CENTRAL CONSUMER PROTECTION AUTHORITY
Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi - 110001
Case No. CCPA- 2/22/2026-CCPA

In the matter of Lite Bite Foods Pvt. Ltd. regarding levying of service charge, violation of Consumer Rights, Misleading Advertisement, and Unfair Trade Practices

CORAM:
Ms. Nidhi Khare, Chief Commissioner
Mr. Anupam Mishra, Commissioner

Appearance on behalf of Lite Bite Foods Pvt. Ltd.:
Mr. Sukhpreet Singh (General Manager- Legal)
Mr. Neerav Bhatnagar (Operations & Audit)

Date: 10.11.2026

ORDER

1. The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has taken cognizance against Lite Bite Foods Pvt. Ltd (hereinafter referred to as "Opposite Party") based on eight grievances registered on National Consumer Helpline (NCH) from 28th March, 2025 to 31st January, 2026 indicating mandatory imposition of service charge on the bill. The consumers primarily alleged as follows:
    a. Refusal to remove service charge when payment is done through third party App such as Zomato.
    b. Imposition of service charge in the guise of 'Staff contribution' and refusal to remove upon consumer's request.

    The Consumers in support of their grievances had attached the bill which is listed in Annexure-1.

2. It is pertinent to mention that vide judgement dated 28th March, 2025 the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in **National Restaurant Association of India & Ors. v. Union of India & Anr.** had held that: *"All restaurant establishments would have to adhere to the guidelines passed by the CCPA. If there is any violation of the same, action would be liable to be taken in accordance with law. CCPA is free to enforce its guidelines in accordance with law."* Further the Hon'ble High Court had upheld the applicability of the CCPA guidelines which is in the interest of consumers and declaring the levy of any mandatory service charge as contrary to law and violates the guidelines.

3. The CCPA in exercise of power conferred under Section 18(2) and Section 19 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 (the Act, 2019) conducted a preliminary inquiry to examine the veracity of the claim made against the Opposite Party.

4. In the preliminary inquiry, CCPA prima facie found, that the Opposite Party had levied service charge in the guise of 'Staff contribution' on the bill despite the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi upholding the Guidelines to Prevent Unfair Trade Practices and Protection of Consumer Interest with regard to levy of service charge in Hotels and Restaurants, 2022 issued by CCPA (hereinafter referred to as Guidelines, 2022). Considering that the bill is software generated, the practice adopted by the Opposite Party might have impacted a wider base of consumers visiting the Opposite Party thereby making it a fit case for class action as envisaged in section 10 of Consumer Protection Act 2019.

5. Based on the preliminary inquiry findings, CCPA directed the Opposite Party to furnish their response vide Notice dated 25th January, 2026 as to why action should not be initiated against them for continued non-compliance of the Guidelines, 2022 passed by CCPA and provisions of the Act, 2019 as well as to refund the consumers listed in the notice.

6. In response to the said notice, on 06th March, 2026 the Opposite Party submitted its reply which is as follows:

    a. It is a company operating in food and beverage industry, running hundreds of restaurants in India and also have presence abroad under various trade names. The Opposite Party operates some of the leading restaurant chains in India and more prominently recognised with its various known restaurants and food outlets operating under different brand names, most prominent of which is "Punjab Grill" (operating since 2001).

    b. It is an ethical organization and thereby make it a point to honour all the applicable legal compliances, whether in the same segment of activities or other areas of business.

    c. That in order to maintain its ethical commitment and obligation, the Opposite Party do carry out staff training activities and circulate all legal and industry related developments, within the organization from time to time, in order to ensure that the same are duly complied with and incorporated in the organization function.

    d. The Opposite Party submitted that it strictly adheres to applicable legal guidelines and does not levy a service charge in any form unless the same has been accepted by the customer. It was further contended that the establishment

promptly acts upon and accommodates any customer requests seeking the removal or waiver of the charge.

e. Having stated the above, the Opposite Party would like to inform that as per records available with us, it had already refunded or removed the respective Service Charge, wherever requested or informed by the Customers.

f. It is once again reiterated that being a responsible organisation, operating in the hospitality industry, the main moto is to act towards enhancing customer experience and compliance with law.

7. Upon examination of the response of the Restaurant, CCPA observed that the Opposite Party is misleading consumers by levying service charge in the guise of staff contribution and GST on the total bill causing additional financial distress to the consumers. Moreover, the Opposite Party was silent on levying service charge when payment is done through third party app placing the onus on the consumers to opt out of an automatically levied service charge contradicts the CCPA's Guidelines of 2022, which mandates that no hotel or restaurant shall add service charge automatically or by default in the bill. Also, while the Opposite Party broadly asserted that it had "already refunded or removed the respective Service Charge, wherever requested" and offered to resolve the grievances listed in the Annexure to the notice, it failed to place on record any refund vouchers, bank transfer receipts, consumer acknowledgments, or certified Point of Sale (POS) software configuration, thereby continuining to charge service charge in the guiseof 'Staff Contribution', impacting a class of consumers, as envisaged under Section 10 of the Act.

8. In light of the above observations, CCPA was satisfied that a a prima facie of violation of consumer rights, misleading advertisement and unfair trade practice was made out against the restaurant. Accordingly, CCPA vide letter dated 20th March, 2026 directed Director General (Investigation) to conduct a detailed investigation.

9. The Director General (Investigation) submitted the Investigation Report dated 12th June, 2026. The findings in the Investigation report are as under:

a. During the investigation, it was observed that despite the Guidelines, 2022 and Judgement of Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in **National Restaurant Association of India & Ors. v. Union of India & Anr.**, the Opposite Party levied service charge on the customer's bill without prior consent, thereby contravening their directions.

b. It was observed that merely printing a disclaimer regarding service charge at the bottom of the Restaurant's invoice and the food menu in a small font does not discharge its obligation under the CCPA Guidelines to clearly inform

consumers that payment of service charge is voluntary and cannot be imposed by default. In certain cases, even such disclaimer is absent from the food invoice altogether. The burden cannot be placed upon consumers to specifically request removal of the service charge. Rather, it is incumbent upon the Restaurant and its staff to proactively inform consumers of the voluntary nature of the service charge and refrain from levying it by default.

c. In ordinary practice, consumers may not notice disclaimers printed in small font on menus or invoices. The practice of relying solely upon such disclosures is therefore insufficient to establish informed consent. Such conduct defeats the very purpose of the CCPA Guidelines and adversely affects consumer rights and interests.

d. The restaurant states that it follows a uniform practice across all modes, including bookings made through third party platforms, however, in actual implementation no clear or specific disclosure was made to consumers at the time of placing the order through such platforms regarding the levy of any service charge or staff contribution charge. The information displayed to consumers primarily consisted of the food value, applicable discounts, taxes, and the final payable amount. The automatic addition of service charge to the bill, without obtaining the express and informed consent of the consumer, is contrary to the CCPA Guidelines and the judgment.

e. The investigation revealed the Restaurant's willingness to provide refund of the service charge to the customers referred to in the SCN. However, the Restaurant failed to furnish any documentary evidence, transaction records to establish that such refunds were actually processed and credited to the concerned consumers, Mere assertions regarding willingness to refund cannot absolve the Restaurant of liability arising from the improper levy and collection of service charge during the relevant period.

f. In view of the above, Lite Bite Foods Pvt. Ltd. is in violation of Sections 2(9) and 2(47) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, as it has levied service charge without the consumer's consent. This practice raises regulatory concerns and constitutes an unfair trade practice that undermines consumer rights and autonomy.

g. Further, the Restaurant is in violation of the CCPA Guidelines to prevent unfair trade practices and protection of Consumer Interest with regard to levy of service charge in hotels and restaurants.

10. Thereafter, the Investigation Report submitted by DG (Investigation) was shared with the Restaurant vide letter dated 25th June, 2026 to furnish its comments and an opportunity of hearing was also provided to the Restaurant on 21st July, 2026 under Section 20 and 21 of the Act, 2019 before passing an order.

11. Further, hearing was held on 21st July, 2026 wherein Mr. Sukhpreet Singh (Head of Legal Affairs) & Mr. Neerav Bhatnagar (Operations & Audit) represented Lite Bite Foods Pvt. Ltd., and they submitted that:

    a. The Opposite Party formally acknowledged receipt of the Investigation Report and needs time to examine its contents.

    b. The Opposite Party sought an adjournment of proceedings, submitting that time was required to obtain instructions from the senior management on account of an internal corporate restructuring and reshuffling of the Board of Directors,

    c. The Opposite Party placed on record the nationwide expanse of its hospitality footprint, explicitly admitting to operating approximately sixty (60) "Punjab Grill" outlets and thirty (30) "YouMee" outlets across India, alongside its other restaurant brands.

12. In furtherance of the hearing, vide email dated 29th July 2026, CCPA forwarded the 28 grievances registered on National Consumer Helpline (NCH) till June, 2026 to the Opposite Party for their necessary action.

13. Subsequent to the oral hearing convened on 21st July 2026, the Opposite Party vide email dated 03rd August, 2026 submitted a formal compliance submitting that:

    a. The Opposite Party placed on record that it permanently discontinued the collection and levy of service charges across all its brand portfolios and dining outlets nationwide with effect from 1st August 2026.

    b. The service charge component has been completely removed from all our Point of Sale (POS) software, billing software, and digital systems (including digital menus, online ordering platforms, and aggregators).

    c. Consequently, no invoice generated at any of the establishments reflects or includes any service charge component.

    d. Lite Bite Foods Private Limited remains fully committed to maintaining absolute transparency and adhering strictly to consumer protection guidelines and directions issued by the CCPA.

14. Based on the above oral and written submissions CCPA observed that while the Opposite Party claimed prospective cessation from 1st August 2026, its communication dated 3rd August 2026 remained completely silent on the actual redressal of grievances forwarded by the CCPA. The Opposite Party failed to place on record any bank receipts, transaction UTR numbers, or customer refund vouchers establishing that the disputed amounts had, in fact, been refunded to the consumers whose complaints were forwarded on 29th July 2026. Furthermore, fresh grievances logged on the National Consumer Helpline for the months of July and August 2026 indicated continuous automated levies during the intervening period. Consequently, to verify software deletion across its extensive national footprint of over 90 outlets, ascertain the status of consumer refunds, confront the establishment with fresh complaints, and afford it a fair opportunity on the determination of penalty under Section 21 of the Act, the CCPA deemed it expedient to convene a further hearing on 12th October 2026.

15. The hearing was duly held on 12th October, 2026, wherein Mr. Sukhpreet Singh, who represented the Opposite Party, submitted that

    a. Pursuant to its earlier communication dated 3rd August 2026, it had permanently discontinued the levy of service charges across all its brand portfolios and dining outlets nationwide with effect from 1st August 2026.

    b. The Opposite Party further submitted that the service charge component had been deleted from all billing software, Point of Sale (POS) terminals, printed menus, and third-party digital aggregator platforms.

    c. While the representative contended that the operations team had processed refunds to the consumers upon receipt of grievances.

16. But the Opposite Party failed to place on record before CCPA any documentary evidence asserting that the disputed service charge had been refunded to the complainant/s. Consequently, during the hearing, CCPA directed the Opposite party to submit these records.

17. Before delving into the specifics of the case, it is pertinent to examine the relevant legal framework that governs such transactions.

    a. Section 2(9) (ii) and (v) of the Act, 2019 includes- "the right to be informed about the quality, quantity, potency, purity, standard and price of goods, products or services, as the case may be, so as to protect the consumer against unfair trade practices" and "the right to seek redressal against unfair trade practices or restrictive trade practices or unscrupulous exploitation of consumers."

b. From the bare reading of Section 2 (28) of the Act, 2019 it can clearly be concluded that when a restaurant displays a menu with specific prices, a component of service is inherent in the price of food and beverages offered by the restaurant, about which the consumer is duly informed. Pricing of the product thus covers both the goods and services component. However, if a mandatory service charge is added later, it conveys an express or implied representation that the restaurant, a service provider had deliberately concealed the actual price of the food and service thereof, constituting an unfair trade practice.

c. Section 2 (46) "unfair contract" means a contract between a manufacturer or trader or service provider on one hand, and a consumer on the other, having such terms which cause significant change in the rights of such consumer, and imposing on the consumer any unreasonable charge, obligation or condition which puts such consumer to disadvantage;

d. Furthermore, Section- 2(47) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 defines "Unfair Trade Practice" which includes deceptive or unethical methods used to promote the sale of goods, use or supply of any goods or provision of services.

e. CCPA had issued *Guidelines to Prevent Unfair Trade Practices and Protection of Consumer Interest with Regard to Levy of Service Charge in Hotels and Restaurants*, on 4th July, 2022. The extracts of which are given below:

> *"3. Service charge is being levied in addition to the total price of the food items mentioned in the menu and applicable taxes, often in the guise of some other fee or charge.*
>
> *4. It may be mentioned that a component of service is inherent in price of food and beverages offered by the restaurant or hotel. Pricing of the product thus covers both the goods and services component. There is no restriction on hotels or restaurants to set the prices at which they want to offer food or beverages to consumers. Thus, placing an order involves consent to pay the prices of food items displayed in the menu along with applicable taxes. Charging anything other than the said amount would amount to unfair trade practice under the Act.*
>
> *7. Therefore, to prevent unfair trade practices and protect consumer interest with regard to levying of service charge, the CCPA issues the following guidelines –*

(i) No hotel or restaurant shall add service charge automatically or by default in the bill.

(ii) Service charge shall not be collected from consumers by any other name.

(iii) No hotel or restaurant shall force a consumer to pay service charge and shall clearly inform the consumer that service charge is voluntary, optional and at consumer's discretion.

(iv) No restriction on entry or provision of services based on collection of service charge shall be imposed on consumers.

(v) Service charge shall not be collected by adding it along with the food bill and levying GST on the total amount."

f. The Hon'ble High Court of Delhi [***National Restaurant Association of India & Ors. Vs Union of India & Anr.]*** passed the Judgment on 28th March, 2025 held in favor of CCPA wherein the Court held the following:

i. *Service charge or TIP as is colloquially referred, is a voluntary payment by the customer. It cannot be compulsory or mandatory. The practice undertaken by the restaurant establishments of collecting service charge that too on a mandatory basis, in a coercive manner, would be contrary to consumer interest and is violative of consumer rights.*

ii. *The collection of service charge and use of different terminologies for the said charge is misleading and deceptive in nature. The same constitutes an unfair trade practice under Section 2(47) of the CPA, 2019.*

iii. *The guidelines framed by the CCPA are thus valid and are in the interest of the consumers and the same are upheld.*

iv. *While this Court holds that the mandatory collection of service charge is contrary to law and violates the guidelines, it is also of the opinion that if consumers wish to pay any voluntary Tip for services which they had enjoyed, the same would obviously not be barred. The amount however, ought not to be added by default in the bill/invoice and should be left to the customer's discretion.*

v. *All restaurant establishments would have to adhere to the guidelines passed by the CCPA. If there is any violation of the same, action would*

be liable to be taken in accordance with law. CCPA is free to enforce its guidelines in accordance with law.

18. The CCPA is empowered under Section 20 and 21 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 to issue directions to modify the advertisement or discontinue such advertisement and practices, if necessary, it may, by order, impose a penalty which may extend to ten lakh rupees and for every subsequent contravention may extend to fifty lakh rupees. Further, Section 21 (7) of the above Act, 2019 prescribes that following may be regarded while determining the penalty:

    i. the population and the area impacted or affected by such offence;

    ii. the frequency and duration of such offence;

    iii. the vulnerability of the class of persons likely to be adversely affected by such offence;

    iv. the gross revenue from the sales effected by virtue of such offence

19. In light of the above provisions and consideration of the investigation report of DG Investigation (CCPA) along with the submissions of the Restaurant, CCPA arrives at the following findings:

    (a) Clause 7(i) of the Guidelines explicitly prohibits any hotel or restaurant from adding a service charge automatically or by default to the bill. The Opposite Party's repeated defense that it removed the charge *"wherever requested or informed by the Customers"* constitutes an admission of an unlawful "opt-out" mechanism. This practice shifts the burden onto consumers to actively dispute the charge at the billing counter, thereby subjecting them to social pressure to comply and imposing an additional financial burden, which amounts to an unfair trade practice. Merely adding service charge automatically on the menu card or on the bill does not cure the underlying compulsion as both the CCPA Guidelines and established judicial precedent of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi, affirm that any automatic or default addition of such charges to the food bill is void from the beginning. Moreover, it subverts genuine voluntariness, negates free, prior, and informed consent, and violates consumer rights under Section 2(9)(ii) of the Act, 2019.

    (b) Despite repeated directions issued by the CCPA during the proceedings on 21st July 2026 and 12th October 2026, the Opposite Party failed to furnish verifiable documentary proof, such as consumer acknowledgments confirming that the refunds were credited. Having been accorded ample opportunity to substantiate

its claims, the Opposite Party's failure to bring conclusive evidence of refund on record leaves its assertions wholly unsubstantiated.

(c) The CCPA held that the restaurant's revised billing description of substituting the term "Service Charge" with "Staff contribution," is legally untenable. Pursuant to Paragraph 7(ii) of the Guidelines, *"Service charge shall not be collected from consumers by any other name"*. Consequently, the restaurant's billing format indicates that the charge remains embedded within the billing software by default. This automatic inclusion creates an opt-out mechanism rather than an opt-in requirement, thereby giving consumers the impression that the levy is mandatory and shifting the burden onto them to actively contest the charge at the billing counter. The amount however, ought not to be added by default in the bill/invoice and should be left to the customer's discretion as service charge or TIP is a voluntary payment by the consumer.

(d) As recognized during the proceedings in National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI) v. Union of India (W.P. (C) No. 10683/2022), a restaurant possesses absolute autonomy to determine its menu prices, which inherently subsume overheads, ambiance, and service. Placing an order by seeing the prices mentioned in the menu card concludes consumer consents strictly to pay the declared menu tariff plus applicable statutory government taxes. Consequently, the compulsory levy of a service charge constitutes an unfair trade practice and directly violates Section 2(28) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, as it conceals the true cost of food and service at the pre-transaction stage, misleading consumers as to the actual cost of dining out.

(e) As concluded by the DG (Investigation), printing fine-print disclaimers at the bottom of food menus or invoices does not satisfy the legal requirement to affirmatively obtain prior informed consent. In several instances, even such nominal disclaimers were entirely absent. Furthermore, during transactions settled through third-party platforms (e.g., Zomato, Swiggy), the pre-billing interface reflected only food values, discounts, and taxes, while the final POS invoice generated at the outlet embedded the service charge/staff contribution. Conspicuously concealing the levy at the ordering stage while executing an automated levy at billing violates the Guidelines laid down by CCPA.

(f) Service charge or TIP as is colloquially referred, is a voluntary payment by the customer. It cannot be compulsory or mandatory. The practice undertaken by the restaurant establishments of collecting service charge that too by default on bill, is contrary to consumer interest and violative of consumer rights. Moreover,

the collection of service charge and use of different terminologies for the said charge is misleading and deceptive in nature. The same constitutes an unfair trade practice under Section 2(47) of the CPA, 2019.

(g) The facts and evidences in this case clearly established that the service charge was mandatorily levied on all consumers till 01st October, 2026, which is in contravention of the CCPA Guidelines, 2022 upheld by the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi dated 28th March, 2025.

(h) Hence, the Restaurant is in violation of the following provisions of Consumer Protection Act 2019:

(i) Consumer rights under section 2(9) (ii) of the Act, 2019.

(ii) Consumer rights under section 2(9) (v) of the Act, 2019.

(iii) Misleading advertisement under Section 2(28) (i) and (iii) of the Act, 2019.

(iv) Engaging in Unfair Trade Practice as defined in section 2(47) of Act, 2019 read with section 2(46) (vi) of Act, 2019;

(v) Guidelines to Prevent Unfair Trade Practices and Protection of Consumer Interest with Regard to Levy of Service Charge in Hotels and Restaurants, on 4th July, 2022.

20. Having regard to the findings, it is concluded that the mechanism of "opt-out" rather than "opt-in" fundamentally vitiates consumers' free consent. According to the Guidelines, 2022, no hotel or restaurant shall add a service charge automatically or by default to the bill, and shifting the burden onto the consumer to identify, contest, and demand the removal of the levy at the time of payment undermines true voluntariness of the consumer. It is pertinent to observe that, as per the restaurant's own submission, it initiated the complete cessation of the service charge only with effect from 1st August 2026 i.e., following the CCPA taking cognizance of the present matter. Notably, the CCPA Guidelines were notified in 2022 and subsequently upheld by the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi on 28th March 2025. Despite the judicial reaffirmation and receipt of notice from the CCPA, the opposite party persisted in levying the service charge for an extended period of at least Eighteen (18) months. The systemic levy was executed across more than 90 outlets spanning across India (including Delhi NCR, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Punjab), impacting hundreds of thousands of consumers. Such deliberate, continuous imposition has caused widespread prejudice to consumers as a class, thereby squarely attracting the penal/remedial provisions under Section 21(7) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

21. In light of the above CCPA issues the following directions:

a. The Restaurant shall discontinue and refrain from levying or collecting any service charge automatically or by default, or under any other name, and shall ensure strict compliance with the Guidelines to Prevent Unfair Trade Practices and Protection of Consumer Interest with Regard to Levy of Service Charge in Hotels and Restaurants dated 04.07.2022.

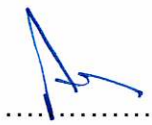
b. The Opposite Party shall immediately resolve all pending consumer grievances received directly or routed through the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) pertaining to the unauthorized collection of 'Staff Contribution' / Service Charge, by issuing full and unconditional refunds to all affected consumers, the comprehensive list is annexed herewith as Annexure-A.

c. Considering the established violations and applying the statutory factors under Section 21(7) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, the Restaurant is directed to pay a penalty of ₹1,00,000/- only.

The Restaurant shall submit a compliance report of the above-mentioned directions to the CCPA within 15 days from the receipt of this order.



Nidhi Khare
Chief Commissioner



Anupam Mishra
Commissioner

8533309	17-01-2026 11:50	Sumeet Narula	9810166000	DELHI	New Delhi	Service Charges	I was charged service tax 10% disguised as staff contribution	Youmee by Lite bite foods Pvt ltd
8668585	08-02-2026 19:40	Iris Simon	9920353585	Maharashtra	Thane	Service Charges	Staff contribution of 613.80 has been charged in the bill.	Punjab Grill
8696878	13-02-2026 11:41	shailaja Renuka Prasad	9845095769	Karnataka	Bangalore	Service Charges	Our family had been to Youmee, Forum mall, Konankunte cross, Bnagalore on 8th feb 2026. we had food and we asked for the bill. Usually i check for service charge as i dont pay it. there was no service charge charged hence i paid the bill. When i came out and once again looked at the bill, a line caught my attention. that was "Staff contribution". This is cheating. resturants are charging service charge in different names with out customer consent. this is not right. Now a days every one looks for service charge and ask the resturants to remove it. so now they are hiding it in different names. i felt decieved. i need action for this act of the restuarant	Lite bite food private limited
8744270	20-02-2026 18:37	Kaushal S	9811975561	Delhi	Delhi	Service Charges	I have been billed with service charge on my dining bill by Punjab grill restaurant located at DLF Cyber hub, Gurugram, NCR. It was levied as staff contribution of 10% of the total bill amount. Bill amount 1167Rs. Service charge amount is 101 Rs. I acn provide the copy of the bill.	Punjab Grill Lite Bite Foods Pvt. Ltd.
8754508	22-02-2026 15:24	Vevik prakash	9990333494	Uttar Pradesh	NOIDA	Service Charges	Restaurant Name:- lite bite foods private limited (Punjabi Grill) Email id - Later Update . Address of the Restaurant - Noida sector 63 Date of Visit-: 14/02/2026 Bill/Invoice Number:- TI--37198/L / T1--37198 Amount Paid - 5186 Problems Details - Customer has taken the dinner from the company and he wants that he should get the refund from the company as early as possible. And he wants that his amount should be refunded as early as possible. Expectation - Customer wants that his amount should be refunded as early as possible.	lite bite foods private limited (Punjabi Grill)
8762759	23-02-2026 21:01	Munesh Kaushik	9810308835	Delhi	New Delhi	Service Charges	Staff Contribution Charges of Rs. 564/- and Normal Water disguised as Mineral Water for Rs. 735/- was charges without our knowledge. when we complained to the Manager who didnt relveal his name refused to address the problem.	Punjab Grill
8769398	25-02-2026 11:37	Paramveer Singh	7986363787	Punjab	Mohali	Service Charges	The Restaurant automatically included a service charge under the same of "Staff Contribution" which was about 300-350 rupees and they even charged 18% GST over it. On inquiring if this was service tax, the staff member replied that it was "optional". Yet it was automatically added to my bill without my prior knowledge.	LITE BITE FOODS PVT. LTD.
8773920	25-02-2026 21:02	Ashish Tandon	7709560862	Karnataka	Bangalore	Service Charges	Charging Service charge as Staff Contribution Charges by default in the bill for all consumers.This is violating consumer rights as these should not be charged up front and should be added only if customer wants.Request you to find the restaurant for violating the consumer act 2019.Please fine as deemed necessary.This is even after informing their staff that this is illegal.	Lite Bite Foods Pvt. Ltd

8794350	28-02-2026 22:20	Chavi Suchandra	8383092319	Haryana	Gurgaon	Service Charges	They gave bill which already included service charge of 247 rupees. Restaurants in India cannot automatically or compulsorily add a service charge to bill. According to updated guidelines from the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) and a landmark Delhi High Court ruling in March 2025, adding a service charge by default is considered an unfair trade practice. Before these guidelines were updated, whenever I would tell restaurant to remove the service charge, they would make so much faces, or become aggressive, or try to convince me to not remove it. It's lot of ordeal to deal with such people. It is better that service charge not be added to bill.	YOUMEE
8799640	01-03-2026 19:55	Harithaa Magesh	8012577877	Karnataka	Bangalore	Service Charges	I was been asked to pay service charge by default which was not legally allowed. When I asked them the reason they were saying that the restaurant is in the process to remove it but still not removed.	Lite Bite Foods Pvt. Ltd.
8816313	04-03-2026 22:30	Kailash Jobanputra	9987543516	Maharashtra	Thane	Service Charges	Illegal Service charges in the name of staff contribution. Bill of 890, they charges 10% as Staff Contribution	Punjab Grill, LITE BITE FOODS PVT LTD
8818559	05-03-2026 11:51	Komal Agarwal	7073155750	Delhi	New Delhi	Service Charges	Hotel/Restaurant Name:- punjab grill defence colony Address of the Hotel/Restaurant - 2nd floor bulding 16 block d defence colony new delhi Date of Visit-: 03-03-2026 Bill/Invoice Number:- T1--45466 Amount Paid - 3367/- Problems Details - consumer stated that he went to a restaurant and was charged a service charge along with the food bill. Expectation -" consumer wants to have any service charges refunded to him as soon as possible.	punjab grill defence colony
8864134	11-03-2026 13:48	Rishabh Kumar Singh	9315429937	Delhi	New Delhi	Service Charges	The service charge has been added by default. However, I do not intend for them to be fined. I would only request that they be given a warning and proper guidance to ensure that service charges are not added automatically to the bill in the future.	Punjab Grill
8943992	22-03-2026 23:40	nivedita patil	9867881678	Maharashtra	Mumbai Suburban	Service Charges	10% of total bill amount charged extra as staff contribution	Punjab Grill
8996895	29-03-2026 23:12	jitendra Kumar Shandilya	7087089600	Delhi	New Delhi	Service Charges	I had food in Punjab grill restaurant on 24 march 2026. I paid bill as produced and later I saw that I have been levied Staff Contribution (Service Charges) on food bill, without my consent which wat INR 70.50 (food bill was INR 705.00). On top of it they computed tax on total bill (including Service Charges. I am attaching receipt for the same.	Punjab Grill
9079632	10-04-2026 16:14	Sathiyanarayanan	9677256551	Tamil Nadu	Chennai	Service Charges	Punjab grill wrongly charged me a service tax labeled as an “employee contribution,” and when I requested a refund, the staff refused—claiming I should have informed them before the bill settlement .	Punjab grill

9144471	19-04-2026 22:14	Nabaghana Dalei	9310052776	Delhi	Central	Service Charges	I am taken dinner on Dt 19 April 26 , paid total bill of amount of Rs 4481/- where there is extra amount included of Rs 388/- which was 10 % of basic total bill amount of 3880/- named as staff contribution without my consent , after bill paid I got noticed and asked to refund the amount but he mis behave me and told , we could not refund you in cash of 388/- only , and said Mr. Sanjay who is present as restaurant Manager in the CP New Delhi , So , what happened to our country , openly looting People in this type and they print it to on the invoice , is this growing India , what common people expected from the govt , and the such related controlling body , very sad and I am so dis respected ,	Punjabi Grils
9180239	25-04-2026 08:16	Vrunda bhatt	9100371561	Telangana	Hyderabad	Service Charges	They are charging the service fee as the staff contribution and directly adding it to the bill	Lite Bite Foods Pvt Ltd YOUMEE
9190260	26-04-2026 15:48	Tushant Mahajan	8810556866	Delhi	New Delhi	Service Charges	"Hotel/Restaurant Name:- you mee Address of the Hotel/Restaurant -unity -1 elegant mall pritambh pura , delhi, 110034 Date of Visit-: 26/04/2026 Bill/Invoice Number:- t2/5357 Amount Paid - 2050/- restaurant email id - update later Problems Details - consumer concern. The individual visited a restaurant where the bill provided to them included an added service charge. They lodged a complaint regarding this matter but received neither a response nor a resolution. Expectation - consumer seeks a refund of the service charge collected from them and wants that, no service charges be levied on any customer. -	you mee
9220523	01-05-2026 10:07	Ananya N	9036008823	Karnataka	Bangalore	Service Charges	Hello, I want to file a complaint against YOU MEE located at Bharathiya Mall, Bengaluru. Despite the CCPA guidelines, the restaurant added a mandatory service charge of Rs. 192, and Rs. 286.5 to my bills- T1--47874 and T1--61202 on 11-08-2025 and 18-12-2025, respectively I have attached photos of the bills for your reference. Please take the necessary action.	Lite Bite Foods Private Limited
9251839	05-05-2026 22:27	Aishani Mullick	8375030174	Delhi	New Delhi	Service Charges	I was charged staff contribution which is actually service charge	Lite brand foods
9360148	22-05-2026 07:51	Anoop Jacob	9845985959	Karnataka	Bengaluru South	Service Charges	This hotel is now stopped service charges and they are now charges something called "STAFF CONTRIBUTION" - as i noticed it, i did not pay. however, they just changed the name to staff contribution, but effevtively charging customers. NEW SCAM.	Punjab Grill Konankunte Forum Mall
9377497	24-05-2026 15:39	Punit Thakkar	9819912034	Maharashtra	Mumbai Suburban	Service Charges	Service charge charged as staff contribution	Lite Bite Foods Pvt Ltd

9427150	31-05-2026 19:38	Neti jolly	9971008313	Delhi	New Delhi	Service Charges	I am filing a complaint against YouMee restaurant located at DLF Avenue, Saket, New Delhi, which is operated under the parent company Lite Bite Foods Pvt. Ltd.On May 31, 2026, I dined at this restaurant (Invoice No: TI--66758). Upon receiving the final bill, I found an automatic levy of ₹109.00 added under the label "STAFF CONTRIBUTION". This amounts to exactly 10% of the food subtotal.This charge was hard-coded into the final "Total Invoice Value" of ₹1259 without my prior notice, consent, or agreement. While the fine print at the bottom of the receipt acknowledges that this is a "discretionary contribution," forcing a non-government fee into the final payable total by default is a misleading and unfair trade practice.Consumers are only obligated to pay the food cost and government taxes (GST). I request the CCPA and National Consumer Helpline to take necessary action against the establishment for violating consumer guidelines and forcing hidden service charges on diners. I have attached the invoice copy as evidence. They removed it but they had disguised it as a guest contribution charge.	Lite Bite Foods Pvt. Ltd.

9445786	03-06-2026 15:45	Poornima Pattebahadur	8097148446	Maharashtra	Mumbai	Service Charges	Subject: Complaint Against Mandatory Service Charge and Unprofessional Behaviour at YouMee, Grand Central Mall, Seawoods Dear Sir/Madam, I wish to lodge a formal complaint against YouMee Restaurant located at Grand Central Mall, Seawoods, Navi Mumbai. On 31 May 2026, I visited the restaurant with my family and was deeply disappointed by both the conduct of the restaurant management and the billing practices followed by the establishment. The manager's behaviour towards me was rude, disrespectful, and insulting. When I raised concerns regarding the charges in the bill, I did not receive a professional or courteous response. As a customer, I felt humiliated and distressed by the manner in which the issue was handled. Further, I noticed that an amount of ₹231.50 was added to my bill under the heading "Staff Contribution." This charge was included in the bill without my explicit consent. As per the guidelines issued by the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), service charges cannot be added automatically or collected under any other name. Such charges are voluntary and must be left to the discretion of the consumer. I believe the restaurant has engaged in unfair trade practices by: Automatically adding a service-related charge to the bill. Collecting the charge under an alternate name ("Staff Contribution"). Failing to clearly communicate that the charge was optional. Subjecting me to unprofessional and disrespectful treatment when the matter was questioned. I request the competent authority to: Investigate the matter. Direct the restaurant to refund the amount collected as service charge/staff contribution. Take appropriate action for violation of consumer protection guidelines. Ensure that customers are not subjected to similar practices in the future. I have attached a copy of the bill as supporting evidence. Thank you for your attention to this matter.	Youmee restaurant

9475410	08-06-2026 12:30	DEVASHISH SHARMA	9888811220	Punjab	Ludhiana	Service Charges	Respected Sir/Madam, I am writing to lodge a formal grievance against Lite Bite Food Pvt. Ltd., at their Punjab Grill outlet located at SCO 16, Bearing Unit No GF-1120 And First Floor 1254, Paragon Waterfront, Punjab, Ludhiana -141012. On 07.06.2026, my friends and I, a group of four, visited this outlet and encountered a series of issues that constitute unfair and exploitative business practices. Firstly, we ordered snacks, hard drinks, and a signature dish—Paneer Tikka Multani—which the restaurant claims as their specialty. However, upon tasting it, we found the paneer to be sour, of very poor quality, and inedible. Despite raising this concern to the chef, who eventually acknowledged the quality issue, the dish was still charged at ₹435 on the final bill. Furthermore, without our consent, they added a staff contribution charge of 10% of the subtotal i.e. Rs. 941.5/-, which was in clear violation of the Indian government's directive post-GST implementation. As per the law, only GST (5%) can be levied, and any other service or contribution charge must be with explicit consent. To take a transparency advantage they added a small font line at the end of the bill that "We provide for a discretionary staff contribution for the benefit of the kitchen and service staff working at the restaurant. This will be removed if you do not opt for it." and when we requested its removal, the staff refused, citing a so-called "policy" despite us never agreeing to it. In addition, the prices at the outlet are exorbitant—a 750 ml water bottle was charged at ₹245, and a 60 ml pack of Black Dog whisky was priced at ₹850. Such pricing is completely unjustified, especially when combined with poor food quality and arrogant staff behavior. In light of these exploitative practices, we request a full refund of the amounts overcharged, including the ₹435 for the paneer dish and the ₹941.50/- staff contribution charge. Moreover, we urge the National Consumer Portal to take strict action against this outlet and their owners to prevent further consumer exploitation. I look forward to your resolution at the earliest.	LITE BITE FOODS PVT LTD
9519157	14-06-2026 23:10	Dinesh Acharya	7760542262	Haryana	Gurugram	Charging More Than MRP/ Extra amount Charge	Namaste, This is in regards to the clandestine overcharging by the Hotel Zamabar in Ambier mall. We had been there for dining and once the bill was delivered I made the payment. However, I did notice that they have a heading named Staff Contribution which dragged my attention. The actual food cost was 1270/- and as per the rules they should have added 5% GST ie split into 2.5% each for CGST and SGST equally and the amount should have been 63.50 (GST) + 1270 = 1333.50. But what did the hotel do is they added "Staff Contribution" of amount Rs 127 (Perhaps they added 10% of the Food Bill of 1270) and then calculated GST on the new amount ie 1270+ 127 (Staff Contribution) = 1397 and then added GST to this amount ie 69.85 and presented the final bill of Rs 1467! I had paid the total amount of 1467 which ideally should have been 1333.50 that implies I paid 133.50 extra!. This is malpractice and looting the customer under the name of service. How many customers they must be duping daily??? Despite such stringent laws and rules we citizens are getting cheated regularly.	Zambar Lite Bites Food Pvt Ltd (Ambience Mall, Gurugram, TIN 06731826694
9537184	17-06-2026 16:53	Shubham bhachawat	7977201776	Karnataka	Bangalore	Service Charges	YouMee at Vega City Mall, Bengaluru is auto-generating and adding service charges by default to customer bills. Attaching the bill copy as proof of unfair trade practice."	YOU MEE
9633839	02-07-2026 20:19	Shreya Sridhar	9884403763	Tamil Nadu	Chennai	Food	Service Charges	YouMee
9628326	02-07-2026 00:12	Souraprabha Ray	9833871880	Maharashtra	Mumbai Suburban	Food	Service Charges	Punjab Grill
9654620	06-07-2026 01:00	Sumant Parimal	9810199654	Haryana	Faridabad	Food	Service Charges	Lite Bite Foods Pvt. Ltd.
9811425	27-07-2026 15:38	Pradeep	9923879857	Haryana	Gurugram	Food	Service Charges	Lite Bite Food Pvt Ltd

9892784	08-08-2026 00:56	triveni dayal	8826707610	Haryana	Faridabad	Food	I respectfully request this Hon'ble Commission to direct the Opposite Party to refund the amount of ₹510.30 wrongly collected from me as "Staff Contribution," along with applicable interest, and to award me ₹35,000 as compensation for the financial loss, harassment, inconvenience, mental agony, and unfair trade practice suffered by me. I further pray that the Hon'ble Commission award the costs of these proceedings, direct the Opposite Party to discontinue this unfair billing practice, and pass any other order deemed fit and proper in the interest of justice.	Punjab grill