

Meghalaya ranked best among small states; Assam ranked 8th: Consumer Justice Report 2026

48% cases were pending for more than three years in Assam SCDRC (2025); Majority of cases in both Assam (50%) and Meghalaya (35%) were filed under the insurance sector.

18 March, Guwahati/Shillong: 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 Meghalaya at the top among nine small sized states (with populations less than one crore each) followed by Sikkim and Himachal Pradesh. Assam, ranked 8th, is the only large/mid-sized state (with populations of over one crore each) among the North Eastern states. Manipur is ranked at the bottom.

Data on consumer commission capacity and workload of all north-eastern states is available in the Consumer Justice Report, 2026 at <https://indiajusticereport.org/>

Some encouraging trends:

- The Meghalaya State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (SCDRC) had a president for all years (2021-2025).
- As of 2025, Assam had appointed 14 staff members for its six sanctioned staff positions.
- As of 2025, all nine staff positions had been filled in the Meghalaya SCDRC.
- Meghalaya's SCDRC and District Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (DCDRCs) cleared more than 136% of the cases (2020 - 2024).
- In 2022 and 2024, the Assam SCDRC and DCDRCs cleared more than 100% of their cases.

Where improvements can be made:

- As of 2025, Assam SCDRC did not have a president and one of its four member positions was vacant.
- Only one woman staff member in Assam's SCDRC.
- As of 2025, 13% of cases in the Meghalaya SCDRC were pending for more than three years.
- All districts in both Assam and Meghalaya did not have district commissions, which is contrary to the legal mandate of one per district.

The study, which draws primarily on public data obtained through Right to Information (RTI) and parliamentary responses, examines the capacity of consumer commissions on their capacity to fulfill the statutory obligations under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019. It ranks states based on a combination of 11 indicators in five themes including budgets, infrastructure, human resources, workload, and gender diversity.

Consumer Commissions Jurisdictions

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

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

- 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 Dispute Redressal Commission (NCDRC) - jurisdiction to entertain complaints where value of the goods or services paid as consideration exceeds 2 crore rupees.

Cases pending for more than three 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.”* Assam reported that 48% of filed cases were pending for over three years, while 13% in Meghalaya had been so for the same duration. In the large and mid-sized cluster, Kerala (79%) had the highest share and in the small sized states, Goa (31%) had the most.

Sectoral Analysis of Consumer Cases

IJR’s 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. Together, 1967 cases were filed in Assam (1800) and Meghalaya (167) SCDRCs, during the 15 years. Assam had cleared 83% of cases while Meghalaya had 18 cases pending.
2. Majority of cases in both Assam (50%) and Meghalaya (35%) were filed under the insurance sector.
3. More than half the disposed cases took more than 365 days in Assam; and 38% disposed cases took at least 11 hearings.

IJR’s consumer dashboard can be accessed here: <https://ccdash.indiajusticereport.org/>

Staff in SCDRC

As of 2025, neither Assam nor Meghalaya SCDRCs had filled both president and member positions. Assam had not filled the president's vacancy and one member position was vacant. Meghalaya had not filled two of its four sanctioned member posts. The Bagla Committee Report in 2000 recommended a total of 38 staff positions including 10 peons in a SCDRC. Both SCDRCs, in 2025, had filled all their staff vacancies.

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.

Gender Diversity

The CPA, 2019 mandates that among the members (and/or president) there be at least one woman. Both Assam and Meghalaya SCDRC did not have a woman president in 2024, but had one woman as member. Between 2021 and 2025, only Assam reported having a woman in president’s post (in 2021).

Assam’s share of women in SCDRC fell from 13% in 2021 to 7% in 2024 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."

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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 |