

Vacancies plague Jharkhand's State Consumer Commission, reveals IJR's Consumer Justice Report 2026

18 March, Ranchi: A first-of-its-kind study, the *Consumer Justice Report 2026: Assessing Capacity of Redressal Commissions in India*, by the India Justice Report (IJR) released today, ranks Jharkhand 18th among the 19 Large and Mid-sized states (with populations of over one crore each). The top rank was secured by Andhra Pradesh followed by Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka and West Bengal comprising the top five states.

Some encouraging trends:

- Jharkhand reported more than 100% case clearance rate (2022-2024)
- Established 24 District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (DCDRC) across all 24 districts

Where improvements can be made:

- No president in the State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (SCDRC) between 2021 and 2025; 75% vacancy among members in 2025.
- No woman among president, members or even staff at the SCDRC in 2025.
- 71% cases pending for more than 3 years in the SCDRC, among the highest in the country.

Among the nine small states (with populations less than one crore each), Meghalaya ranked first, followed by Sikkim and Himachal Pradesh.

Drawing primarily on public data obtained through Right to Information inquiries and parliamentary responses, the study evaluates state performance through the filters of budgets, infrastructure, human resources, workload and diversity to rank how well states have equipped themselves to fulfill the statutory obligations under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

Consumer Commissions Jurisdictions

Based on the 2021 rules¹, each tier has a pecuniary jurisdiction to entertain complaints of a specified monetary value.

- DCDRCs - jurisdiction to entertain complaints where value of the goods or services paid as consideration does not exceed 50 lakh rupees.
- SCDRCs - jurisdiction to entertain complaints where value of the goods or services paid as consideration exceeds 50 lakh rupees but does not exceed 2 crore rupees.
- National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) - jurisdiction to entertain complaints where value of the goods or services paid as consideration exceeds 2 crore rupees.

¹ The Consumer Protection (Jurisdiction of the District Commission, the State Commission and the National Commission) Rules, 2021. Available at: https://consumeraffairs.gov.in/public/upload/files/232278_1732705181.pdf

Among highest share of cases pending for more than 3 years

Section 38(7) of the Consumer Protection Act 2019 stipulates every complaint to be disposed of as *“expeditiously as possible within a period of three months from the date of receipt of notice by opposite party where the complaint does not require analysis or testing of commodities and within five months if it requires analysis or testing of commodities.”* Jharkhand’s state commission reported 71% of its cases pending for over three years, the second most in the cluster of 19 large and mid-sized states after Kerala (79%).

Time Period Analysis of Consumer Cases

Analysis of cases filed and disposed between 2010 and 2024 (15 years) as available on the official portal Confonet² (now e-jagriti) by IJR reveals that

1. Nearly 3000 cases were filed with the Jharkhand SCDRC of which 70% were cleared.
2. In the 15 year period, 80% of filed cases were ‘first appeals’ - a legal remedy available to a party not satisfied with the decision passed by a district commission.
3. Nearly 36% of cases filed with the SCDRC was an insurance complaint followed by the banking sector (15%).
4. Nearly 70% of cases filed in this period took more than a year to dispose of. On average, Jharkhand's SCDRC disposed of cases in 1006 days.

The IJR analysis can be accessed here: <https://ccdash.indiajusticereport.org/>

Staff in SCDRC

As of 2025, the state commission did not have a president and of the sanctioned four members, only one position had been filled. Between 2021 and 2025, vacancies among members have increased from 25% to 75% while the post of the president has consistently remained vacant.

The presence of adequate staff strength is essential to the smooth functioning of an SCDRC. The Bagla Committee Report in 2000 recommended a total of 38 staff positions including 10 peons in a SCDRC. It also said that for every 250 pending cases there should be a 1 assistant and 1 LDC, thereby taking the minimum strength to 40. For SCDRCs, with a pendency of less than 500, a total of 15 staff positions were recommended. Between 2021 and 2025, the Jharkhand SCDRC reported that more than half of the staff positions, at least, were vacant.

² CONFONET was an Online Case Management System administered by the Department of Consumer Affairs to digitise the functioning of the consumer commissions across India, enabling end-to-end digital tracking from case filing to judgment at the district, state, and national levels. To modernise this framework, CONFONET 2.0 was introduced in December 2023. Subsequently, CONFONET has been subsumed into e-Jagriti, launched on 1 January 2025 as a unified platform that integrates CONFONET with other legacy systems to deliver a seamless, citizen-centric ecosystem for faster and transparent consumer justice. It allows advocates to manage cases and hearings, while providing judges secure access to end-to-end digital case files, analytics, and virtual courtrooms to facilitate faster, infrastructure-light adjudication.

Lack of Gender Diversity

The CPA, 2019 mandates that among the members (and/or president) there be at least one woman. In 2024 and 2025, the Jharkhand SCDRC did not have a woman president or member. There has not been any female staff member at the state commission between 2021 and 2025.

The ranking of states is below:

19 Large and mid-sized states:

State	Consumer Justice Rank
Andhra Pradesh	1
Madhya Pradesh	2
Rajasthan	3
Karnataka	4
West Bengal	5
Haryana	6
Tamil Nadu	7
Assam	8
Uttarakhand	9
Uttar Pradesh	10
Maharashtra	11
Kerala	12
Bihar	13
Gujarat	14
Punjab	15
Odisha	16
Chhattisgarh	17
Jharkhand	18
Telangana	19

9 Small states:

State	Consumer Justice Rank
Meghalaya	1
Sikkim	2
Himachal Pradesh	3
Goa	4
Nagaland	5
Mizoram	6
Tripura	7
Arunachal Pradesh	8
Manipur	9

Justice (Retd.) Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India released the report and said, “the will of the Parliament is reflected in a legislation but if the legislation is made non-functional then will is also defeated. The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 was expected to improve consumer protection capacity in the country. But it is concerning to find that more than half the president and member positions in state commissions are vacant and not all districts have formed district commissions. This has persisted despite multiple court orders including during my tenure when we had taken suo motu cognisance of capacity gaps. These significant gaps affect the

consumer protection institutional structure and the access to speedy and effective redressal. Furthermore, it erodes the confidence of consumers in grievance redressal in the consumer commissions”.

Justice (retd.) Madan B Lokur said, "the Consumer Protection Act is a beneficent legislation at the centre of which is the ordinary consumer. The report clearly shows that the system is working at subsistence level, with vacancies as high as 40% in State Commissions. One in three cases is pending over three years. It is time the authorities realise that consumption and economic growth is severely affected by the lack of faith in consumer redressal mechanisms. Forty years after the Consumer Protection legislation Act was enacted the situation is terribly grim. It raises the question: Are these commissions really grievance redressal bodies? "

Maja Daruwala, Editor, India Justice Report, said, “The 2019 consumer protection law is designed to respond to the complexities of the changing marketplace in India and globally. While there are improvements and innovations compared to the previous statute, even the most progressive legislation relies on robust institutional mechanisms. Data accessed through RTI show the gaps and neglect in filling leadership vacancies in commissions which undermines the spirit of the consumer protection mandate and leads to ineffective grievance redressal. We find that in consumer commissions gender diversity is restricted to mere compliance, pendency persists, and mediation is ornamental, eventually weakening the promise of institutional resolution and redress for consumers.”

For further details, please contact:

Valay Singh

India Justice Report (indiajusticereport.org)

E: valaysingh@gmail.com

M: 9717676026

About the India Justice Report:

The India Justice Report (IJR) is a quantitative index that uses the government’s own statistics to rank the capacity of the formal justice system operating in various states. The IJR is a collaborative effort undertaken by DAKSH, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, Common Cause, Centre for Social Justice, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy and TISS-Prayas.

First published in 2019, each biennial report tracks improvements and persisting deficits in each state’s structural and financial capacity to deliver justice based on quantitative measurements of budgets, human resources, infrastructure, workload, and diversity across police, judiciary, prisons, legal aid and Human Rights Commissions for all 36 states and UTs.

Annexure I: Consumer Justice Ranking Indicators

S.No	Ranked indicator	Commission measured	Source	Time period
1	President vacancy	State Commissions	Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 5127, answered on 02.04.2025.	2025
2	Member vacancy	State Commissions	Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 5127, answered on 02.04.2025.	2025
3	President vacancy	District Commissions	Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 5127, answered on 02.04.2025.	2025
4	Member vacancy	District Commissions	Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 5127, answered on 02.04.2025	2025
5	Staff vacancy	State Commissions	RTI	2025
6	Women among president and members	State Commissions	RTI	2024
7	Women share among staff	State Commissions	RTI	2024
8	Case clearance rate	State and District Commissions	Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 4320, answered on 26.03.2025	2020 to 2024
9	Cases pending (%) for more than three years	State Commissions	RTI	2025
10	District commissions as a percentage of districts	District Commissions	Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 4320, answered on 26.03.2025	2025
11	Budget utilisation	State Commissions	RTI	F.Y. 2024-25