consumer Welfare Fund was created in 1992 with the objective of providing financial assistance to promote and protect the welfare of the consumer, create consumer awareness and strengthen consumer movement in the country, particularly in rural areas. The Department of Consumer Affairs operates the Fund, set up by the Department of Revenue under the Central Excise and Salt Act, 1944. As on 31.8.2009 a sum of about Rs.117.16 crore has been credited to the Consumer Welfare Fund Utilization from the fund during last three years was more than Rs. 20 crore.

Consumer Welfare Fund Rules were formed and notified in the Gazette of India in 1992. Under these rules any agency / organization engaged in consumer welfare activities for a period of three years and registered under the Companies Act, 1956 or any other law for the time being in force including village / mandal / samiti level cooperatives of consumer specially women SC/ST, State /Central Government or any industry as defined under Industrial disputes Act 1947 recommended by Bureau to be engaged for a period of 5 years in viable and useful research activities , which has made or likely to make significant contribution in formulation of standard mark of the products of mass consumption, etc. are eligible for seeking financial assistance from the Fund.

3. PROCEDURE FOR SANCTION

The proposal for sanction of grant from CWF is scrutinized in the Department and those that are found not suitable are rejected on initial scrutiny. Those, which are considered viable, are then submitted for examination by an Appraisal Committee under Joint Secretary (CA) which recommends / rejects / seek clarification from them and submits its report for approval to the Standing Committee of CWF to take a final view regarding the suitability of the project. The organization / institution is also given an opportunity to make a presentation before the senior officers of the Department, if found necessary. Proposals are finally approved by the CWF Standing Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary (CA). After approval of the Standing Committee, sanctions are issued with the concurrence of the Integrated Finance Division.

4. On going schemes from CWF.

1. Setting up of Consumer Clubs in School/Colleges:-

This scheme was launched in 2002, according to which a consumer club can be set up in each Middle/High/Higher secondary School/College affiliated to a Government recognized Board/University. A grant of Rs.10, 000/- per consumer club is admissible under this scheme. This scheme has been decentralized and transferred to the State Governments/UTs with effect from 1.04.2004. Proposals can be submitted under this scheme to the Nodal Officer in the Food, PD & Consumer Affairs Department of the respective States/UTs by eligible organizations/VCOs. Funds are transferred to the Nodal officer in the State on receipt of the list of schools from the

State. So far, 7149 consumer clubs have been sanctioned in 22 States. Remaining States have been asked for setting up Consumer Clubs, expeditiously.

2. SCHEME ON PROMOTING INVOLVEMENT OF RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS/UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES ETC. IN CONSUMER PROTECTION AND CONSUMER WELFARE –

This scheme that has been launched in 2004 has been revised in 2009 with a view to sponsor research and evaluation studies in the field of consumer welfare to provide solution to the practical problems being faced by the consumers and to have necessary inputs for formulation of policy/programme/scheme for the protection and welfare of consumer. The Indian Institute of Public Administration has been appointed as consultant under the scheme to the Department of Consumer Affairs for three years for performing the following functions:

- (i) To evaluate proposals received by the Department of Consumer Affairs for sanction of funds under the scheme on promoting involvement of research institution/universities/ colleges etc. in consumer protection and consumer welfare.
- (ii) From the short listed proposals as in (i) above
 - (a) To sanction proposals for research, evaluation studies etc. in the field of consumer welfare as per the scheme; and
 - (b) To publish the results of research and evaluation studies conducted as per (a) above in the form of books, monographs, pamphlets etc.

The project cost is Rs.2.98 crore.

3. Creation of Chair/Centers of excellence in Institutions/Universities

- a) **Chair on Consumer Law and Practice in National Law School of India University (NLSUI), Bangalore:-** A Chair on Consumer Law and Practice was sanctioned in 2007-08 to National Law School of India University (NLSUI), Bangalore at a cost of (Rs.90,00,000/- as an endowment grant. Rs. 15, 00,000/- was released for first year expenditure) . Total amount of grant of Rs. 1, 05, 00,000/- has already been released. The primary objectives of the Chair is to act as a “Think Tank” for the Research and Policy related issues on consumer law and Practice and also develop Consumer Affairs as a district subject of study both at Under Graduate and Post Graduate levels.
- b) **Centre of Consumer Studies in Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA): -** A Centre of Consumer Studies was sanctioned in 2007-08 to IIPA, New Delhi at an estimated cost of Rs. 850.77 lakh spread over a period of five years for an in-depth action research in the areas of consumer protection, training of personnel engaged in administration and adjudication of consumer justice in the country and the elected representatives of the local bodies etc. An amount of Rs. 148.97 lakh for the first year grant has been released so far.

4. Information, Education and Communication programmes for consumer awareness

- **Society for Advancement of Villages Empowerment and Rehabilitation of All (SAVERA):-** The project proposal for organizing Information and Education and Communication (IEC) programme in Katihar and Kishangarh District of Bihar for strengthening Consumer Movement at grassroots and to set up a Consumer counselling committees at Village and Block level has been sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 52.02 lakh, out of which 32.09 lakh has been released so far.
- **M/s I. Land Informatics Limited, 58/114, Prince Anwar Shah Road, Lake Garden, Kolkatta** A project by M/s I. Land Informatics Limited, 58/114, Prince Anwar Shah Road, Lake Garden, Kolkatta- for promoting Consumer awareness in Rural areas in West Bengal had been sanctioned for Rs. 27 Lakh for conducting an IEC progarmme in six blocks in each of the six Districts of Coochbehar, Malda, Purulia, Jalpaiguri, Bankura and Birbhum in West Bengal for strengthening consumer movement at grassroots. The project has already been completed and a second phase of the project for another 6 districts of West Bengal is under consideration.
- **M/s Vinod Kumar Memorial Trust, B-2/4, Model Town-II, New Delhi-** A project has been sanctioned to M/s Vinod Kumar Memorial Trust, B-2/4, Model Town-II, New Delhi. to upgrade and maintain the website midguideindia.com at the cost of Rs.20 lakh for strengthening consumer information on drugs and allied sectors. The primary objective of the project is to take steps to enhance consumer information on Drugs and Allied services. Rs.10 lakh has been released as 1st installment.

5. Setting up of consumer Product Testing Laboratories

Project has been sanctioned to VOICE Society, New Delhi. The focus of the project is to utilize existing National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) accredited laboratories in India for comparative testing of various categories of consumer products and publishing and popularizing consumer voice magazine containing consumer related subjects in English, Hindi & other regional languages to create informed consumers and to facilitate in developing & up-gradation of National Standards based on scientific data and consumer preferences. Project has been sanctioned to VOICE Society for two years at a cost of RS. 225.50 lakh. Total grant has been released in four installments under this project. 10 products and 2 services are tested during each year and the reports are published. So far test reports on 20 products and 4 services have been published. The project has been evaluated recently by an independent agency.

- **M/s Federation of Consumer Associations, West Bengal (FCAWB) :-** A project for up gradation of Food and Water Testing organizing Laboratory with NABL Accreditation at a cost of Rs.2.08 crore, has been sanctioned specifically towards purchase of equipments for upgrading the laboratory.

- **Council for Fair Business Practice, Mumbai, Maharashtra (CFBP)**
As part of new initiatives to enhance the levels and reach of consumer protection and welfare activities, the Department has considered and approved a project by Council for Fair Business Practice, Mumbai, Maharashtra (CFBP). This project is for upgrading existing Ramakrishana Bajaj testing lab in SNDT Women's University Mumbai. The department is partially financing the upgrading of lab at a cost of Rs.50 lakh

6. Setting up of Complaint handling/Counseling /guidance mechanisms

- **NATIONAL CONSUMER HELPLINE**

The National Consumer Helpline (NCH) is a landmark project set up in collaboration with the Delhi University at a cost of Rs.3,12,89,420/- . An amount of Rs.3,03,71,149, has been released so far. Consumers from anywhere in the country can dial the toll free number 1800-11-4000 from any BSNL/MTNL telephone line and seek advice in all areas of consumer interest and sort out their grievances. The service is available in English and Hindi.

The Helpline is intended to deal with all problems related to products and services including problems related to telecom, courier, banking, insurance, financial services etc. It advises the consumer to deal with problems related to defective products, deficiency in services and unfair trade practices. Average complaints received are 5,000 in a month out of which around 30% get resolved. The project has been evaluated recently and appreciated by an independent agency.

- **CONSUMER ONLINE RESOURCE & EMPOWERMENT (CORE) CENTRE PROJECT:**

The CORE Centre project is an initiative taken by the Department towards web based Consumer Awareness & Protection programme aimed at identification of consumer problems and their redressal through institutional approach and utilizing the vibrant Information Technology methods. The project is being executed through Consumer Coordination Council (CCC) – a national coalition of more than 50 leading consumer organizations in the country and a member of Consumers International-CI, U.K.

The main objectives of the CORE Center Project are :-

Development of National Information gathering mechanisms on consumer related issues;

Dissemination of information on important consumer issues;

Establishment of a Research & Documentation Centre on various consumer issues;

Providing information and analysis of consumer related Laws and Judgments;

Provide online support and pursue consumer complaints;

Broadly, the Centre is aimed at generating awareness, development of consumer rights, focusing corporate attention on consumer needs, preferences and problems, and orienting Government functioning vis-à-vis citizens through enforcement of Citizen Charters.

○ The project has been sanctioned with a total Budgetary outlay of Rs.3.50 crore spread over a period of five years out of which an amount of Rs.2.41 crore has been released so far. The CORE Centre is located in the premises of the National Institute of Standardization of BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) at NOIDA (UP).

The Online Registration and Redressal of complaints is one of the major day-to-day activities of the CORE Centre. This Service is available in English for 24 hours.

- **Council for Fair Business Practice, Mumbai, Maharashtra (CFBP)**

As part of new initiatives to enhance the levels and reach of consumer protection and welfare activities, the Department has considered and approved a project by Council for Fair Business Practice, Mumbai, Maharashtra (CFBP) This project is for consumer complaint handling by CFBP. Rs.6 lakh is sanctioned for complaint handling per year for 5 years.

- **Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI),** New Delhi has been sanctioned a grant of Rs. 3.56 crore for establishment of FICCI Alliance for Consumer Care (FACC) for setting up of a mechanism and providing platform for facilitating prompt redressal of consumer complaint through voluntary self-regulation and consumer education. An amount of Rs. 1.38 crore has been released so far. Under the project FICCI, has introduced a voluntary code of conduct for business groups and member companies will be persuaded to adopt the voluntary code of conduct in their activities.

7. **Training Programmes**

a) **State Govt of Tamilnadu-** Has been sanctioned two projects for training programmes:

i) Project for conducting training programmes in the field of consumer protection for the benefit of self help Groups and consumers in 31 district of Tamil Nadu at the total cost of Rs.69.90 lakh.

ii) Orientation-cum-training programme for State Govt. officials and other stakeholders who have consumer interface. The total cost of the project is Rs.21.84 lakh.

b) A project proposal for organizing Workshop-Cum-training programme for housewives for on the spot test to detect common adulterants in foods in eight districts of Chennai in Tamilnadu at a cost of Rs, 29.74 lakh was sanctioned to CONCERT. On the recommendation of the evaluation report of the pilot

project carried out by Tamilnadu Government, a second phase of the project for another 11 districts VIZ, Madurai, Vellore, Villipuram, Cuddalore, Tuticorin. Tanjore Kaurur, Tiruvallu, Slem, Perambalur and Tiruvannamalai in Phase-II Rs. 33.78 lakh has also been sanctioned.

8. Assistance to States/ UTs

a) In order to promote consumer movement throughout the country, the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have been impressed upon to create their own Consumer Welfare Fund. For strengthening financial support, seed money is provided to the States/UTs at the ratio of 50:50 (Centre: State). This ratio has been further enhanced to 90:10 in the case of 13 special category States. So far, the State Consumer Welfare Fund have been created in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujrat, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, J&K, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura. Other States/UTs who have not so far availed the benefit of the scheme are being persuaded for sending their proposals at the earliest.

b) **STATE CONSUMER HELPLINE:** This is a new plan scheme to set up State Consumer Help lines on similar lines as National Consumer Help Line. These Help lines will extend service in the regional language of the State concerned besides Hindi and English. Eventually, these State Help Lines will be networked with National Consumer Helpline so as to make use of the data base and experience already available. Under the scheme funds are provided for five years to States/UTs, after which the States/UTs are expected to take over the running of the Helpline. So far 17 States/UTs have been sanctioned funds to set up Consumer Help lines.

4. ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES, REGULATION & ENFORCEMENT

Department of Consumer Affairs is administrating (a) Essential Commodities Act, 1955 (EC Act, 1955); and, (b) Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 (PBM Act,1980), to ensure availability of essential commodities to the consumers and to protect them from exploitation by unscrupulous traders.

2. The Standing Committee of some Union Ministers and Chief Ministers which was set up during the Conference of Chief Ministers held on 21.5.2001, **suggested that the E.C. Act may continue as an umbrella legislation for the Centre and the States, to be used when needed, but a progressive dismantling of controls and restrictions was also required.** Accordingly, the Central Government issued Orders on 15.2.2002 and 16.6.2003 under the E.C. Act allowing dealers to freely buy, stock, sell, transport, distribute, dispose, etc. any quantity in respect of wheat, paddy/rice, coarse grains, pulses, sugar, edible oilseeds and edible oils, etc without requiring any license or permit under any order issued under the Act.

3. The list of commodities declared as “essential” under the E C Act has been reviewed from time to time and some items deleted in the light of changes in the economic situation and particularly with regard to their production and supply. At present only following seven commodities considered essential to protect the interest of the farmers and the large section of the people “below the poverty line” have been retained under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 :

- (1) Drugs;
- (2) Fertilizer, whether inorganic, organic or mixed;
- (3) Foodstuffs, including edible oilseeds and oils;
- (4) Hank yarn made wholly from cotton;
- (5) Petroleum and petroleum products;
- (6) Raw jute and jute textile;
- (7) (i) seeds of food-crops and seeds of fruits and vegetables;
(ii) seeds of cattle fodder; and
(iii) jute seeds,

4. It is now universally accepted that all unnecessary and redundant restrictions which distort and impede operation of market forces should be removed. The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill was prepared proposing inter-alia to delete all the items listed in the said Act and simultaneously to retain only seven commodities recommended for continuance by the concerned Ministries to ensure production, supply and distribution in the larger interest of the masses and particularly those belonging to poorer sections of the society. Hence after consultations with all Ministries concerned and on obtaining competent authority’s approval, the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2006 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 20.12.2005. This Bill was passed by Rajya Sabha on 21.08.2006 and subsequently by Lok Sabha on 28.11.2006. After receiving the assent of the President on the 24th December,2006, the corresponding Act was published in the Gazette of India on 26th December, 2006 as Act No.54 of 2006. The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act,2006 has come into effect from 12.02.2007 after issue of a notification in the Gazette of India .

5. In the context of unprecedented rise in prices of some essential commodities, there had been wide spread concern from various corners for taking immediate steps to mitigate the rising trend of prices of essential commodities. Representations from the Chief Ministers of Punjab and Delhi and also from the Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra were received for restoration of powers under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 for undertaking dehoarding operations in view of the assumption that there is speculative holding back of stocks particularly of wheat and pulses in anticipation of further rise in prices.

6. The situation was reviewed by the Govt. and it was decided with the approval of the Cabinet to keep in abeyance some provisions in the central order dated 15.02.2002 and 16.06.2003 for a period of six months with respect to wheat and pulses (whole and split), so as to tackle the crisis on availability and prices of these commodities. Accordingly, the Central Govt. issued a Central Order No. 1373(E) dated 29.08.2006 by virtue of which the words or expressions made in respect of purchase, movement, sale, supply, distribution or storage for sale in the "Removal of (Licensing requirements, Stock limits and Movement Restrictions) on Specified Foodstuffs Order, 2002" notified on 15.02.2002 have been kept in abeyance for commodities namely wheat and pulses for a period of six months from the date of issue of the order or further order, whichever is earlier. This order however would not affect the transport, distribution or disposal of wheat and pulses (whole or split) to places outside the State, nor shall it be applicable to import of these commodities. Subsequently vide order dated 07.04.2008, the Central Government had kept in abeyance the operation of Central Order dated 15.02.2002 in respect of commodities edible oils, edible oilseeds and rice for a period of one year. Later vide order dated 27.08.2008, this was extended to the commodity paddy also for a period from 01.09.2008 to 30.04.2009. The validity of all these orders have been extended from time to time and these orders are presently valid till 30.09.2010, in respect of pulses, edible oils, edible oilseeds, rice and paddy. Wheat as a commodity has been withdrawn from the ambit of the orders w.e.f. 01.04.2009.

7. It was also decided with the approval of the competent authority to further relax restrictions and to keep in abeyance some provisions of the Central Order dated 15.02.2002 for period of four months from the date of publication of Order with respect to Sugar so as to tackle the availability and prices of this commodity. Accordingly, an Order No.S.O.649 (E) dated 09.03.2009 has been published in Gazette of India to this effect. This has subsequently been extended upto 08.01.2010.

8. In pursuance to the above Orders all State Governments/UTs were requested to implement this order by issuing either a fresh control order or reviving the old control order for fixing stock limits for various categories of dealers such as millers/producers, wholesalers and retailers in respect of these commodities. States/UTs have also been empowered to take effective action exercising the powers vested with / delegated to them under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

9. So far as implementation of these orders is concerned it is mentioned that only **21** State Governments/UTs have either issued stock limits for all the six items or for individual items or have issued only licensing requirements/ stock declaration (of these 21, 17 States/UTs have actually issued stock limit Orders/ in the process of issuing. 4 States/UTs have issued licensing requirements/stock declarations). **6** States are

considering to issue stock limit orders. **5** States/UTs have decided not to issue stock limit orders. The remaining **3** States/UTs have not responded at all.

10. The Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 which is being implemented by the State Governments/UT Administrations for the prevention of unethical trade practices like hoarding and black-marketing etc., empowers the State Governments to detain persons whose activities are found to be prejudicial to the maintenance of supplies of commodities essential to the community.

11. Because of the regular interaction of the Central Government with the State Governments, the State Governments had taken necessary measures under both “Essential Commodities Act, 1955” and the “Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980” to prevent unethical trade practices like hoarding and black-marketing of essential commodities particularly of Public Distribution System(PDS) items. As per reports received from some State Governments, the action taken under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 during 2009 (upto 30.09.2009) are as under:

S.No.	Name of the State Govt.	During 2009 (Upto 30.09.2009)
1.	Gujarat	13
2.	Tamil Nadu	91
3.	Orissa	02
4.	Maharashtra	02
	TOTAL:	108

The action taken by the State Governments under Essential Commodities Act, 1955 against unscrupulous traders in respect of essential commodities during the year 2009 (upto 30.09.2009) as reported by them is as under:

Year	Number of raids conducted	No. of persons arrested	No. of persons prosecuted	No. of persons convicted
2009 (upto 30.09.2009)	96301	5093	2856	38

5. INTERNAL TRADE

In the recent past, a number of initiatives as given below have been taken by the Government to liberalize futures trading in commodities, in India:-

(i) Permitted Commodity Exchange to promote stock exchanges for trading currency future

Due to increasing integration of our economy with the world economy, the cross border flow of funds has increased significantly. As a consequence of this process, the magnitude and intensity of currency price risk has also increased manifold. In such a scenario, the inadequacy of the over-the-counter (OTC) derivative instruments available currently to deal with currency price risk need to be complemented by other comprehensive hedging instruments such as currency futures and options on currency futures. Accordingly, the Government decided to allow futures trading in currency. This will enable the market participants to cope with the currency price risk more efficiently at a reduced cost.

The above policy is exactly on the lines of policy notified for foreign investment in infrastructure companies in the Securities Markets, viz. stock exchanges.

(ii) Suspension of futures trading in Urad, Tur, Wheat, Rice and sugar.

Future trading in wheat which was suspended in February, 2007 was resumed w.e.f. 15.5.2009 keeping in view favorable conditions. Forward Markets Commission suspended futures trading in sugar on 26.5.2009 as a measure of abundant caution and directed the Exchanges that no new sugar contracts would be launched and suspended the permission granted for yet-to-be launched contracts, till 31.12.2009. FMC would review the suspension of trading in urad, tur, sugar and rice at an appropriate time in consultation with the Department of Consumer Affairs.

(iii) Approval of new National Exchange

Recently, the Government has given approval to set up one more National Exchange viz Indian Commodity Exchange Limited, Gurgaon (ICEX). In principle approval for up gradation of one regional exchange namely Ahmedabad Commodity Exchange Ltd, Ahmedabad has also been given.

2. Overall growth

During 2008-09, the total value of commodity futures trade has been Rs. 52.49 lakh crore as compared to Rs. 5.71 lakh crore during 2004-05 showing an increase of 919 %. The trading volume and value have increased manifold after three National Exchanges were set up. The following table shows the increase in commodity futures trading value since 2004-05:

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Value of trading (Rs. In lakh crore)	5.71 (341)*	21.55 (274)*	36.76 (70)*	40.65 (11)*	52.49 (29)*

**Figures in parenthesis are % change over previous year.*

6. BUREAU OF INDIAN STANDARDS

GENEREAL

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) came into existence, through an Act of Parliament dated 26 November 1986, on 1 April 1987, with a broadened scope and more powers taking over the staff, assets, liabilities and functions of erstwhile Indian Standards Institution (ISI) with the following objectives.

Objectives

- Harmonious development of activities of standardization, marking and quality certification
- To provide new thrust to standardization and quality control
- To evolve a national strategy for according recognition to standards and integrating them with growth and development of industrial production and exports.

Vision

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the National Standards Body of India, in its corporate quality policy, resolves to be the leader in all matters concerning Standardization, Certification and Quality. In order to attain this, the Bureau would strive:

- To provide efficient timely service.
- To satisfy the customer's need for quality and safety of goods and services, and
- To work and act in such a way that each task performed as individuals or as corporate entity, leads to excellence and enhances the credibility and image of the organization.

BIS would achieve these objectives by working in close cooperation with all concerned BIS service users and by adopting appropriate management systems, motivating and ensuring active participation of all its employees.

Mission

- To achieve excellence through effective implementation of Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 1986 and providing prompt and efficient services for BIS users.
- In dealings with consumers and organizations, time and speed shall be the essence of the matter.

BIS is involved in multifarious activities like: Standards Formulation, Certification, Product/Systems, Laboratory Services, International Activities, Consumer Related Activities, Promotional Activities, Training Services, Information services, Sale of Standards & Publications.

1. Standards formulation

Under Standards formulation, it is engaged in formulation of Indian Standards for 14 sectors namely Chemicals, Food and Agriculture, Civil, Electrical, Electronics & Telecommunications and Information Technology, Mechanical Engineering, Management & Systems, Metallurgical Engineering, Petroleum Coal & related Products, Medical and Hospital Planning, Textile, Transport engineering and Production and General Engineering, Water Resources under Fourteen Division Councils which have 308 Sectional committees working under them. As on 30 June 2009, 18564 standards formulated by BIS, are in force These cover important segments of economy, which help the industry in upgrading the quality of their goods and services. BIS formulates need-based Indian Standards in line with the national priorities as a time bound programme.

Programmes under XIth Five Year plan.

BIS has started implementing XIth Five year plan Scheme on “National System of Standardization” under Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

2. Product Certification Scheme

BIS Product Certification Scheme is basically voluntary in nature; however, keeping in view the health and safety of the consumer and those of mass consumption, it has been made mandatory for 76 items by the Government through various statutory measures such as Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, Coal Mines Regulations, and Indian Gas Cylinders Rules besides BIS Act. Some of the items brought under mandatory certification on consideration of health and safety are Milk Powder, Packaged drinking water, LPG cylinders, clinical thermometers etc. At present as on **30 June 2009, 20350, (excluding those deferred)** certification marks licences are in operation under the Scheme, covering about 1000 different items ranging from food products to electronics.

All foreign manufacturers of products who intend to export to India are required to obtain a BIS product certification licence under Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Commerce’s notification dated 24 November 2000. Towards this, BIS launched its Product Certification Scheme for overseas manufacturers in the year 1999. Under the provisions of this scheme, foreign manufacturers can seek certification from BIS for marking their product(s) with BIS Standard Mark. Under this scheme, **122** licences of foreign manufacturers in **about 15 countries** are in operation. Under the scheme for Indian Importers, Certification Marks Licence can be granted to Indian Importers for the product imported into the country and are not covered under Regulatory Requirements. Indian Importers can apply for BIS licence on such products are treated as Indian Manufacturers. Three licences are in operation under this scheme. BIS also runs other certification schemes like IECEE-CB, IECQ and IECEx Schemes of IEC under different provisions. India is a certifying member of the IEC System of Quality Assessment of Electronic Components (IECQ) and IEC System for Conformity Testing to standards for safety of Electrical Equipment (IECEE).

Further, BIS has taken new initiatives like simplification of procedure for Grant of Licence, basically to reduce the time taken for grant of licence. This has yielded

some encouraging results.

3. Laboratories

To support the activities of product certification, BIS has a chain of **8 laboratories**. These laboratories have established testing facilities for products of chemical, food, electrical and mechanical disciplines. Approximately **22000 samples** are being tested in the **BIS laboratories and BIS recognized laboratories every year**. In certain cases where it is economically not feasible to develop test facilities in BIS laboratories and also for other reasons like overloading of samples, equipment being out of order, the services of outside approved NABL (National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories) accredited laboratories are also being availed. BIS has recognized **126 Labs** for product certification purposes.

BIS has undertaken the project of modernization of all its testing laboratories in order to increase the in-house capacity of testing of samples as well as to reduce the time taken in testing.

4. Hallmarking

Hallmarking of Gold Jewellery was started in April 2000 on voluntary basis under BIS Act 1986. It is aimed to protect the consumer's interest and providing third party assurance to consumers on the purity of gold for its fineness. On the similar line, a scheme for Hallmarking of silver Jewellery/artefacts was launched in October 2005.

Till 30 June 2009, 142 hallmarking centers have been recognized for this purpose and 7283 licences are in operation (Gold & Silver). The list of jewellers who have taken BIS licence for hallmarking and BIS recognized hallmarking centers have been posted on BIS website.

5. Management Systems Certification.

BIS runs other important systems certification schemes under the Management Systems Certification. Under Quality Management System Certification Scheme(QMSCS) as per IS/ISO 9001, which was launched in September 1991, the total number of operative licences as on 30 June 2009 is 857. BIS Quality Management System Certification has been accredited by Raad voor Accreditatie (RvA), Netherlands for 23 major economic activities.

Under **Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Certification (HACCP)** integrated scheme, 59 certified companies are under operation as on **30 June 2009**. Under the **Environmental Management Systems Certification Scheme (EMSCS)**, the total number of operative licences as on **30 June 2009 is 138**. Under the **Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems (OH&SMS) Certification Scheme**, which was launched in January 2003, the total number of operative licences as on **30 June 2009 is 39**.

Among the new Schemes, BIS has launched Public Service Delivery Management Systems as per IS 15700:2005 "Quality Management Systems – Requirements for Service Quality by Public Service Organizations," in order to ensure

minimum standards of service delivery in all sectors pertaining to or influenced by the government. As on 30 June 2009, one licence has been granted.

6. Enforcement activity

With the growth and popularity of the BIS Certification Marks Scheme, there have been instances of misuse of BIS Standard Mark also. BIS, therefore, lays emphasis on enforcement activity to stop the use of Standard Mark or its imitation by any person or company who is not holding a valid BIS licence. In order to save the common consumer from unscrupulous traders and manufacturers misusing the BIS Standard mark, enforcement raids are carried out and prosecution cases filed in the court of law wherever legally tenable. To strengthen this activity, two outsourced agencies have been engaged for providing intelligence and assisting in carrying out raids against offending parties for an initial period of one year in selected locations. The number of search and seizures operations carried out in **2008-2009 stand at 156.**

7. International Activities

Under International Activities, since its inception in 1947, the then ISI and now BIS has been an active member of International Organizations namely: ISO and IEC. BIS represents India as Member Body in ISO and IEC. It holds Participating Membership (P) status in **259** Technical Committees/ Subcommittees of ISO and **71** Technical Committees/ Subcommittees of IEC, whereas it is Observer Member (O) on 308 Technical Committees/ Subcommittees of ISO and **82** Technical Committees/ Subcommittees of IEC. It participates in various policy-making committees of these international standards bodies. BIS also holds secretariat of some of the important ISO/IEC Committees which are of trade interest to India. As member of ISO, BIS also takes active part in the development of International Standards with a view to protect the interests of Indian trade & industry. BIS is actively involved in Regional and Bilateral Cooperation Programmes pertaining to standardization, conformity assessment & accreditation etc. It has signed MoU/MRA with **18** countries/organizations including ISO and ANSI of USA to this effect.

8. Consumer protection

To meet with the growing expectations of consumers in the country, BIS has established a separate department with a specific mandate of providing consumer protection and welfare and dealing with public grievances. This department maintains liaison with Central Consumer Protection Council, and consumer associations, and co-ordinates with the Ministry of Consumers Affairs, Food and Public Distribution on consumer issues. It is guided in its activities by a Consumer Policy Advisory Committee which advises BIS on all policy matters relating to efficient discharge of the functions and for making standardization and certification activities user-friendly. A well-defined procedure has been established for handling complaints. The complaints registered, which can be lodged on line as well, are monitored regularly.

Consumer Awareness Programs

Implementation of Indian Standards is of great significance and has been a prime objective of the Bureau of Indian Standards. SP&CAD is contributing in this

direction by promoting the concept of standardization, certification and quality amongst the consumers. For accomplishing this motive SP&CAD is organizing regular Awareness Programmes through various Regional Offices/Branch Offices. These Awareness Programmes are sometimes conducted in association with Consumer Organizations. More consumer awareness programmes will be conducted this year.

Educational Utilization of Standards Programmes (EUS)

The students and faculty of professional institutions need to be trained in the field of standardization and management systems, so that they are well equipped to introduce quality in goods and services to be delivered by them. SP&CAD has been regularly conducting programmes on Educational Utilization of Standards with the specific aim to propagate the message of standardization and to create awareness about latest Indian Standards in various professional institutes and universities throughout the country. Special kit of Reference Material pertaining to specialized fields has also been prepared for distribution amongst the participants in such programmes. Special attention will be given this year to conduct more Educational Utilization of Standard programme.

Industry Awareness Programmes

The aim of the Industry Awareness Programme is to propagate the concept of standardization and management systems amongst small scale industries. Such programs consist of lectures and discussions, where the participants are exposed to the concept of standardization, Management systems Certification, product certification and other BIS activities. Standards relating to specific industrial sector, depending upon the concentration of industries in the area, are also highlighted in such programmes. These programmes are organized in collaboration with Local Industry Associations and Small Industries Service Institute of that area. Increased numbers of Industry Awareness Programmes will be carried out this year.

State Level Committees and Tender Enquires

Efforts are made to have close collaboration and interaction with Govt. Departments and purchase agencies through State Level Committees for implementation and promotion of Indian Standards. Further, scrutiny of tenders in newspapers is regularly done to find out possible opportunity for standards promotion and implementation.

Information and SSI Facilitation Cell

SP&CAD is operating an Information and SSI Facilitation Cell for the benefit of small and medium scale entrepreneurs. Information on various activities of BIS and technical queries are provided.

Public Grievances

Complaints regarding BIS certified products received from consumers are being reviewed and monitored every month for redress. Efforts will be made to redress the grievances to the satisfaction of the complainant within the stipulated time frame.

Programmes under XI th Five Year plan.

BIS has started implementing XI th Five year plan Scheme for Human Resource Development/ Capacity Building in Educational Institutions “ under Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

9. National Institute of Training for Standardization (NITS),

To impart training to technical and management personnel from industry, consumer organizations, public sector undertakings, govt. bodies and developing countries, BIS has established, the National Institute of Training for Standardization (NITS), NOIDA.

NITS conducts training on Quality Management Systems as per IS/ISO 9001, Environment Management Systems as per IS/ISO 14001, Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems as per IS 18001, Food Safety Management Systems as per IS/ISO 22000, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and Laboratory Management Systems as per IS/ISO/IEC 17025 besides conducting International Training Programmes in Standardization and Quality Systems and on Management systems for developing countries of Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America every year. In 2008-2009, 44 International Trainees were trained. NITS also conducts training programmes for BIS employees.

7. WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

I. Weights and Measures Laws & Rules

1) To make the weights and measures laws simple ,comprehensive and transparent , a unified Bill namely, The Legal Metrology Bill,2008 has been prepared . The Bill is aimed at regulating weight or measure to the extent required for protecting the interest of Consumer and at the same time keep the industry free from undue interference. The Bill has been introduced in Rajya Sabha on 24th October,2008.

Some of the salient features of the Bill are:-

- (a) to do away with regulation of weight or measure used in industrial production
- (b) verification of prescribed weight or measure by Government approved test centre;
- (c) prescribing qualification of ‘legal metrology officers’ appointed by the Central Government or State Government;
- (d) exempting regulation of weight or measure or other goods meant for export;
- (e) nomination of a Director by a company who will be responsible for complying with the provision of the enactment;

The Bill proposes to replace the two existing Acts – The Standards of Weights & Measures Act, 1976 and The Standards of Weights & Measures (enforcement) Act, 1985.

2) The Standards of Weights and Measures (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 1977 enacted under the provisions of the Standards of Weights and Measures Act,1976 regulate pre packed commodities . The Rules mandate that manufacturers/importers of pre-packed commodities declare on the package certain information about the commodity kept in the package . The Rules provide for regulation to ensure correctness of net quantity of the commodity kept in the package.

3) The Standards of Weights and Measures (General) Rules, 1987 enacted under the provisions of the Standards of Weights and Measures Act, 1976 provide for regulation of weighing and measuring instruments used in trade and transaction, industrial production and protection.

The Standing Committee of Parliament has examined these bills. The report of Standing Committee is under examination of the Government.

II. Modernization of State enforcement machinery

To ensure effective implementation of weights and measures laws by States/ UTs, a Central Plan Scheme “Strengthening Weights and measures infrastructure of States and UTs” is being implemented during XIth Plan at an outlay of Rs.170 crore.

The Scheme aims at augmenting the infrastructure of Legal Metrology Department of States / UTs in a holistic way namely construction of new laboratory building, supply of equipments and capacity building of the personnel etc., During 2007-09, 41 mobile kits for testing weighbridges and 59 sets of Secondary Standard Balances, costing Rs.25.57 core have already been supplied to different States under this scheme.

III. Strengthening of Regional Reference Standards Laboratories [RRSLs] and Indian Institute of Legal Metrology [IILM] , Ranchi.

RRSLs serve as a vital link in the dissemination of national standards down to the commercial level.

IILM, Ranchi provides training to the enforcement officials of States/UTs.

The RRSLs are mandated to verify the legal standards of weights and measures used by States/UTs and to conduct tests for approval of model of weight or measure. The RRSLs also undertake calibration of weighing and measuring instruments used by industries of the region. RRSL, Faridabad has been accredited by the NABL for the calibration of Mass measurement

During XIth plan, a scheme is being implemented to upgrade the existing facilities in mass, length , volume and density measurement and to create new testing facility like Force , Torque and Flow measuring testing facility .

The IILM, on an average trains about 200 personnel from States /UTs every year. It is proposed to make the Institute, 'a centre of excellence' based on the study conducted through Indian Institute of Management, Kolkata.

8. CONSUMER COOPERATIVES

The Consumer Cooperative Structure in the country has four tiers, with the National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Limited (NCCF) at the apex level with which thirty State level Cooperative Consumers' Organisations are affiliated to it. There are 812 Central/Wholesale Consumer Cooperative Stores at the District level and 22,241 primary Cooperative Stores at Taluka level functioning in urban areas. In the rural areas of the country, about 44,418 village level Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit and Marketing Societies are functioning for distribution of consumer goods and other essential goods to the member consumers especially to the vulnerable and remote areas people. In the urban and semi urban areas, the consumer cooperative societies are operating about 37,226 retail outlets to meet the requirements of the consumers. NCCF & the Cooperative Stores Ltd., Delhi known as Super Bazar are the two cooperative institutions functioning under the administrative control of this Department. The Super Bazar is likely to become functional following to the decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

2. In the SLP No. 8398-99/2005, the Hon'ble Supreme Court decided the issue regarding revival of Super Bazar and accepted the report of the Evaluation Committee with the direction that the steps will be taken by the Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies and the Official Liquidator to revive Super Bazar in accordance with the provision of MSCS Act, 2002. Steps are being taken to implement the Hon'ble Supreme Court Order at the earliest.

3. The NCCF besides undertaking distribution of consumer articles, also has a Consultancy and Promotional Cell for guiding and strengthening consumer cooperative societies engaged in the retailing activities. The NCCF with its Head office at New Delhi operates 34 branches/sub-branches located in various parts of the country. Government of India holds 78% of total share capital amounting to Rs. 13.79 crore in the NCCF, and nominates three Government representatives, including Sr. Economic Adviser of the Department, in its Board of Directors. The sales turn over achieved by the NCCF during the year 2008-2009 was Rs.492.83 crore as against the sales turnover of Rs. 504.51 crore last year. It has earned a net profit of Rs. 1.58 crore during the year 2008-2009 as against the loss of Rs. 2.39 crore incurred during the previous year. The NCCF is diversifying its business and proposed to increase its sale turnover as well as profitability position in current financial year.

9. CONSUMER AWARENESS

The Department of Consumer Affairs under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution is the nodal Department for consumer protection as a thrust area by the Government. Allocation of funds for this programme has been considerably stepped up in the last 2 years of 10th plan as well as for 11th Five year Plan. With this significant increase in resource allocation, the Department has taken the initiative in devising a Multi Media Campaign with the highest professional standards to have the maximum impact on consumers. A beginning has been made in sensitizing and educating the consumers of their rights, creating an environment for building credibility and positive imagery. The target audience is both urban and rural consumer from all segments of society belonging to all age groups.

ELEVENTH PLAN SCHEME ON CONSUMER AWARENESS

11th Five Year Plan has given an increased thrust on consumer awareness activities and the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved an allocation of Rs. 409 crore for the 11th Five Year Plan on 31.01.2008. In the first full year of implementation of this plan scheme the Department has managed to mount an intensive multi media campaign using all possible mediums of communication. The expenditure on this plan scheme in the present FY was Rs. 86 crore as against the original BE figures of Rs. 75 crore, thus signalling an effective implementation of the Plan scheme.

The multi media publicity campaign 'Jago Grahak Jago' in a very short span of time has become a household name and has established a strong brand identity for itself.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES OF PUBLICITY DIVISION

- PUBLICITY THROUGH PRINT MEDIA USING NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS:** Advertisements are released through DAVP in national dailies as well as regional newspapers in local languages in accordance with the new advertisement policy of the DAVP. Each advertisement has been released through a network of more than 400 newspapers throughout the length and breadth of the country.

Apart from the issues that are directly relevant to the role of the Department such as ISI, Hallmark, labelling, MRP, weights and measures, etc. a major initiative has been taken wherein issues that have come into focus on account of new emerging areas such as telecom, real estate, credit cards, financial products, pharmaceuticals, Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) etc. have been taken through the print advertisement either through joint campaigns or after joint consultations with those departments.

Around 30 major issues were taken up as part of the print advertisements and more than 12,000 insertions were given in the newspapers in FY 2008-09 throughout the length and breadth of the country as per the DAVP advertisement policy.

2. **PUBLICITY THROUGH ELECTRONIC MEDIUM BY TELECAST OF VIDEO SPOTS:** The Department has produced video spots of 30 seconds duration on various consumer related issues such as Short Measurement of petrol, Grievance Redressal system, MRP, ISI and Hall-Mark etc., which are being telecast through Doordarshan and Satellite channels such as Sony, Star Plus, Zee News, Star News, Doordarshan National Network, Kalyani programme of DD-I, Krishi Darshan, regional channels, Sun network, ETV Network, ZEE TV network, Discovery, Entertainment and other private popular satellite channels. Special programmes have been telecast on Lok Sabha TV also to highlight the issues relating to consumer awareness. Issues pertaining to rural and remote areas have been given prominence in the various advertisement spots.

Around 30 major issues were taken up as part of the print advertisements and more than 12,000 insertions were given in the newspapers throughout the length and breadth of the country as per the DAVP advertisement policy.

3. **TELECAST OF VIDEO SPOTS IN NORTH EASTERN STATES:** The Department has produced video spots in Regional languages of North Eastern States of 30 seconds duration on various consumer related issues such as M.R.P. (Maximum Retail Price), Short Measurement, Expiry date on medicine, adulteration, damaged product, Redressal system, TRAI recommendation, Credit Cards, Real Estate issue and telecast them through Doordarshan Kendras of North Eastern States to ensure that the message reaches out in the local language, the audio as well as video spots were produced in the local languages specific to North-Eastern region.
4. **MEGHDOOT POSTCARDS:** The Department in consultation with Department of Post has disseminated consumer awareness messages through Meghdoot Post cards to reach far-flung rural areas including North East States.

The Department has entered into a tie up with Department of Post under which posters carrying messages pertaining to consumer awareness have been displayed in 1.55 lakh Post Offices in the country.

5. **CALENDERS ON CONSUMER AWARENESS IN RURAL POST OFFICES :**
Calendars displaying messages on the various issues relevant to consumers were displayed in the network of more than 1.55 lakh post offices throughout the length and breadth of the country. Similar initiative has also been taken for displaying posters on consumer awareness in the network of more than 25000 Post Offices in the urban areas.
6. **PRINTED LITERATURE:** The Department has printed a folder entitled 'Jago Grahak Jago' containing the salient features of Consumer Protection Act 1986. Provisions of Weights and Measures Act, information about standardisation such as ISI, Hallmarking etc. for distribution during various events such as India International Trade Fair(IITF), Nukkad Nataks and also through the State Governments at grass root level. The publicity material

relating to consumer awareness has also been translated in regional languages and is being disseminated to various State Governments.

7. **EXHIBITION IN INDIAN SCIENCE CONGRESS AT SHILLONG**

Exhibitions and Trade Fairs provide a potential platform of reaching out to the people through an interactive media. Keeping this in mind, the Department has participated in several leading exhibitions during the financial year. A stall was put up as part of the 96th India Science Congress (ISC) at Shillong. Thousands of visitors including the scientists and delegates, who have come to participate in ISC visited the 'Jago Grahak Jago' stall and they were made aware of their rights and responsibilities as consumers through the various banners, hoardings/posters etc. that were displayed during the exhibition. Publicity material containing information on the various aspects of Consumer Protection Act, publicity brochures containing information about Consumer Fora, National Consumer Helpline, Grievance Redressal Mechanism and sector specific information such as on real estate, telecom, financial products etc. was distributed free of cost to the visitors during the Trade Fair. The response to our stall was very encouraging and more than 1000 entries were recorded in the visitors register that was kept at the stall. The video advertisement spot as part of the 'Jago Grahak Jago' campaign was also run continuously to spread awareness on consumer issues among the visitors to the stall.

8. **NUKKAD NATAK CONTEST ON CONSUMER ISSUES**

A Nukkad Natak competition for consumer awareness was organised in Delhi, in which colleges under University of Delhi and some colleges from the National Capital Region (NCR) participated. The first phase of the Nukkad Natak Contest was organised during the India-International Trade Fair in Pragati Maidan, New Delhi on 27th November, 2008 and eight teams were shortlisted for the finals. The final was held in India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on 9th December, 2008. The three winning teams were awarded cash prizes, whereas all the participating teams were given gift hampers. The event evoked tremendous students interest and there was active participation of the students.

The winners of the Nukkad Natak Contest also gave a performance during the official function organised in the capital on it is 23-12-2008 to commemorate National Consumer Day – which falls on 24th December.

9. **NATIONAL CONSUMER HELPLINE**

The Department has launched National Help Line and the Toll Free Number 1800-11-4000 which is being operated by Delhi University for counselling the Consumers to redress their grievances. The timing of toll free number facility is available to consumers from 9-30 A.M. to 5-30 P.M. on all the working days (Monday—Saturday) and 011-27662955-58 (Normal Call Charges apply). Through the various advertisements pertaining to Department of Consumer Awareness adequate publicity has been given to National Helpline so that the affected consumers could seek guidelines/counselling through the national

helpline. Wide publicity was given to National Consumer Helpline by running scrollers on DD news channels throughout the year.

10. **PARTICIPATION IN EMPOWER INDIA 2009 EXHIBITION**

The Department displayed and distributed publicity material pertaining to consumer awareness in the Empower India 2009 Exhibition organised by Ministry of Power in Mumbai in August 2009. Publicity material was distributed in the form of brochures and pamphlets to the visitors of the stall.

11. **PARTICIPATION IN INDIA INTERNATIONAL TRADE-FAIR-2008**

Exhibitions, Health Melas and Trade Fairs provide a good opportunity for showcasing the consumer awareness initiatives of the Department. The Department participated in the India-International Trade Fair organised in New Delhi from 14th to 27th November, 2008. Lakhs of visitors visited the 'Jago Grahak Jago' stall during the Trade Fair.

Publicity brochures containing information about Consumer Fora, National Consumer Helpline, Grievance Redressal Mechanism and sector specific information such as on real estate, telecom, financial products etc. was distributed free of cost to the visitors during the Trade Fair.

The response to our stall was very encouraging and more than 2000 entries were recorded in the visitors register that was kept at the stall. The video advertisement spot as part of the 'Jago Grahak Jago' campaign was also run continuously to spread awareness on consumer issues among the visitors to the stall. Representatives of National Consumer Helpline were also deputed to provide on-the-spot guidance to the visitors during the Trade Fair.

12. **PARTICIPATION IN MTNL HEALTH MELA**

The Department participated in MTNL Health Mela from 17th to 26th October, 2008. Through the Health Mela literature pertaining to consumer courts, National Helpline, Core Centre and guidance to consumers regarding grievance redressal mechanism was distributed. The response to our stall was very encouraging and more than 1400 visitors recorded their comments/suggestions in visitor's register that was maintained in the stall. The video spots pertaining to "Jago Grahak Jago" campaign of the Department were also run continuously to spread consumer awareness among visitors to the stall.

13. **USE OF SPORTS EVENTS**

In order to reach maximum number of consumers, the Department has telecast video spots containing consumer related information during the popular sports events particularly the Cricket Series where the audience interest is maximum. All the major cricket events that were telecast on DD were utilised as a platform for telecast of the video spots of the Department.

14. **OUTDOOR PUBLICITY**

Publicity was also mounted on various issues of consumer interest such as real estate, education, medicines, banking sector, telecommunication etc. through the outdoor publicity mediums such as banners, hoardings etc. An innovative way of publicity was found out by printing of our messages on railway tickets as well as utility bills such as electricity bills and also by printing of messages on railway reservation charts. This publicity was carried not only in Hindi and English languages but almost in all the regional languages so as to reach out to all consumers in their respective languages.

15. **JOINT PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN**

Many Ministries/Departments have come forward to join hands with Department of Consumer Affairs to jointly mount publicity campaign on issues that are of importance to the consumers. In association with other Ministries such as Department of Chemical & Fertilizers, National Pharmaceuticals Product Authority (NPPA), Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Human Resources Development, Reserve Bank of India etc. Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Department of Consumer Affairs has released various advertisements on the specific related consumer issues to educate consumers. Advertisements were released through print media as well as electronic media on the new emerging areas of consumer interest such as telecom, real estate, energy saving (BEE), credit cards, financial products and pharmaceuticals etc.

16. **USE OF INTERNET TO GENERATE CONSUMER AWARENESS**

We are a young country with more than 70% population being under 35 years. The youngsters are using the internet in a big way for various purposes and also happen to be major consumers. Realizing this, a major initiative is being taken to spread consumer awareness through the internet medium. The print advertisements and the audio-visual spots of the Department are being uploaded on the website of the Ministry i.e. www.fcamin.nic.in

17. **SPECIAL SCHEME ON ASSISTANCE TO STATE GOVERNMENTS/UTS :**

Considering the fact that active involvement of State Governments in awareness campaign is crucial in taking forward the movement to rural, remote and backward areas, it has been decided to associate the State/UT Governments in expanding the area of consumer awareness. For the 11th Plan scheme of consumer awareness also the involvement of the States has been given prominence in spreading the message of consumer awareness. In fact, the effectiveness of the scheme to a great extent relies upon involvement of States/UTs/PRIs and hence the provision for grant in-aid/support to States/UTs should be a component of the Consumer awareness scheme.

The Department of Consumer Affairs provided publicity material such as posters, audio, video, folders, calendars, and magazines etc. to the State Governments/UTs for distribution through panchayats in the rural areas.

Grant-in-Aid has been given to the States/UTs for carrying out consumer awareness activities in the local media using the local language and emphasis has been made on involving Panchayati Raj institutions in the consumer awareness campaign.

PUBLICITY AROUND NATIONAL CONSUMER DAY

Every year 24th of December is celebrated as National Consumer Day commemorating the coming into effect of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986. Department of Consumer Affairs is the nodal Central Govt. Department for protection of consumer rights and welfare. The theme for this year's National Consumer day was 'Enlightened Consumer is the Empowered Consumer'. This theme was adopted to spread the message that a consumer will be able to safeguard his interests/rights only if he is aware about the rights and redressal mechanism available to him.

The media units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting actively participated in spreading the message of consumer awareness through various journals brought out by Publication Division as well as programmes conducted by media units. Articles stressing on consumer protection/consumer rights were published in the magazines Yojana, Bal Bharti and the flagship publication of Publication Division, Employment News/Rojgar Samachar. Cultural programmes were organised by Song & Drama Division and Directorate of Field Publicity to commemorate National Consumer Day.

Prasar Bharti also gave valuable contribution in spreading the message of consumer rights, soft stories were mounted by DD News channel as well as several regional news units of Doordarshan throughout the length and breadth of the country. DD-I and many regional Kendras of Doordarshan mounted special programmes highlighting consumer awareness and consumer protection. All India Radio and private FM channels also broadcasted several audio programmes on this theme. Print media carried several news items/messages regarding National Consumer Day. Leading private sector portals also carried out feature items/news stories concerning consumer awareness on the basis of reference material provided by the Department. Press Information Bureau published feature items/ backgrounders on consumer awareness thus carrying the message to the medium and small newspapers as well.

FOCUS ON NORTH EAST REGION

Keeping in view the uniqueness of this region and considering that North East (NE) Region has the distinct culture, custom, specific focus has been given to publicity regarding consumer awareness in the NE region. A unique approach has been adopted for the region and innovative measures are being undertaken for spreading consumer awareness.

Services of all the major newspapers in the region, electronic media and traditional media and also the services of Song & Drama Division of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting etc. were utilised for spreading publicity in the NE region.

The Department participated in the 96th Indian Science Congress (ISC) at Shillong. The ISC Conference was inaugurated by Hon'ble Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. The Publicity Division had put up a stall regarding the 'Jago Grahak Jago' multi media campaign of the Department. Free publicity material was distributed to the visitors to inform them about the various provisions of Consumer Protection Act and the precautions they need to take as a consumer in the different sectors pertaining to education, travel, real estate, banking telecommunication, medicines etc.

The stall attracted very encouraging response from the visitors and the entries made in the visitors book shows that people in the north-eastern region were quite aware of the 'Jago Grahak Jago' campaign. The stall was also visited by the then Science and Technology Minister Shri Kapil Sibal apart from other leading political personalities of the area.

IMPACT STUDY ON PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN

Planning Commission has time and again stressed on the need to undertake evaluation and monitoring studies on the publicity campaign undertaken by the Department. To ensure meeting this objective various steps have been taken as underlined.

- (a) **Monitoring by the Multi-Media Committee –**
Jago Grahak Jago publicity campaign is implemented under the guidance and supervision of Multi Media Committee (MMC) which is chaired by Joint Secretary, Consumer Affairs. MMC has representations from Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, DAVP, Doordarshan, All India Radio, NFDC, NGOs, VCOs and other special invitees from various Ministries which hold the Jago Grahak Jago campaign to base its inputs from a wide variety of sources.
- (b) **Feedback from NCH -** Suitable note is kept of the feed-back that is received through National Consumer Helpline (NCH) and suitable adjustments are made in the publicity plan keeping in view the same.
- (c) **Concurrent evaluation of the plan scheme -** Since the Consumer Awareness Scheme has already completed 2 years in the 11th Five Year Plan a concurrent evaluation of the plan scheme has been undertaken to gauge the efficacy of the campaign and to suggest meeting mid term corrections, if required.

The study was carried out in 12 States/UTs spanning through 59 districts. Questionnaires were given to more than 12,000 respondents. The analysis of the responses submitted by the respondents suggests that the awareness levels on consumer related issues has increased both among the general public as well as manufacturers/service providers as a result of the 'Jago Grahak Jago' campaign. The respondents also highlighted the need for such a campaign and its continuation.

SPECIAL ISSUE ON CONSUMER AWARENESS

Yojana, the leading Government journal focusing on issues relating to planning and development brought out a special issue on consumer awareness and consumer protection so that the academicians, policy planners, students and administrators can assess valuable information concerning the field of consumer awareness and protection. The Department also organised an Essay competition on the topic titled 'Unethical food marketing to children through the English and Hindi editions of Yojana'.

An aware consumer is an asset for the nation as he helps in bringing transparency and accountability on the entire system. Generating consumer awareness is the key for the success of consumer movement in the country so as to make a consumer aware about his rights and responsibilities,. In order to ensure that the message of consumer protection reaches every citizen of the country, the Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution has taken-up various activities to generate consumer awareness.

10. NATIONAL TEST HOUSE (NTH)

National Test House (NTH) under the administrative control of Department of Consumer Affairs, is a premier Scientific Institution of the country. It was established in 1912 under the then Railway Board and since then it has grown into a laboratory of national importance in the field of testing, evaluation and quality control of various engineering materials and finished products. It is actively involved in all respects of technology connected with industry, commerce, trade and standardization. It has played a pivotal role in the development of indigenous industries and serves as a vital link between industrial research and manufacture of finished products under rigid quality control.

1. Functions :

The main functions of NTH is as under :-

- Testing and evaluation of materials, products, equipments, apparatus and systems in practically all branches of Science and Technology except for food, pharmaceuticals, arms and ammunitions.
- Research and Development in testing and measurement technology and related areas including consultancy, for failure analysis and allied problems.
- Helping industries in developing indigenous products for import substitution and in their quality assurance programmes.
- Calibration at the level of Echelon-II and maintenance of proper standards and reference in areas of its competence.
- Assisting the 'National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories' (NABL) in accreditation of the testing and calibration laboratories.
- Association with Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) for evolving of national and international specifications and standards.
- Training of Scientists, Technologists & Technicians in 'Testing and Measurement Technology'.
- Providing Welders' Certificates to the prospective candidates, after they are being duly examined in the field.

2. Status of Expenditure :

The status of expenditure under **Plan Scheme** during the current plan period is as under :

(Rs. in Crore)

Year	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure
2007-08	25.00	8.27	7.97
2008-09	14.00	11.62	10.62
2009-10	15.00	--	5.22 (up to September-'09)

3. Physical progress :

A) Land & Building :

i) Continuing Scheme :

Running and maintenance of various civil and electrical installations in different laboratories in NTH regions were carried out by CPWD authorities.

Construction of New Building at NTH(NER), Guwahati:

NTH Centre at Guwahati with only Civil and Chemical disciplines is functioning from semi-permanent sheds made available by the Govt. of Assam. The semi-permanent sheds currently available are not conducive enough to enhance the modern testing facilities in NTH(NER), Guwahati. The maintaining of sophisticated testing equipments in the existing laboratory environment is becoming difficult leaving aside the further augmentation. In order to comply with the Govt. of India policy for streamlining infrastructural development in the North-Eastern region, NTH has decided to construct a **permanent building for NTH(NER), Guwahati** by demolishing the existing semi-permanent sheds phase-wise. The permanent laboratory building once operational can deliver quality assurance of industrial products in a more structured way under the 11th Plan Scheme.

The proposal has been included in the 11th Plan Scheme of NTH which has been duly approved by the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC). An allocation of Rs.140.00 lakh and Rs.150.00 lakh respectively was made by the Department for NTH(NER), Guwahati during the years 2008-09 and 2009-10 respectively. The construction of Residential Quarters at NTH(NER), Guwahati, executed by the CPWD authority is likely to be completed by the month of November, 2009. The existing laboratories will be shifted temporarily to the Residential Quarters and be made operational, so that the day to day testing work might not be affected owing to the construction of the Laboratory cum Office Building. The proposal of Rs.6.61 Crore, forwarded by CPWD, for construction of the Laboratory cum Office Building at NTH(NER) has been forwarded to DoCA. An allocation of Rs.50.00 lakh has been made by the Department during 2009-10.

NTH(NER), Guwahati, has shown a remarkable growth of around 100% in respect of revenue-earning during the past two years which manifests the optimum utilization of the facilities. The region expects that emerging industries in and around the country and consumers from all walks of life will be immensely benefited in evaluating the quality of most of their products at par with the international level.

ii) New Scheme :

a) Establishment of State-of-the-Art Training Centre at NTH (ER), Alipur, Kolkata:

Rs. 44.06 lakh has been authorized to CPWD for construction of Training Center at NTH(ER), Alipur, Kolkata. CPWD authorities have already started the construction work and funds worth Rs.33,49,954/- have been utilized by CPWD during

2008-09. Rs.31.66 lakh has been authorized to CPWD for the said project during the year 2009-10. The work is in progress and the project is likely to be completed shortly.

b) Construction of additional covered space for creation of new test facilities in NTH(NR), Ghaziabad.

Funds worth **Rs.60,21,000/-** have been authorized to CPWD (NZ) for construction of one Additional Floor at Administration Building at NTH(NR), Ghaziabad.

c) Construction of Phase-II building at NTH(SR), Chennai :

In the New Scheme, for Phase-II Building at NTH(SR), Chennai, an estimate worth Rs. 7.41 crore (against allocation of Rs.3.00 Crore during 11th Plan) was forwarded to the Department for authorization of funds to CPWD. An allocation of Rs.100.00 lakh has been made for the said project during 2009-10.

B) Machinery & Equipment :

Some of the major equipments were procured in order to create new facilities and augment the existing facilities of the laboratories in all the regional centres.

Sl. No.	Name of the Equipment	Regions
1	Spares for Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer (AAS)	NTH(ER), Kolkata
2	Mass Comparator Balance, 0-110gm (0.001mg)	NTH(WR), Mumbai
3	Inductively Coupled Plasma Spectrophotometer (ICP-OES) with Auto Sampler	NTH(SR), Chennai
4	Spares for Carbon Sulphur Analyser	NTH(SR), Chennai
5	Inductively Coupled Plasma Spectrophotometer (ICP-OES) with Auto Sampler	NTH(NR), Ghaziabad
6	Fourier Transform Infrared Spectrophotometer (FTIR) - 2Nos.	NTH(NR), Ghaziabad & NTH(NWR), Jaipur
7	UTM-100kN	NTH(NR), Ghaziabad
8	Optical Emission Spectrophotometer, Spark type (Portable), minimum 5 channels.	NTH(NWR), Jaipur
9	Carbon, Hydrogen, Nitrogen, Sulphur (CHNS) Analyzer	NTH(ER), Kolkata
10	Microwave Digester (Imported)- 2Nos.	NTH(ER), Kolkata & NTH(SR), Chennai.
11	Rotary Vacuum Evaporator	NTH(ER), Kolkata

12	Hydrogen Generator, Flow rate-250cc/min, Purity- 99.99%, Pressure- 0 to 7 bar	NTH(ER), Kolkata
13	Water Purification System – 2Nos	NTH(ER), Kolkata & NTH(NWR), Jaipur
14	Carbon Sulphur Analyser	NTH(NER), Guwahati
15	Optical Emission Spectrometer (OES)	NTH(ER), Kolkata
16	Limiting Oxygen Index Tester	NTH(ER), Kolkata
17	Spares for UV-VIS Spectrophotometer	NTH(ER), Kolkata
18	Portable Digital Holiday Detector	NTH(ER), Kolkata
19	Xenon Arc Weather-o-Meter-2 nos.	NTH(ER), Kolkata & NTH(SR), Chennai
20	FTIR Library	NTH(ER), Kolkata
21	200kV AC High Voltage Test Set	NTH(SR), Chennai
22	Critical Oxygen Index Test Apparatus	NTH(SR), Chennai
23	Micro Ohmmeter	NTH(NR), Ghaziabad
24	Million Meg Ohmmeter	NTH(NR), Ghaziabad
25	Lead Acid Battery Cycle Tester, 20 Channel	NTH(ER), Kolkata

C) The expertise and wealth of experience of NTH is utilized to provide a major thrust in its modernization for protection of the consumers as well as for the Nation in judging the quality of their products. Some milestones of which are as follows :

(i) Inter Laboratory Comparison (ILC) programme on determination of Gramme per square metre (G.S.M.) Test on Paper samples was carried out by the RPPT Laboratory of NTH (NR), Ghaziabad and a comparative study of the report was done with Regional Testing Centre, New Delhi in accordance with ISO/ IEC 17025-2005. The performance report for the said programme was satisfactory, the Z-score value (used in the assessment of individual laboratory results) for GSM of paper, received from RTC, New Delhi revealed that the results were within the agreeable limit. International reputation of NTH has been achieved.

(ii) The Chemical Laboratory of NTH (ER), Alipore has performed the value added job by checking the quality of Paint samples required for Indo-Bangladesh Border Fencing (IBBF), submitted by National Building Construction Corporation. Ltd. (NBCCL). As per the Defence specification, NTH has done the value added job and the quality checking of paint, required for Indo-Bangladesh Border Fencing (IBBF) which is of immense national interest. NTH had performed the intangible job in order to ensure the quality of paint as per the requirements of the Defence Organization and not for fixing the specifications.

(iii) Failure Analysis of the “Ammonia Valve” of Cold Storage, used for potato preservation, has been taken up by the NDT Laboratory of NTH (ER), Alipore on behalf of M/s. Survey & loss Assessor, Deshbandhu Nagar, Kolkata-59. The firm got the Valve tested by NTH to ascertain the legitimacy of the Insurance claim by the respective cold storage to the Insurance Company.

(iv) M/s. Tata Steel assigned the job of finding a suitable alternative of Railway Track Ballasts. The Civil Engg. Lab. of NTH (ER), Salt Lake has performed this job for national interest by taking up the testing of Strength, Abrasion, Impact test on “Air-cooled Ballast Furnace Slag”.

(v) NTH (ER), Kolkata participated in the 11th Expo held at Kolkata, organised by “Central Calcutta Science & Cultural Organisation of Youth”, a Govt. registered body at the behest of DOCA from 7th September, 2007 to 14th September, 2007. The participation hails a huge success as a exposer is utilised as a long awaited scope for marketing and publicity of functioning of NTH towards growth and prospect of the nation. Good response has been recorded from the industrial personnel, accademicians and prominent dignitaries. The Honourable Minister of State, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India, appreciated the effort.

(vi) To standardise the quality of spices for export purpose of the firm M/s. Shalimar Chemicals Private Limited, the Chemical Laboratory of NTH (ER), Salt Lake, Kolkata, evaluated the oil, protein, fat, carbo-hydrate, minerals (Fe & Ca) percentage in chilly and turmeric powder for national interests. Thus NTH has entered into items of food items as per Integrated Food Law.

(vii) The Sonepur fair, the biggest fair of historic importance in India has been utilized successfully to create an awareness about the functioning and activities of NTH among the common people of India. The pavillion of NTH has been supervised excellently by the scientists in charge and staff of NTH(ER), Kolkata from 24th November, 2007 to 18th December, 2007. Around 1550 visitors attended the fair.

(viii) Fire Extinguisher Ball, made in Thailand, has been tested for its unique performance. The product can be utilized by the Fire Fighting personnel to extinguish fire in an enclosed area.

(ix) Testing of High Build Paints (Polyurethane and Epoxy) and anti-rust chemicals, received from Chittaranjan Locomotive Works, was carried out for enhancing the durability of coating on the surface of locomotive prior to application of paints.

(x) NTH has started the inspection jobs for Export Promotion as well as in-land supplies.

(xi) NTH participated in 12th National Expo during 5th to 10th September, 2008 and Kreta Suraksha Mela from 15th to 19th September, 2008 to create an awareness about the functioning and activities of NTH among the common people of India. The pavilion of NTH has been supervised excellently by the scientists and staff of NTH.

4. Materials for Highlights :

a) Excise Department of Govt. of West Bengal declared National Test House as a notified Laboratory for testing of Excise related products(vide notification no. 41-Ex dated-11.01.08 and 204-Ex/O/IM-73/2005 dated 03.03.2008 published in Kolkata Gazette).

b) The Director, NTH(ER), Kolkata, was intimated by the Excise Commissioner, Department of Excise, Govt. of West Bengal, about the Notification published in the Kolkata Gazette vide notification No. 634-X/O/IE-10/08 dated 4th July, 2008. The scientific experts from the Chemical Lab of NTH(ER), Kolkata have to appointed as State Chemical Examiner and State Assistant Chemical Examiner by order of the Governor of West Bengal.

c) NTH(ER), Kolkata, participated in the “Second Green Revolution Summit & Agro-Products Fair, 2008”, held from 24th September to 26th September, 2008 at Kolkata. The pavilion was well attended by the visitors.

d) NTH(NER), Guwahati, participated in the **96th Science Congress** held from 3rd to 7th January, 2009 at North Eastern Hill University at Shillong.

e) The Director General in Charge, national Test House, along with three other scientists NTH(ER), Salt Lake, Kolkata, NTH(NR), Ghaziabad and NTH(NER), Guwahati, attended the I.C.C. Summit from 12th February, 2009 to 14th February, 2009 at **Ho-Chi-Minh City, Vietnam**, to improve awareness in Quality Assessment of consumer products in South East Asian Countries.

5. Training policy for officers and scientific staff of NTH :

During the current plan period , the scientists of NTH were sent to renowned scientific, technological and management institutes in India for training, conducted by NPL, New Delhi, the Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, ASCI, Hyderabad, ISTM, New Delhi, XLRI, Jamshedpur, etc.,as per the Training Calendar, forwarded by NPL, DST, ASCI, XLRI, etc.

6. Computerization of NTH :

NTH have a direct interaction with the customers for getting quotation for test fee, receipt of sample and testing charges etc. These aspects have been computerised and all the above work is done on a Single Window System. In addition to the above, redressal of public grievances for prompt and sympathetic attention is also available in all the units of NTH. A computerized web-based **Management Information System (MIS)** for both technical and administrative functions has been installed at NTH(ER), Kolkata. The main areas covered under the system are : Sample monitoring, Budget and Accounts monitoring, Personnel information and Document management system. A new NTH-Website of both Hindi & English versions has been hosted with multiple information related to NTH. This website comprises some of the basic features like Right to Information Act, Citizen Charter etc. A ready reference related to sample testing status will be available in the website and secured soft copies of the testing & calibration certificates may be provided to the customers against their request.

7. Salient recommendation of IIM Calcutta in their Study on NTH and Extent of Implementation :

IIM Calcutta was assigned to study in details the relevancy of NTH in its field of activities for coming years with specified terms of references. In accordance with the stipulated agreement, IIM Calcutta has already submitted the Final reports for both the Main Study as well as the Productivity Norms of NTH.

Extent of implementation :

- NTH has already affixed higher revenue target so that it becomes self-reliant on Non-Plan Expenditure during the 12th Five Year Plan Period (2012-13 to 2016-17).
- Head, Testing Services have been assigned for the designated job of Head, Training & Consultancy Services as additional duty and Director of the Regions have been shouldering the responsibility for business development.
- In respect of promotional opportunities for all level of scientists, Report submitted by the three-member committee to DoCA has taken into account all issues related to filling up of vacant posts of scientists, promotion of scientists and technical support staff pending acceptance of the forthcoming Executive Committee meeting of NTH and subsequent exercise thereof.
- NTH has already implemented support services for SMEs and interacted with FICCI and ASSOCHEM.
- Certification of Welders, as per IBR-1950, has already been carrying out by NTH.

**MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD
AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION**

(DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS)



सत्यमेव जयते

Government of India

**ECONOMIC EDITORS'
CONFERENCE**

4th NOVEMBER, 2009

**MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND
PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION**

(DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS)



सत्यमेव जयते
Government of India

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