

# THE MONOPOLIES AND RESTRICTIVE TRADE PRACTICES ACT, 1969 :

## POLICY, PROVISIONS AND PERFORMANCE

4.1.1 The MRTP Act, 1969 has its genesis in the Directive Principles of State Policy embodied in the Constitution of India. Clauses (b) and (c) of Article 39 of the Constitution lay down that the State shall direct its policy towards ensuring:

- (i) that the ownership and control of material resources of the community are so distributed as best to sub-serve the common good; and
- (ii) that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment.

### **Provisions Relating to Monopolistic, Restrictive and Unfair Trade Practices**

4.2.1 Section 10 of the MRTP Act, 1969 empowers the MRTP Commission to enquire into monopolistic or restrictive trade practices upon a reference from the Central Government or upon its own knowledge or on information. The MRTP Act, 1969 also provides for appointment of a Director General of Investigation and Registration for making investigations for the purpose of enquiries by the MRTP Commission and for maintenance of register of agreements relating to restrictive trade practices.

4.2.2 The MRTP Commission receives

complaints both from registered consumer and trade associations and also from individuals either directly or through various Government Departments. Complaints regarding Restrictive Trade Practices or Unfair Trade Practices from an association are required to be referred to the Director General of Investigation and Registration for conducting preliminary investigation in terms of Sections 11 and 36C of the MRTP Act, 1969 and Regulation 119 of the MRTP Commission Regulations, 1974. The Commission can also order a preliminary investigation by the Director General of Investigation and Registration when a reference on a restrictive trade practice is received from the Central/ State Government, or when Commission's own knowledge warrants a preliminary investigation. Enquiries are instituted by the Commission under relevant Sections of the MRTP Act, 1969 after the Director General of Investigation and Registration has completed the preliminary investigation and as a result of the findings, submits an application to the Commission for an enquiry.

### **Monopolistic Trade Practices**

4.3.1 Seven enquiries under Section 10(b) were pending with the MRTP Commission at the beginning of the year 2004, while no fresh inquiry was instituted during the period April, 2004- December, 2004. Two enquiries were disposed of during the period and 5 enquiries

were pending as on 31.12.2004.

## **RESTRICTIVE TRADE PRACTICES**

### **Under Section 10(a)(i)**

4.4.1 289 enquiries, including 268 brought forward from the previous year, were considered during January 2004-December 2004. 19 enquiries were disposed of during the said period and the remaining 270 enquiries were pending with the Commission as on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004.

### **Under Section 10(a)(ii)**

4.5.1 Neither any enquiry was brought forward from the previous year nor any enquiry was instituted under this Section during the year.

### **Under Section 10(a)(iii)**

4.6.1 42 enquiries carried forward from the previous year were taken up by the Commission during January 2004 to December 2004. Ten enquiries were disposed of during the period and the remaining 32 were pending with the Commission as on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004.

### **Under Section 10(a)(iv)**

4.7.1 65 enquiries were brought forward from the previous year and 2 fresh enquiry were instituted by the Commission during the year from January 2004 to December 2004. Two enquiries were disposed of during the said period and 65 enquiries were pending with the Commission as on 31<sup>st</sup>December 2004.

## **UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES**

4.8.1 Provisions relating to Unfair Trade Practices were incorporated in the MRTPE

Act,1969 in 1984. Unfair Trade Practices have been defined in Section 36A as trade practices which for the purpose of promoting the sale, use or supply of any goods or for provision of any services, adopt one or more of the practices mentioned therein and thereby cause loss or injury to the consumers of such goods or services, whether by eliminating or restricting competition or otherwise.

### **Under Section 36B(a)**

4.9.1 432 enquiries including 352 enquiries carried forward from the previous year were considered by the Commission during January, 2004 - December 2004. Of these, 34 enquiries were disposed of and the remaining 398 enquiries were pending as on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004.

### **Under Section 36B(b)**

4.10.1 Neither any enquiry under Section 36B (b) of the MRTPE Act , 1984 was initiated nor any enquiry was brought forward during January, 2004- December, 2004.

### **Under Section 36B(c)**

4.11.1 8 enquiries brought forward from the previous year were taken up by the Commission during the period January, 2004 - December 2004. All the 8 enquiries were disposed of during the period.

### **Under Section 36B(d)**

4.12.1 179 enquiries, including 173 brought forward from the previous year, were taken up by the Commission during January,2004 - December 2004. Nine enquiries were disposed of and 170 enquiries were pending with the Commission as on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004.

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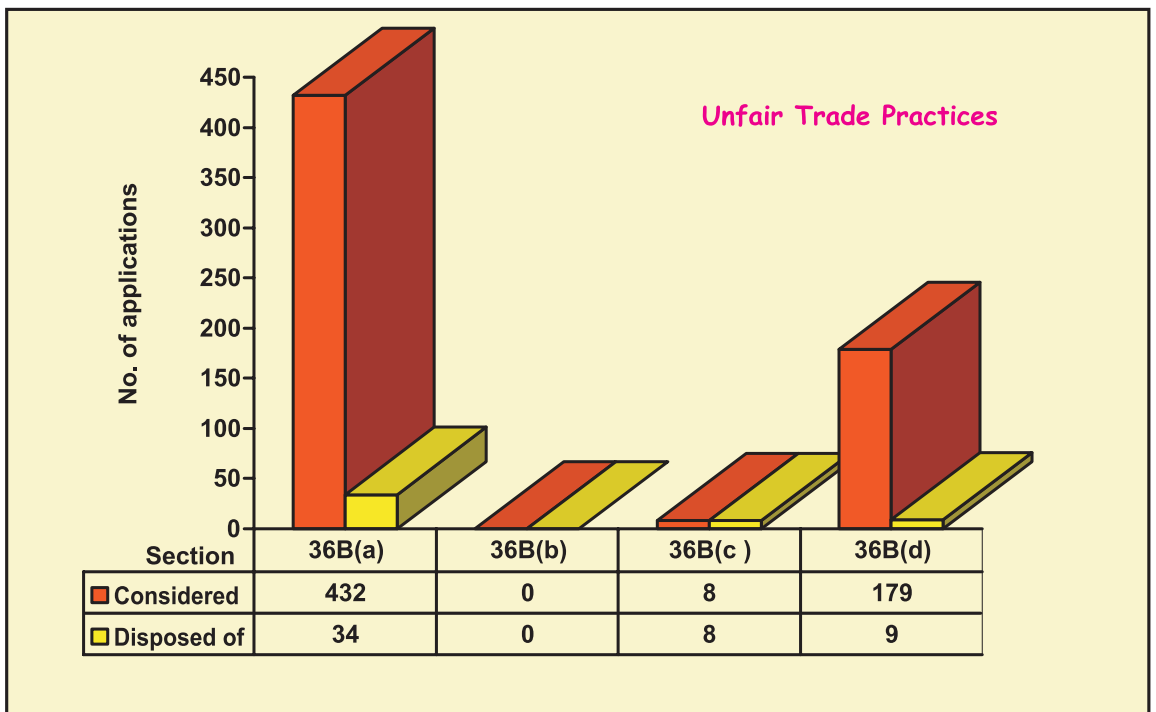
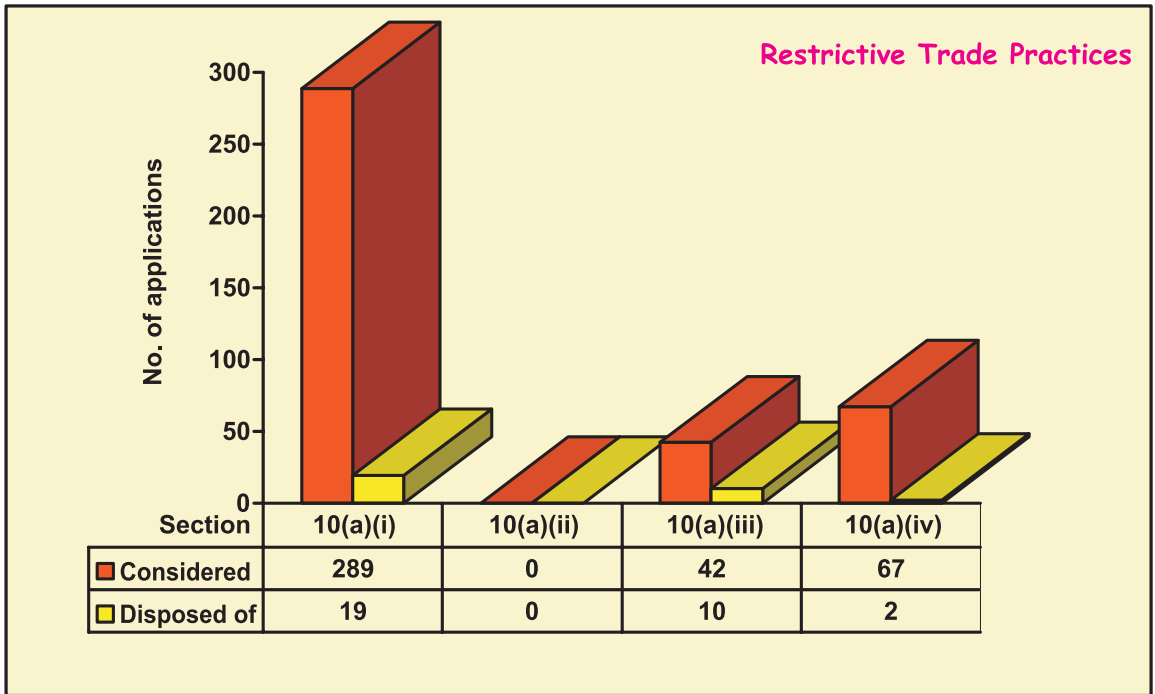
## **Temporary Injunctions**

4.13.1 Besides 91 applications pending under Section 12A with the MRTP Commission as on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2004, 80 applications were received by the Commission during the period April, 2004 -December 2004. Thus out of 171 applications, 54 were disposed of during this period. Remaining 117 applications under Section 12A were pending with the Commission as on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004.

## **Award of Compensation**

4.14.1 During the period April,2004 - December 2004, 1231 applications under Section 12B including 1160 applications brought forward from the previous year were considered by the Commission. Of these, 67 applications were disposed of by the Commission during the period and the remaining 1164 applications were pending as on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2004.

Enquiries considered and disposed of by MRTP Commission as on 31.12.2004



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## **Registration of Agreements**

4.15.1 Section 35 of the MRTP Act, 1969 requires every agreement relating to Restrictive Trade Practices falling within one or more of the categories enumerated in Section 33(1) of the Act to be furnished for registration within 60 days of the making of such agreement.

4.15.2 In pursuance of this provision, during the period April, 2004 to December 2004, 17 agreements were received for registration. The same were registered and entered in the Register of Agreements.

4.15.3 A total number of 39,982 agreements were filed up to the end of 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2004, by various undertakings. Out of these, particulars of 39,115 agreements were entered in the Register of Agreements.

## **INVESTIGATION BY DIRECTOR GENERAL (INVESTIGATION & REGISTRATION)**

### **Investigation**

4.16.1 The Director General is required to conduct preliminary investigation in respect of restrictive, monopolistic and unfair trade practices as and when an order of preliminary investigation is received from the MRTP Commission. As on 1.4.2004, no investigation was in progress. During the period from 1.4.2004 to 31.12.2004, one fresh order of preliminary investigation report was received which was pending at the end of the year. Besides, the Director General has suo motto powers to initiate preliminary investigations into monopolistic, restrictive and unfair trade practices, and in case any of these trade practices are detected during such investigation, the Director General is empowered to file applications under Sections

10(a)(iii) and 36 B (c) of the Act for initiation of enquiry proceedings by the MRTP Commission. As a result of such suo motto investigations, 1 application each under Section 10(a)(iii) and 36 B(c) of the Act, was filed from April, 2004 to December, 2004.

## **Consumer Protection**

4.17.1 Of late, consumer protection movement has been sweeping across the whole country. The consumers have been organising themselves into Consumer Bodies all over the country to safe-guard the public and consumers' interest against unfair trade practices being indulged in by parties through misleading advertisements, bargain-sales, organisation of sale promotion contests, marketing goods which do not conform to standard of safety etc. An independent Chapter regarding unfair trade practices was inserted in the MRTP Act in 1984 and the consumers are taking full benefit of the provisions contained in this Chapter by filing complaints in this office. Facility of speedy redressal of their grievances is provided by this office. During the period April, 2004 to December, 2004, this office has handled as many as 111 complaints received from consumers or consumer organisations. Of these, 93 complaints were disposed of during the period and 18 complaints were pending as on 31.12.04.

## **CARRIAGE OF PROCEEDINGS**

### **I. Before the Commission**

4.18.1 The Director General is the custodian of public interest in the enquiry proceedings before the Commission and he has to appear in person or through his counsel to safeguard the public interest before the Commission. As on 31.12.04, 143 enquiries were pending before the MRTP Commission.

**II. Before the Supreme Court/ High Courts**

pending before the Supreme Court/ High Courts is given in Table 4.1.

4.19.1 The position of appeals filed and

**Table 4.1**

Appeals filed and pending before the Supreme Court/ High Courts

	Pending as on 1.4.2004	Filed during 1.4.2004 to 31.12.2004	Disposed of during 1.4.2004 to 31.12.2004	Pending as on 31.12.2004
Appeals before the Supreme Court	69	1	0	70
Writs in different High Courts	81	2	2	81

4.19.2 The Director General has been appearing the required Appeals/ Writ Petitions before the Supreme Court and High Courts

through the counsels appointed by the Central Agency Section of the Ministry of Law, Department of Legal Affairs.