

## **A REPORT of two-day National Conference on the theme “CONSUMER PROTECTION AND WELFARE IN GLOBAL ECONOMY: NECTAR – 2012**

A two-day National Conference on the theme “CONSUMER PROTECTION AND WELFARE IN GLOBAL ECONOMY: NECTAR – 2012” was organized by Akola Law College on 30th Sept. 2012 and 1st Oct. 2012.

Consumer is the King. The earth revolves around the Sun. But does it not revolve around the consumer? Consumer is the center-point of all economic activities. Therefore, consumer is “Sovereign”. Mahatma Gandhi also emphasized this fact. He accorded a place of high respect to the consumer. Yet it remains a reality that this ‘king’ is the least cared and most neglected and exploited creature on the earth. In India, where illiteracy and poverty reign supreme, this is all the more true. Further, the process of globalization has put new deregulatory pressures on consumer law. At the same time, in the wake of the liberalization of the global economy, it has given rise to new demands for regulation on the consumer law agenda. It is a well recognized fact that protection of consumers’ rights and interests not only promotes the interests of business but also of the State as well. Therefore, it is necessary to take adequate measures, including legal, to protect the interests of consumer. Consumer protection laws and consumer awareness campaigns assume great significance in this background. The major thrust was to see what role consumer legislation could and should play in resolving problems connected with poverty and in promoting welfare globally. The followings were sub-themes of the conference-

1. Legal Framework to Protect Consumers
2. Green and Ethical Consumerism
3. Right to Health – A Fundamental Right
4. Rights & Responsibilities of Service Providers
5. Adjudicating Bodies and Redressal Authorities

All the themes were discussed and deliberated upon at great length by the academia, researchers, teachers and students.

### **Day One: Sept., 30, 2012**

The conference was inaugurated by Hon. Mr. Justice Ashok Bhan, President, National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission, New Delhi. Prin. Mrs. Ratna Chandak, convener, delivered welcome speech. Dr. S. C. Bhandari, the chief coordinator, explained the theme and objectives of the conference. A souvenir was released at the hands of the Chief Guest to commemorate this national event. On this occasion, Hon’ble Mr. Justice Ashok Bhan gave a formula for the consumers’ protection and welfare. He said that every human being is a consumer and has to face problems. The mantra one should remember and follow is “Do Your Duties & Know Your Rights”. He commended the organizers for organizing the national conference. On this occasion, meritorious students of the college Ms. Shubhangi

Lokhande and Ms Vrushali Bangale were felicitated at the hands of the chief guest for securing the second and the third position in the merit list of Amravati University. They were awarded a cash prize of Rs. 5,000 each. Prof. P. D. Mandaogane, President, Akola Education Society presided over the function. The proceedings of the conference were conducted by Prof. P. D. Mandaogane.

Immediately after inauguration, *first inter-active guest lecture session* took place. During this session, Dr. Shrihari Mandaogane, Divisional General Manager, TQM, TATA Motors, Pune, delivered the key-note address and shared his knowledge and experiences on the topic “Achieving Total Satisfaction of the Customers in Automobile Industry in Global Economy”.

The *first theme session* was on the topic, “**Legal Framework to Protect Consumers**”. The session was chaired by Dr. Rajadhyaksh, acting Dean of Law, Mumbai University, Mumbai. **Forty** delegates contributed their papers on this theme. Prof. Hanchate Ram Mohan Rao, Dayanand Law College, Solapur, Prof. Pankaj Kakde, S. P. College of Law, Chandrapur, Adv. Ajit Patkhedkar, faculty, Akola Law College, Akola, Dr. Manoj Bendale, Yeshwant Mahavidyalaya, Wardha, Dr. Sanjay Maniar, Valsad, Gujarat, Mr. Sanket Joshi, Amaravati, Dr. Mahesh Dabre, L. R. T. College, Akola and Dr. R. B. Deshmukh, Principal, Shivaji Law College, Parbhani, presented their papers. Dr. Sri Vidhya Jayakumar, Principal, TMC Law College, Thane, explained that the consumer problems are symptoms of fundamental disorders of the economic system and will have to be addressed effectively. Everyone is a consumer and consumer interest is public interest. Opening up of the economy has led to flooding of the market with goods and services and a higher level of expectation of quality by the consumers. Inflation is continuing to be harsh. That’s why consumers need protection before, during and also after purchase of goods and services. Dr. Anshumaika Shrivastava, Principal, V. V. Mahavidyalaya, Amravati, looked into the dynamism of the process whereby consumer empowerment is achieved through legislation. She attempted to analyze whether participation of customer does in fact translate into concrete empowerment in a nation where customers are able to carve a niche for themselves in the traditional environment. She also focused on the challenges that are to be looked upon with great sincerity in coming years.

During the *second theme session*, “**Right to Health-A Fundamental Right**” was thoroughly discussed. The session was chaired by Dr. Mariamma. A. K., Principal, Balaji College of Law, Pune. During her presentation, she focused on the modern day practices which force the consumers to consume unhealthy products by which their health is adversely affected. She insisted that it is highly necessary to create awareness among the consumers about the illeffects of the products. In all fifty delegates contributed

their papers on this theme. Prof. Umesh S. Aswar, Government Law College, Mumbai, highlighted on the topic “Analytical Study of Relevant Provisions of Various Medical Laws”. Ms. Nilima Bhople, Mumbai, Dr. M. L. Dharmapurikar, Shivaji Law College, Khandhar, Dr. Kalpana V. Jawale, PGTD, SGB AU, Amravati. P. V. Bandewar, Narayanrao Chavan Law College, Nanded, Dr. Sau. J. B. Auradkar, Shivaji Law College, Khandhar, Ms. Nahila Asif Ali, Ms Sneha Zanwar, Akola Law College, Akola and Prof. Nityanad Pandey, Indore, presented their papers. Dr. Mugdha Phadke, Akola highlighted various case laws under which the doctors cannot be held responsible for negligence. The topic of her presentation was, “It’s not Medical Negligence”. Dr. Varsha Deshmukh, P. D. College of Law, Amravati made power point presentation on the topic “Freedom to be Born as Female- Medico-Legal Dilemma”. She urged that to stem the increasing epidemic of female feticide we have to expose the collusion of unethical medical practitioners. The campaign has to oppose the commoditization of women in popular culture and media. She insisted that organizations and individuals with different priorities and ideological beliefs have to rally together to battle the powerful patriarchal forces operating within the institutions of the family, government and civil society. A transformation of our gendered society is necessary for the elimination of female feticide. Though a law has been passed it has been enforced very ineffectively, leaving a lot of loopholes. The medical community, social activists and law enforcement agencies have to come tighter to curb this practice and to change the mindset of the general population.

In the evening, a cultural programme was organised wherein international fame Radhika Sathe & her troupe presented a classical Kathak dance. It was followed by a Hindi Kavi Sammelan, in which poets Shri Sunil Navandhar, Shri Krishnakumar Sharma & parody maker Shri Prakash Purohit regaled the delegates with their satirical poems. The programme was hailed by the audience as it went into raptures by the hilarious presentation.

### **Day Two: Oct, 01, 2012.**

On the second day of the Conference, the *second inter-active guest lecture* session was organized. During this session, Shri. Bharatbhai Shah, Managing Director, Leben Laboratories Pvt. Ltd., Akola, had symposium with the audience on the topic “*Consumerism in Heart*”. He threw light of generic medicines. He satisfied the queries also.

In the *third theme session*, the topic which came under discussion was “*Green and Ethical Consumerism.*” Total **twenty three** delegates contributed their papers on this theme. The session was chaired by the Dr. Nazir Ali Quadri, Principal, R. R. Law College, Washim and cochaired by Prof.

Smita Shingrup, Principal, Smt. Maherbanu College of Science & Comm., Akola. Mrs. S. P. Kalamdhad, Dr. Ambedkar College, Dept. of Law, Nagpur, gave presentation on the topic “What Food Is On My Plate?” She insisted that labelling is essential for the protection of the citizens’ freedom of choice, of what they eat. She thoroughly focused that genetically modified food might presently give solution to various problems all over the world and might be accepted as a great revolution in science and technology. However, the side effects of genetically modified food should not be ignored. She indicated that tomorrow how horrible the situation could be! If we do not wake up and make the masses aware about the genetically modified food, the result might be disastrous. The mass awareness should be created about the effects of genetically modified food on health, so that people could make rational choice whether to have this food on their plate or not. Ms. Varsha Chandwani, student, Smt. Maherbanu College of Science & Comm., Akola, explained the concept of green shopping with the title “Go Green : The Shopping That Saves The World”. Ms. Rashmi Pande, student, S N G Law College, Akola, focused on “Green & Ethical Consumerism for Sustainable Development– Corporate Liability”. The other paper presenters were Adv. Mrs. K. S. Kapse, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College of Law, Nagpur, Sanjay Bang, Narayanrao Chavan Law College, Nanded, Sanjay Jayram Aher, Bharati Vidyapeeth’s New Law College, Sangli, Prof. Vikas Khakare, Narayanrao Chavan Law College, Nanded, Natasha Chourasiya, student, Akola Law College, Akola, Muktai Rahatgaokar, P. D. College of Law, Amravati, Priti G. Sahu, Smt. Maherbanu College of Science & Comm., Akola and Dr. D. V. Ingle, Smt. L. R. T. College of Commerce, Akola.

In the *fourth theme session*, the topic which came under discussion was “*Rights and Responsibilities of the Service Providers*”. The session was chaired by Dr. Sri Vidhya Jayakumar, Principal, TMC Law College, Thane. Total **fifteen** researchers contributed their papers to this theme. Dr. Ravishankar Mor, Dept. of Law, Yeshwant Mahavidyalaya, Wardha explained the rights of online shoppers. However, rights of online shoppers are not given due regards in India and the violation of such rights by the online shops is rampant. He threw light on the fact that most of the time website stores take shelter behind the agreement signed by the buyers to avoid their legal responsibility. In order to sustain the growth of Online shopping business in India, he suggested the necessity that government, judiciary and NGO’s should take immediate steps to restore the confidence of buyers in the online shopping. Dr. Madhukar Phad, V. P. Law College, Baramati, Tejashree Khot, student, Akola Law College, Akola, Gitesh Rajat Mehta, B. B. A., Student, Akola, highlighted on rights and responsibilities of service providers with consumers. Prof. Ratna Chandak, Principal, Akola Law College, Akola, contributed the paper on the topic “Consumer – A Hub of the Wheel of the Sustainable Economy & Accountability of Service Providers”. She discussed with the help of decided cases the contributions made by the Consumer

Protection Law and the adjudicatory authorities created thereunder in enhancing the accountability of various service providers by adjudication.

In the *last theme session i.e. fifth session*, the topic that was deliberated upon was “*Role of Adjudicating Bodies and Redressal Authorities*”. Contribution of the delegates towards this session was **ten** in number. Prof. Amol Karwa, Narayanrao Chavan Law College, Nanded, made PPT on judicial contribution in protection of copyright from infringement and its effect on consumerism. Ms. Megha Joshi and Ms. Neha Jaiwar, students, Akola Law College, Akola, focused of the role of adjudicating bodies and redressal authorities.

The *valedictory session* was chaired by Shri. Y. D. Gohil, Jt. Commissioner of Income Tax, Akola Range, Akola. Dr. Santosh Thakre, Chancellor’s Nominee on the Management Council, SGB Amaravati University, Amravati, was the chief guest. Adv. Motisingh Mohta, Chairman, Bar Council of Maharashtra and Goa was the guest of honor. Present on the dais with the guests were Prof. P. D. Mandaogane, Shri Vilas Deshpande, Prin. Ratna G. Chandak and Dr. S. C. Bhandari. Dr. Santosh Thakre in his speech lauded the efforts of Akola Law College in hosting the national level conference in a well organized manner. Shri Y. D. Gohil in his valedictory speech emphasised the need of organizing such conferences frequently to generate academic discussion on the topics of public interest. He thoroughly elaborated the role of consumerism in the present context. Adv. Motisingh Mohta reviewed the working of the forums and other adjudicatory bodies. He suggested to remove the loopholes in the Act itself. On this occasion, the organizing committee felicitated the delegates who were awarded with Ph. D. recently.

The Conference ended with “*Pasaydan*” of Sant Gyaneshwar rendered by Mrs. Ramani Joshi. The Conference proved to be highly successful in view of the spontaneous response and enthusiastic participation of the delegates from all over the country.