



THE TAMIL NADU Dr. AMBEDKAR LAW UNIVERSITY

(State University Established Act No.43 of 1997)

M.G.R. Salai, Perungudi, (Near Taramani Railway Station) Chennai - 600113.



Shri. A.K. Venkata Subramaniam

*Chair of Excellence on Consumer Law and Jurisprudence
in association with*



सत्यमेव जयते

*Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India*

invites you to a

WORKSHOP

on

SMART PRODUCTS AND CHALLENGES FACED BY CONSUMERS

on

14th March, 2019

on the eve of

WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY

Venue

U.G.BLOCK, SEMINAR HALL

The Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University (New Campus)
(Near Taramani MRTS Railway Station)
Perungudi, Chennai – 600113.

About the University

The Tamil Nadu Dr.Ambedkar Law University is a premier institution for legal education, established in the year of 1997 in pursuance of the Tamil Nadu Act No.43 of 1997. As a sui generis model, the University is the first of its kind in the country offering legal education both on its campus and through affiliated law colleges in the state of Tamil Nadu. The entire ten Government Law Colleges stand affiliated to the Tamil Nadu Dr.Ambedkar Law University. The University has established a School of Excellence in Law and Post-Graduate Courses with 10 Departments within the University campus.

About the Chair of Excellence on Consumer Law and Jurisprudence

The Chair of Excellence on Consumer Law and Jurisprudence named after late Shri.A.K.Venkata Subramanian, a former Secretary, Government of India and a Consumer Activist has been functioning since 01-07-2014. It was set up jointly by the Department of Consumer Affairs, Gol and TNDALU.

The objectives of the Chair, among others, are:

- i. To provide for the advancement and dissemination of knowledge of law and their role in the development of better education;
- ii. To promote legal education and well being of the community generally
- iii. To develop in the students and research scholars a sense of responsibility to serve the society in the field of law by developing skills in regard to advocacy, legal services, legislation, law reforms and the like
- iv. To provide access to legal education of large segments of the population and in particular to the disadvantaged groups.
- v. To organize lectures, seminars, symposia and conferences etc.

Theme of Workshop

The Theme announced by the Consumer International (CI) Organisation for the year 2019 is "Trusted Smart Products". According to the Consumer International (CI) Organisation, there are currently 23.1 billion smart products in the world, outnumbering people three to one. From smart phones to wearable fitness trackers, to voice-activated assistants and smart TVs, many of the products we use are increasingly becoming connected by default.

A smart product is a product that connects people with the internet through different communication connections. The network of smart products is otherwise known as Internet of Things (IOT). IoT is a layer of digital intelligence that makes a device smarter than it would be on its own. When connectivity is added to a device, it becomes smart, such as smart watch, smart phone, or a smart refrigerator. These devices are capable of collecting and analysing user data and transmitting it to other connected devices in a network. Smart products offer consumers the promise of convenience, efficiency and personalised services. IoT-connected smart devices such as a phone, car, watch, washing machine, or refrigerator have been a part of our day to day lives. IHS, a Global Data and Information Services Business, reports that by 2030, 125 billion connected devices will be part of our daily lives. India, by the sheer size of its population, will be a major market for these products.

The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 seeks to promote and protect the rights of Consumers such as (a) the right to be protected against the marketing of goods and services which are hazardous to life and property (b) right to be informed about the quality, quantity, potency, purity, standard and price of goods or services so as to protect the consumer against unfair trade practices (c) the right to be assured access to variety of goods and services at competitive prices (d) the right to be heard and to be assured that consumers interests will receive due consideration at appropriate fora (e) the right to seek redressal against unfair trade practices or unscrupulous exploitation of consumers and (f) the right to consumer education.

To what extent will the rights of consumers, mentioned above, be protected in the case of purchases of smart products? It has been reported that a study of the sign-in terms and conditions of 500 popular US websites including Facebook and Google revealed that more than 99% of them were “unreadable”, far exceeding the level most American adults read at, but are still enforced. According to a newspaper published on SSRN (Social Science Research Network), the average readability level of the agreements reviewed by the researchers was comparable to articles in academic journals. One can imagine the situation in India and several other developing countries where literacy levels are much lower.

The three major issues which are likely to confront Indian consumers are:

- i) Security and privacy concerns in the use of smart products.
- ii) Access to smart products.
- iii) A satisfactory redressal mechanism in case of complaints relating to quality, quantity, standard, price etc.

The Consumer Protection Amendment Bill, 2018 had incorporated a proposal to regulate the security issues prevailing over smart products. The definitions included in the Bill such as 'e-commerce' and bringing the scope of online purchasers within the definition of the term 'Consumers' were welcomed by all stakeholders. Unfortunately, the Bill has since lapsed and it is not clear how long it will take for the amendments to become a reality. Till the law is amended, the issues mentioned above will have to be faced by the consumers.

In this background, The Chair of Excellence on Consumer Law and Jurisprudence (CECLJ) of the Tamil Nadu Dr.Ambedkar Law University, Chennai is organizing a One Day Workshop on 'Trusted Smart Products and Challenges faced by Consumers' on 14th March, 2019, on the eve of World Consumer Rights Day, to discuss the key issues raised above.

Academicians, advocates, officials from the concerned Government Departments, consumer related NGO's, research scholars, and students are invited to attend the workshop and share their views on securing consumers' trust in smart products.

There is no registration fee for participation. All are welcome to attend.

Organizing Committee

Thiru. R.SANTHANAM

Honorary Director

Dr. RANJIT OOMMEN ABRAHAM

Project Director

Dr. R.SRINIVASAN

Co-ordinator &
Project Team Leader

Dr. R.HARITHA DEVI

Co-ordinator & Project Manager-I

Thiru. R.KARUPPASAMY

Co-ordinator &
Project Manager-II

Thiru. V.ANANDHA KUMAR

Research Associate
Mobile: +91 86955 54100

*Chair of Excellence on Consumer Law and Jurisprudence,
The Tamil Nadu Dr.Ambedkar Law University, Chennai - 600 028.*

email: consumerchair@gmail.com

Follow us on - https://twitter.com/Consumer_Chair