

**Three Days Training Programme on Capacity Building for  
Researchers in Consumer Protection and Consumer Welfare  
at Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati**

**(February 02-04, 2011)**

The Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi under the Scheme “**Promoting Involvement of Research Institutions, Universities and Colleges in Consumer Protection and Consumer Welfare**” in collaboration with Department of Political Science, & Public Administration, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati and Indian Institute of Public Administration, Tirupati Local Branch organized a **Three Day Training Programme on “Capacity Building for Researchers in Consumer Protection and Consumer Welfare” from February 02-04, 2011**. The programme was sponsored by the Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India. 32 participants from various universities and colleges of Andhra Pradesh and other Southern states participated in the programme. The objectives of the programme were to: explain the need and importance of Consumer Protection and Welfare; elucidate the basic provisions of the Consumer Protection Act and other legislations having a bearing on Consumer Protection; and clarify basic requirements of qualitative and quantitative research methodology relevant for research in the area of Consumer Protection and Welfare. The basic purpose of the programme was to generate interest in the area among the researchers and to encourage them to take up research in related areas of consumer protection where a gap exists.





**Prof. A. Ranga Reddy, President, IIPA Tirupati Local Branch welcoming the dignitaries**

Prof. A. Ranga Reddy, President, IIPA, Tirupati Local Branch welcomed all the dignitaries, participants and the members of Executive Council of IIPA, Tirupati Local Branch. He also thanked IIPA, New Delhi for sponsoring the three day workshop in collaboration with IIPA Tirupati Local Branch. He highlighted that 7 Billion people on the Globe are facing consumer problems as it is still a seller's market rather than a buyer's market. There is a need to change from seller's market to buyer's market. There is a need

to make the buyer powerful. Consumer is called a king but he is a puppet in the hand of business. He is not having his say in market especially in branded and high cost products. There is a need to provide justice to the consumers in the market. Cheating in the market is common, which is to be curbed by introducing strong laws, enhancing awareness and punishment for the sellers and manufacturers so as to promote competition and healthy development of society.

Prof. B.V. Chalapathi, Programme Director, Dept. of Political Science and Public Administration, S.V. University, Tirupati presented the theme and objectives of the workshop. Introducing the programme he said that Consumer Protection and Welfare is need of the hour. has been emphasised since Kautilya's



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**Prof. B.V. Chalapathi, presenting the theme and objectives of the workshop**

Arthshashtra. With Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the private players have entered into the market resorting to cheating and exploitation of the consumers. He said that the objective of the programme is to give a broad idea about consumer protection to the researchers with inputs on research methodology to enable them to work on various issues on consumer protection.



Dr. N. Thulasi Reddy, Chairman, Point Economic Programme, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad and Former President, District Consumer Forum, Kadapa in his Keynote Address stressed that Consumer Protection and Welfare is necessary for promoting a society. Consumers are being exploited to unfair and exploitative practices in market. There is a need to build a strong consumer movement involving



**Dr. N. Thulasi Reddy delivering the Keynote Address**

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government, business and the consumers to curb these practices. He flagged the origin and development of consumer movement at the global and the national level and highlighted the significance of the World Consumer Day which is celebrated on March 15 every year. It was on this day in 1962 John F. Kennedy gave four rights to the consumers which were later expanded to eight rights. Out of these eight, six have been incorporated in our Act as well which are right to safety, right to be informed, right to choose, right to be heard, right to redressal, and right to consumer education. Before Consumer Protection Act was enacted in 1986, there were a number of legislations which dealt directly or indirectly with consumer protection such as Sale of Goods Act, 1930; Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 etc. however they failed to provide an efficient and effective remedy to the consumer and finally Consumer Protection Act was enacted in 1986 to provide better protection to the consumers. The act applies to all goods and services and provides for a speedy inexpensive disposal of complaints as well as an informal and easy procedure for filing complaints. For the redressal of grievances of the consumers a three tier quasi-judicial machinery has been set up under the Act at District, State and National level. The 1986 Act had given consumer rights but the consumers also have corresponding responsibilities like awareness, Action, Unity, Mass movement and Cooperation. The centre and state governments have been allotted Consumer Welfare Fund which is being used to sponsor a number of consumer awareness and education programmes at centre and state level. These schemes include District Information Centres, consumers clubs at schools and colleges, awareness programs on National and World Consumer Day, Consumer Protection Cells. Now consumer protection has been included in the syllabus of schools and colleges to introduce the subject to the students who are impulsive buyers and also can take the information to the

masses. He also informed about the Post Graduate Diploma in consumer protection started by the Andhra government.

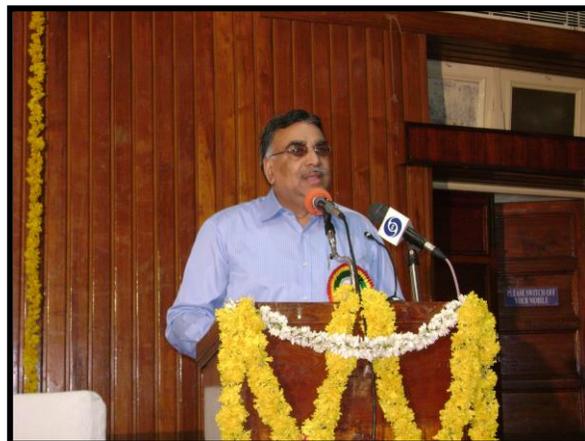


**Prof. Pranab Banerji, Project Coordinator, Consultancy Project, IIPA presenting an overview of the Consultancy Project**

On the occasion Prof. Pranab Banerji, Project Coordinator, Consultancy Project, IIPA presented an overview of the Consultancy Project on “Promoting Involvement of Research Institutions, Universities and Colleges in Consumer Protection and Consumer Welfare” and the various activities conducted under the project. The participants were informed about the scheme in detail. He briefed the participants that the scheme is in two parts – one part is to give grants to the universities/ colleges and research institutions to conduct research in the area of consumer protection and consumer welfare. The other part deals with the

capacity building activities among the researchers and to disseminate the message among the researchers that grant is available to people interested in the area. This and other activities under the part II of the consultancy are an effort to generate awareness about the laws and policies for consumer protection. The programme was divided into two parts-one involving inputs on consumer protection and awareness and the other part on research methodology. Hence there were sessions on various issues of consumer protection as well as on qualitative and quantitative techniques.

Speaking on the occasion Prof. Suresh Misra, Chair-Professor and Co-ordinator, Centre for Consumer Studies, provided details about the activities of the Centre for Consumer Studies. He said the aim of the Centre is to facilitate and promote better protection of consumers’ rights among various sections of society, especially the rural people. With this objective in mind we are collaborating



**Prof. Suresh Misra, Chair Professor, CCS, IIPA giving an outline of the activities of the Centre**

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a number of institutions at various places in India to take consumer awareness to the grass root levels. We all are consumers and consumer education and awareness is the need of the hour. However, subjects like consumer protection are not the priority at present. Consumer Protection Act, 1986 has been there for more than two decades but still even those who have the knowledge shy away from complaining, as we Indians by nature have the attitude to suffer in silence and always think that going to court means a lot of problem, expenditure and waste of time. We need to understand that the redressal Forums under the Consumer Protection Act are consumer friendly forums. They are not packed with all those problems which are there in civil courts. They follow summary procedure, work according to principles of Natural Justice and are supposed to deliver judgement in few months. Endeavours have been made by both the central and state governments to educate the consumers about their consumer rights. As a consumer all of us should try to exert our rights. We should first approach the trader, if he fails to give any relief to us then the manufacturer and in case relief does not come from any of these then to the consumer courts.

Prof. K. Kamalanathan, Former Executive Member of IIPA, New Delhi emphasised about consumerism as you get what you desire. John Nadar started the consumer movement in U.S. A. Prof. Pranab Benerji, IIPA, New Delhi has presented the importance of IIPA and the growth of consumer movement in different parts of India. Prof. Suresh Misra, IIPA, New Delhi has revealed the studies that have been carried out. He stressed the role of universities and academic institutions in promoting the consumer movement.

Prof. D. Venkateswarlu, Principal, S.V.U. College of Arts emphasised that the level of consumer awareness in India is generally very low and market is still a sellers market. We easily get swayed away and influenced by the media. Famous actors and sportspersons advertise certain goods and people get influenced. There are surrogate ads for dangerous products like wines, cigarettes, spurious items. The consumers are not always aware about the technical details and go by the advice of the friends. The consumer behaviour is complex and very little is being done for consumer protection. Even the ad campaign by the department needs to be made more interesting so as to catch the attention of the people. A healthy society will emerge, once consumer becomes proactive in quantity and quality of the product and price.

The programme was divided into two parts-one involving inputs on consumer protection and awareness and the other part on research methodology. The sessions were; Introduction to Consumer Protection by Prof. Suresh Misra, IIPA; Fundamentals of Research Design by Prof. P. Krishna Prasad; Research Methods: Qualitative by Prof. Pranab Banerji, IIPA; Consumer Protection Act by Sapna Chadah, IIPA; Consumer Education and Awareness by Suresh Misra; Computer Application by Dr. V. Satyavan; and Quantitative Methods by Prof. Pranab Banerji. There were also sessions by experts on Banking and Consumer, Insurance and Consumer, Consumerism and Unfair Trade Practices. One session was devoted for Research in Consumer Affairs where the whole process of selection and evaluation of the projects was discussed in detail. Some suggestions as regards the topics in the area of consumer protection and welfare in which research can be undertaken were also highlighted.

On the concluding day the Valedictory Address was delivered by Prof. J. Prathap Reddy, Registrar, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati. He said that Consumer Protection is a universal subject. If a consumer is intelligent, he is beneficiary and he is a sufferer. There is a consumer forum in district and if you have some problem you to lodge a complaint for redressal of the same. The consumers should fight for their



**Prof. J. Prathap Reddy, Registrar, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati delivering the Valedictory Address**

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otherwise they will always remain at receiving end. As a consumer we are also sometimes at fault. We never ask for receipt when we buy goods even for the medicines. The Jago Grahak Jago is merely a slogan for us, we are not taking seriously the message and information which is passed on to us through the media campaign. The area is of seminal importance for all and an inter-disciplinary approach is required for it. We all must take interest in the subject and be a vigilant consumer. There is a need to educate the consumers about their rights and responsibilities.



**Prof. B. Mohan, Former Registrar, S.V. University, Tirupati in his address said that in pre-**

economic liberalisation the consumer came last. It is only after 1991 that consumer movement has picked up. The break-through was enactment of Consumer protection Act in 1986. The CPA provides for speedy and inexpensive redressal mechanism. The Central Govt is doing a lot to educate the consumers and there are a number of schemes of the govt. to educate consumers. But the problem is that everything has become a ritual. More than 20 years after enactment of CPA still the consumers are being exploited. There is a need to make them more aware. In this endeavour we all, as teachers and researchers, can make a difference. We must pass on the information to the students and people at grass root level and generate awareness. We must also take up research in the area which will produce useful material to educate the consumers and also bring out relevant policy inputs for the government.

**Views/Opinions of the participants on different aspects of the Training Programme are analysed and presented below:**

**1. Please rate the structure and organization of the Course.**

Very Well structured	Well structured	Somewhat un-structured	Very un-structured
16	15	1	-

**2. How useful is the training to you immediately in your job?**

Very useful	Quite useful	Of limited use	Not at all useful
18	9	4	1

**3. How useful is the training likely to be in future jobs that you may handle?**

Very useful	Quite useful	Of limited use	Not at all useful
16	12	4	-

4. How far have you been benefited from interaction with the fellow participants of the course?

Extremely	Considerably	Fairly	Not at all
10	18	4	-

5. How far was the course material supplied relevant and related to the course content?

Extremely relevant	Considerably relevant	Fairly relevant	Not at all relevant
18	9	4	1

6. To what extent are you satisfied with the following?

	Satisfied fully	Satisfied to a large extent	Satisfied to a limited extent	Not satisfied at all	NC/NA
a. Reception	20	11	1	-	-
b. Residential accommodation	14	11	1	1	5
c. Food quality and service	23	7	2	-	-
d. Class room	18	12	2	-	-

<b>Facilities</b>					
<b>e. Interaction with the Faculty</b>	18	12	1	-	1
<b>f. Recreation Facilities</b>	16	12	-	-	4

### 7. Assessment of Training Faculty/sessions (32 Participants responded)

Sl. No.	Topic	Name of Speaker	Assessment				
			Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	NC
1.	Introduction to Consumer Protection	Suresh Misra	14	14	4	-	-
2.	Fundamentals of Research Design	P. Krishna Prasad	9	11	4	1	7
3.	Research Methods: Qualitative, Interview, Questionnaire, Case Study	Pranab Banerji	24	7	1	-	-
4.	Consumer Protection Act	Sapna Chadah	14	11	7	-	-
5.	Consumer Education & Awareness	Suresh Misra	13	15	3	-	1
6.	Consumerism and Unfair - Trade Practices	Bhavani Prasad	6	12	6	2	6
7.	Computer Application	V. Satyavan	6	13	5	1	7
8.	Banking and the Consumer	R. Arunachalam	4	16	7	1	7

9.	Insurance and the Consumer	B. Yerram Raju	2	11	10	4	5
10.	Research Methods: Quantitative	Pranab Banerji	21	9	2	-	-
11.	Hypothesis, Testing Processing & Data Analysis	Pranab Banerji	20	8	3	-	-
12.	Consumer Research Design	Pranab Banerji Suresh Misra Sapna Chadah	14	11	5	-	2

**8. Which parts of the course did you find most helpful?**

1.	Research Methodology	14
2.	Consumer Protection Act	8
3.	Computer Applications	8
4.	Consumer Education and Awareness	6
5.	Fundamentals of Research Design	6
6.	All	4
7.	Consumerism and Unfair Trade Practice	4
8.	Banking and Consumer	2

**9. Which parts of the course did you find least helpful?**

1.	Insurance and Consumer	9
2.	None	5
3.	Banking and Consumer	3

4.	Fundamentals of Research Design	1
5.	Computer Application	1
6.	Consumer Research Design	1
7.	Consumerism and Unfair Trade Practice	1

**10. Your overall impression of the course**

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	NC
14	13	4	1	-

**11. Did the course give you any specific ideas about how you can improve your work?**

Yes	No	NC
27	4	1

- ☒ The course has given ideas relating to research in consumer protection.
- ☒ It will help to create awareness among the research scholars and students.
- ☒ Has given good inputs to research scholars to do research in consumer protection and welfare.
- ☒ Generated awareness on consumer issues.
- ☒ The training programme was useful for future jobs and problems in the areas.
- ☒ The programme provoked to think and work for the consumer protection movement.
- ☒ The course created awareness about consumer rights and equipped to face such situations in future
- ☒ The programme has increased both personal and professional competency.

- ☞ Course gave an idea as how to use software in research.
- ☞ Informed about case study, hypothesis formulation, research topic selection etc.
- ☞ It helped to get a clear idea about consumer protection and welfare.
- ☞ Course imparted knowledge about formation of objectives, hypothesis testing and research techniques.
- ☞ The course was useful.
- ☞ The workshop gave an idea as how to conduct studies in the area and way to conduct projects.

## **12. Any other Comments/ Observations you wish to make about the Course.**

- ⌘ Research method related to consumer protection may be improved little more with practical application.
- ⌘ Computer application session may be extended.
- ⌘ The duration of the course may be extended.
- ⌘ The course was excellent.
- ⌘ More time should be devoted for each session.
- ⌘ Three days period for such extensive programme is not sufficient; the duration must be enhanced for more days.
- ⌘ Course needs to be better structured
- ⌘ Course material needs to be provided before the commencement of the course.
- ⌘ Only experts in the field should be invited for giving lectures.
- ⌘ Current trends and topics in consumer welfare research need to be discussed.
- ⌘ The medium of instruction has to be strictly English.
- ⌘ Lectures from the professional experts could be arranged.
- ⌘ The workshop was very useful
- ⌘ The workshop was very well organised.
- ⌘ Workshop gave a lot of knowledge and information.
- ⌘ Excellent, well organised programme.
- ⌘ Interaction with the resource persons and participants was good.
- ⌘ Computer application session should be given some more time.
- ⌘ The workshop may be extended from 3 to 5 days.
- ⌘ The time for the training workshop was not enough , duration may be increased.

We would like to place on record the practice followed in the Indian Institute of Public Administration to give due consideration to the views/suggestions of the participants in regard to the course contents and design of the programme at the time of restructuring the training programme. The views/comments of the participants, therefore, will certainly be considered next time, while designing the programme.

The report would be incomplete, if we do not record our appreciation to the Faculty, Officers and staff of Department of Political Science, CCS University, Meerut for their help in organising the Training Programme. However, Prof. S. K. Sharma and his colleagues deserve special mention for their support.

We would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our thanks to Dr. Rakesh Hooja, Director, IIPA for his guidance, encouragement and pro-active interest. The Secretary, Additional Secretary and Joint Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India, deserve special thanks for sponsoring the Centre for Consumer Studies and the Consultancy Project and reposing confidence and trust in the Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi.

**(Suresh Misra)**

**(Pranab Banerji)**

**Course Coordinators**