

PRODUCT SAFETY:

All consumer products must be safe and meet consumer guarantees under the product safety laws. There should be some safety standards. These standards are designed to ensure the safety of products, activities or processes etc.



The Indian consumer has the '**right to be protected against marketing of goods and services which are hazardous to life and property**' (Consumer Protection Act 1986).

Consumer Education and Research Centre undertook '**A Study of the Regulations and Enforcement Practices Regarding Safety of Consumer Products in India**' at the instance of GIZ to analyse the general prevailing rules as well as to understand regulations for different sectors concerning consumer product safety in India.

CERC prepared a report on regulation and enforcement practices regarding safety of consumer products in India. It was approved by GIZ and has been appreciated by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, New Delhi.

Most often consumers are unaware of the lurking danger in many products they buy. The dangers can range from faulty design features such as small parts in toys, to the use of harmful substances in the manufacture of products such as use of mercury in skin lightening creams and bisphenol A (BPA) in plastic water bottles and food containers.

The CERC study covered regulations and enforcement practices regarding safety of consumer products in India, including withdrawal and recall practices, case studies, court judgments and policies. Five product categories were selected by GIZ for the study: **toys, detergents, plastics as storage and food containers, colour paints and cosmetics.**

CERC compared the regulations & standards of European Union, USA and India. They also studied and compared labelling information of detergents, cosmetics, colour paints, and toys.

CERC recommended for labelling of consumer products which require mandatory label. The purpose of labelling is to enhance the safety of the consumers by making available to users valuable information concerning the composition of consumer products.

There are many rules & regulations concerning consumer product safety in India. There are general like the **Sale of Goods Act, 1930, Consumer Protection Act, 1986, Bureau of Indian Standards** and **Import Policy 2012** for safety of the consumer products. To implement the rules there are mechanism enforced by regulatory bodies. These mechanisms are operated through the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

CERC elaborated comparative product testing reports of these consumer products conducted by different organisations in India. These studies were done to understand the harmful constituents of these consumer products and their effects on the consumers. CERC presented the landmark cases related to product safety.

Key recommendations made by CERC were threefold: (1) A specific law dealing with product safety apart from strengthening the role of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) (2) Exemplary penalty provision for unsafe products (3) A time-frame in which all safety related aspects of products should be covered under mandatory certification. Specific recommendations were made for all five product categories.

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