

Central Consumer Protection Authority
Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi -110011

Case No: CCPA/26/2023-CCPA

In the matter of: Analog IAS Academy regarding Misleading Advertisement and Unfair Trade Practice.

CORAM:

Mrs. Nidhi Khare, Chief Commissioner

Mr. Anupam Mishra, Commissioner

APPEARANCES

For Analog IAS Academy:

1. Mr. Srikanth Vinnakota, Director of Analog IAS Academy
2. Mr. M.P Kahsyap, Advocate.

Date: 10.11.2023

ORDER

1. This is a suo-moto case taken up by the Central Consumer Protection Authority (hereinafter referred as 'CCPA') against Analog IAS Academy (hereinafter referred as 'opposite party') wherein it was observed that the academy was allegedly publishing misleading advertisements on their website (www.analogeducation.in) making the following claims-

- i. "Proud to be the stepping stone to India's Best Officers - 64 selections in UPSC 2022 exam."
- ii. "9 in TOP 100 AIR, 26 in TOP 200 AIR and 45 in TOP 300 in UPSC exam 2022 belong to their academy."
- iii. "Best IAS coaching Centre in Hyderabad."
- iv. "Toppers choose the top IAS Coaching in Hyderabad"
- v. "Analog IAS Academy is No 1 Coaching academy for Civil Services preparation with unparalleled record of Results for more than two decades."

2. Accordingly, CCPA took cognizance of the matter and conducted a preliminary inquiry to examine veracity of the claims in the impugned advertisement made by the opposite party. As per the preliminary inquiry report, it was found that the opposite party showcased various types of courses like General Studies (PCM), Classroom Programme, Political Science (Optional), Mathematics (Optional), Public Administration (Optional), Anthropology (Optional) & Sociology (Optional) but the information with respect to the course opted by the said successful candidates in

UPSC Civil Services Exam (CSE) 2022 was not mentioned in the said advertisement. Further, it was found out that no information or document was available on the website to substantiate the claim by opposite party. From the preliminary inquiry report, it was clear that prima face it was a fit case of Misleading Advertisement and Unfair Trade Practice that affected consumers as a class.

3. Therefore, the CCPA issued a notice dated 16th June 2023 to the opposite party for violation of provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 highlighting the issue of misleading advertisement by deliberately concealing important information and making tall claims about results from the opposite party's academy. An opportunity to furnish its response was given to the opposite party within 15 days of the issue of the Notice.

4. In response to the notice, a reply dated 28th July, 2023 was received from the opposite party, wherein, following submissions were made:

- i. The response contained following annexures-
 - a) Exhibit A & B in opposite party's main reply - List of awards received by Opposite party for the Best IAS Coaching Academy.
 - b) Annexure 1- details of 64 students as claimed in the impugned advertisement.
 - c) Annexure 2- The Times of India News Paper Survey Edition.

- ii. Opposite party stated that the "Best IAS Coaching Centre in Hyderabad" is based on Rewards and Recognition conferred by prestigious groups and institutions like THE TIMES GROUP and others at National and International meets. And their submission regarding unparalleled record of results is based on our track record of successful candidates which are also enclosed for your consideration in Exhibit B.

- iii. Opposite party stated that design of advertisements was not at all intended to mislead and that was totally unintentional.

- iv. Opposite party further stated that they have already undertaken changes/ corrections in their advertisements with clarity in accordance with provisions of fair trade practices included in various sections of Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

5. Thereafter, an opportunity of hearing as mandated under the Consumer Protection Act was provided to the opposite party on 31.08.2023 wherein opposite party was represented by Mr. Srikanth Vinnakota (Director) of Analog IAS Academy, and Mr. M.P Kahsyap (Advocate). They made the following submissions: -

- i. It is true that 61 out of 64 students are from their mock interview programme.
- ii. The Academy provides Mock Interview program free of cost.
- iii. In advertisement, the essential elements are given in limited space and time available. Additionally, they stated that same thing applies for the course i.e.,

whether it is preliminary, mains exam or interview, when somebody attends their coaching, they have used their service. Therefore, they are their students.

- iv. The Academy has not given any wrong information, and nothing has been hidden which has to be shown. Therefore, they have done nothing illegal as per the Consumer Protection Act, 2019

6. Recognizing the significance of ensuring adherence to the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 and the fundamental principle of equitable and transparent resolution, an investigation by Director General (Investigation) was deemed necessary and he was requested to submit investigation report within 15 days.

7. The Director General (Investigation) in its investigation report dated 31.10.2023 submitted the following:

- a. Opposite party has failed to furnish their response with regard to the veracity of the claims made in the advertisements such as:
 1. Fees paid along with the copies of receipt
 2. Registration forms of candidates at the time of joining the Academy.
Both of which were asked in the Notice dated 16.06.2023
- b. Opposite party has provided an Excel sheet of 64 candidates and claimed that these candidates who have cleared UPSC CSE 2022 Exam belonged to their Academy. On examining the details it is found that total 03 candidates have enrolled for General Study's foundation course and remaining candidates have enrolled for Mock Interview Programme only.
Out of 03 candidates with AIR- 54 (Richa Kulkarni) and AIR- 346 (N Chetna Reddy) enrolled for General Studies Foundation course in the year 2019 and candidate with AIR- 866 (Nagula Krupkar) enrolled for General Studies Foundation course in the year 2018, whereas success are being claimed for CSE 2022.
- c. Opposite party has not provided any relevant documents in support of their claim.
- d. There is no information provided by the Academy website on the basis of which qualifying parameters the Academy has been awarded the status of Best IAS Coaching Academy in Hyderabad.
- e. Opposite party through their reply dated 23.07.2023 informed CCPA that they have corrected the information on their website with respect to their claims. However, on viewing the Academy website on 30-31 Oct 2023, it is found that opposite party is still displaying the misleading information on their website.
- f. Based on the above observation, it is inferred that majority of candidates have joined for Mock Interview Program which is not a full time programme or class room session. It may be noted that interview preparation comes after the candidate has cleared Prelims and Main Exam of UPSC Civil Services Exam. The claim made by the Academy is unsubstantiated with sole purpose to promote the name of their Academy and unsuspecting candidates may get lured by the advertisement.

8. Report by DG (Investigation) was sent to the opposite party vide letter dated 02.11.2023 to furnish its comments within 7 days.

9. However, CCPA did not receive any reply from the opposite party till 09.11.2023.

10. It is pertinent to mention that as of 10th November 2023, opposite party still have not modified the impugned advertisement as they have mentioned in their reply i.e. "they already undertaken changes/ corrections in their advertisements with clarity in accordance with provisions of fair trade practices included in various Sections of the Authority." **(Annexure- 1)**

11. It may be mentioned that Section- 2(28) of the Act defines "misleading advertisement" in relation to any product or service i.e., an advertisement which falsely describes such service or falsely guarantees to or likely to mislead consumers as quality of such service or deliberately conceals important information. In the present matter, information regarding specific course opted by successful candidates in UPSC exam 2022, so advertised, is important for the consumers to know so that they can make informed choice while deciding which coaching institute to join & which course to opt for to prepare for UPSC Civil Service exams.

12. Therefore, opposite party's advertisement violates the Section-2(28) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 as they have deliberately concealed important information with respect to the course attended in order to deceive & mislead consumers. The impugned advertisement claimed that "9 in TOP 100 AIR, 26 in TOP 200 AIR and 45 in TOP 300 in UPSC exam 2022 is from opposite party's academy" and "Total 64 selections from their Academy" whereas on detailed investigation it was found that the successful candidates have taken the following courses at opposite party's Academy. **(Annexure-2)** which shows that 61 out of 64 have taken Mock Interview for 1 day. However, the same cannot be verified as the Academy has nether shared registration forms, consent forms or fee receipts of the said candidates. It is merely a chart prepared by the opposite party.

Even if we believe that data provided by opposite party is right then also it is clear that in the impugned advertisement, the opposite party did not truthfully disclose that all such candidates had attended only Mock Interview Programme which was free of cost except Richa Kulkarni (AIR- 54), N Chetna Reddy (AIR- 346) and Nagula Krupkar (AIR- 866). Therefore, the claims made in the advertisement are not completely substantiated.

13. It is understood that Mock interview is not a full-time program, and it comes into play only after an aspirant has cleared both the Prelims and Mains examination of CSE. Thus, it is clear that none of them have studied any other courses apart from the Mock Interview program that are advertised by the opposite party's Academy. This fact has not been disclosed in the impugned advertisement.

Opposite party's Academy offer the following courses on its official website:-

S.No.	Course Offered by Analog IAS Academy	Fees	Duration
1.	General Studies (PCM) Classroom Programme	1,40,000	10 Months
2.	Political Science (Optional)	50,000	5 Months
3.	Mathematics (Optional)		
4.	Public Administration (Optional)		
5.	Anthropology (Optional)	40,000	4 Months
6.	Sociology (Optional)		

Deliberately concealing important information in the impugned advertisement has been done with the sole purpose of misleading consumers into believing that the successful candidates must have taken the above mentioned advertised courses offered by the Opposite party. Such false and deceptive advertisement affects consumers as a class. Thus the claim on selection of 64 candidates from opposite party's Academy is found to be deceptive & misleading in the impugned advertisement.

14. It is pertinent to mention that the essence of misleading advertisement in Consumer Protection Act, 2019 and Guidelines for prevention of Misleading Advertisements and Endorsements for Misleading Advertisements, 2022 is that an advertisement shall be considered valid & not misleading when it contains truthful & honest representation of facts by making disclosures in such a manner that they are clear, prominent and extremely hard to miss for viewers to notice.

15. It is a well-known fact that successful candidates of Civil Services Examination have to clear all the 3 stages of Exams. Viz., Prelims, Main Exams and Personality Test (PT). While Prelims is a screening test, the marks obtained in both Mains Exams and Personality Test are counted for getting finally selected. The total marks for Main Exams and PT are 1750 and 275 respectively. The contribution of Personality Test is merely 13.5% in the total marks.

16. As per a Press Release by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) dated 23 May, 2023 released by Press Information Bureau (PIB), a total of 11,35,697 candidates applied for UPSC Civil Services Examination, 2022, out of which a total of 13,090 candidates qualified for appearance in the Written (Main) Examination which was held in September, 2022. Further, a total of 2,529 candidates qualified for the Personality Test of the examination. At the end, a total of 933 candidates were recommended by the Commission for appointment to various Services. **Therefore, out of 2,529 candidates selected for Personality Test of CSE 2022, 1 out of every 3 such selected candidates have a strong probability to make it to the final selection in CSE.**

17. Such candidates had already cleared Preliminary and Mains examination by themselves, with no contribution of the opposite party. In the instant case, opposite party has been found taking full credit of successful candidate's efforts and success by prominently putting their pictures in the advertisement and claiming that **64 out of 933 selected candidates** are from opposite party's Academy whereas the opposite

party provided only a mock interview, free of cost, to the respective candidates. By concealing the specific name of the course opted by the candidates, such false & misleading advertisement creates huge impact on those consumers who are UPSC aspirants without letting them know that the opposite party had offered guidance to only such successful candidates who had already cleared Preliminary and Mains examination of UPSC examination. Thus, the impugned advertisement has violated the consumer's right to be informed so as to protect himself against unfair trade practice.

18. Section- 2(47) of the Consumer Act, 2019 defines "unfair trade practice" i.e., a trade practice which, for the purpose of promoting the sale, use or supply of any goods or for the provision of any service, adopts any unfair method or unfair or deceptive practice including falsely represents that the services are of a particular standard, quality or grade.

19. Opposite party assert their status as the "Best IAS Coaching Centre in Hyderabad" "Toppers choose the top IAS Coaching in Hyderabad" and "Analog IAS Academy is No 1 Coaching academy for Civil Services preparation with unparalleled record of Results for more than two decades.

In its reply dated 28th July 2023, opposite party submitted annexure titled "The Times of India News Paper Survey Edition 2020-21" as mentioned on the newspaper, it is an Optimal Media Solutions Initiative, a division of Times Internet Limited, circulated with The Times of India, Hyderabad which is an **advertorial, education promotional feature**.

Claiming themselves as Best, should have been substantiated and based on any neutral market survey carried out between all similarly placed coaching institutes of India or by third party assessment which was based on **transparent & known parameters/indicators** for such assessment. In the instant case, there is no information provided by the Opposite party on basis of which transparent parameters the opposite party's Academy has been awarded the status of Best IAS coaching Academy in Hyderabad. Therefore, it is an exaggeration without any substantial validation.

20. The CCPA has carefully considered the written submissions as well as submissions made by the opposite party during hearing and investigation report submitted by Director General (Investigation) and found that the advertisement is false & misleading as it deliberately conceals important information with respect to course opted by successful candidates from their Academy, which consequently affects consumers as a class. Opposite party was advertising about other courses offered by them but they nowhere advertised their free of cost Mock Interview Programme whereas 61 out of 64 selected candidates took only Mock Interview Programme. Additionally, opposite party has deliberately misled consumers by falsely describing its service with the intent that such deceptive trade practice will cloud the judgment of large number of UPSC aspirants/consumers in deciding to avail the services offered by them. Thus, it makes a fit case of misleading advertisement and unfair trade practice.

21. The CCPA is empowered under Section- 21 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 to issue directions to the advertiser of false or misleading advertisement to discontinue or modify the advertisement and 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 prescribes that following may be regarded while determining the penalty against false or misleading advertisement:-

- a) the population and the area impacted or affected by such offence;
- b) the frequency and duration of such offence;
- c) the vulnerability of the class of persons likely to be adversely affected by such offence.

22. The opposite party has 2 centers at Hyderabad. As per opposite party's official website, more than 15,000 benefited from their Academy i.e. these many students took one or another course from opposite party's Academy. Every year approximately 10,00,000 students from all over the country appear for the UPSC exam., therefore, the vulnerability of the class of persons likely to be adversely affected by such misleading advertisement is huge.

23. In view of the above, under section-21 of the Consumer Protection Act 2019, CCPA hereby issues the following directions to the opposite party:

- a) To discontinue the impugned advertisements from all electronic and print media whatsoever with immediate effect.
- b) Analog IAS Academy shall pay a penalty of ₹ 1,00,000 for publishing following false and misleading advertisement claims which affected the consumers as a class.
 - i. Proud to be the stepping stone to India's Best Officers - 64 selections from their academy in UPSC 2022 exam.
 - ii. 9 in TOP 100 AIR, 26 in TOP 200 AIR and 45 in TOP 300 in UPSC exam 2022 belong to their academy.
 - iii. Best IAS coaching Centre in Hyderabad.
 - iv. ANALOG IAS Academy is No. 1 Coaching Academy for Civil Services preparation with unparalleled record of Results for more than two decades.
- c) The opposite party shall submit the amount of penalty and a compliance report to CCPA on the above directions within 15 days from the date of this Order.


Nidhi Khare
Chief Commissioner


Anupam Mishra
Commissioner

Annexure- 1

The screenshot displays the Analog IAS Academy website. The header includes the logo and navigation links: Home, Courses, About, Downloads, Blog, FAQ, Contact, Privacy. A banner on the left celebrates 20 years of the academy. The main content area features a grid of eight officers' portraits with their names and All India Ranks (AIR). To the right, a table lists UPSC Results and Test Series statistics. A chat window is visible in the bottom right corner.

Rank	Name
AIR 8	ANIRUDDH YADAV
AIR 27	YADAV SURYABHAN ACHCHELAL
AIR 40	SRI SAI ASHRITH SHAKHAMURI
AIR 54	RICHA KULKARNI
AIR 60	MALIYE SRI PRANAV
AIR 67	KASTURI PANDA
AIR 75	CHANDRAKANT BAGORIA
AIR 79	ANJALI GARG

Category	Count
TOP 100	9
TOP 200	26
TOP 300	45
FROM TELUGU STATES	27
TOTAL RANKS	64

This screenshot shows the same website with a chat window open. The chat window is titled 'Analog IAS Personal Assistant' and contains a welcome message, a description of the academy, and a video player. The video player shows a man speaking. The chat window is powered by Kanyt AI.

Mr. Srikanth Vinnakota
Director, ANALOG IAS ACADEMY

Good afternoon. Welcome to Analog IAS Academy Personal Assistant.

ANALOG IAS Academy is No 1 Coaching academy for Civil Services preparation with unparalleled record of Results for more than two decades.

Video

How may I assist you?

Type your message...

[UPSC Results](#)
[Test Series](#)

Toppers Choose the top IAS Coaching in Hyderabad



UMA HARATHI N
AIR 3 Year 2022




ANIRUDDH YADAV
AIR 8 Year 2022



YADAV SURYABHAN
AIR 27 Year 2022



SRI SAI ASH SHAKHAM
AIR 40 Year 2022

 Hello There 🌟 I am NITA
[Chat Now](#)



Annexure- 2

S No	Rank	Name	Course Attended	Date of Joining	Duration	Fee Paid
1	3	UMA HARATHI N	Mock Interview Programme	12th July, 2021	1 Day	0
2	8	ANIRUDDH YADAV	Mock Interview Programme	17th August, 2021	1 Day	0
3	27	YADAV SURYABHAN ACHCHELAL	Mock Interview Programme	10th April, 2021	1 Day	0
4	40	SRI SAI ASHRITH SHAKHAMURI	Mock Interview Programme	20th Jan, 2023	1 Day	0
5	54	RICHA KULKARNI	General Studies Foundation + PSIR Optional	1st June, 2019	10 Months	126000
6	60	MALIYE SRI PRANAV	Mock Interview Programme	6th Feb, 2023	1 Day	0
7	67	KASTURI PANDA	Mock Interview Programme	21st July, 2021	1 Day	0
8	75	CHANDRAKANT BAGORIA	Mock Interview Programme	16th March, 2023	1 Day	0
9	79	ANJALI GARG	Mock Interview Programme	18th July, 2021	1 Day	0
10	110	NIDHI PAI	Mock Interview Programme	27th Jan, 2023	1 Day	0
11	112	JARAD PRATIK ANIL	Mock Interview Programme	7th July, 2021	1 Day	0
12	123	SHREYA TYAGI	Mock Interview Programme	7th August, 2021	1 Day	0
13	144	NEEPA MANOCHA	Mock Interview Programme	12th August, 2021	1 Day	0
14	204	TARUN BANSAL	Mock Interview Programme	14th July, 2021	1 Day	0
15	207	ARPIT R PARAKH	Mock Interview Programme	26th April, 2021	1 Day	0
16	210	AKASH A L	Mock Interview Programme	26th Feb, 2023	1 Day	0
17	214	ARPITA ASHOK THUBE	Mock Interview Programme	6th Feb, 2023	1 Day	0
18	218	MANDHARE SOHAM SUNIL	Mock Interview Programme	28th May, 2021	1 Day	0
19	224	RAVIRAJ AWASTHI	Mock Interview Programme	2nd May, 2023	1 Day	0
20	240	SHASHI SHEKHAR	Mock Interview Programme	12th August, 2021	1 Day	0
21	243	KASIRAJU PAVANA SAI SAHITHYA	Mock Interview Programme	2nd April, 2022	1 Day	0
22	252	RISHABH SHUKLA	Mock Interview Programme	19th May, 2021	1 Day	0
23	267	AAKASH SHRISHRIMAL	Mock Interview Programme	2nd May 2023	1 Day	0

24	270	BOLLAM UMAMAHESWAR REDDY	Mock Interview Programme	16th March 2023	1 Day	0
25	276	AJAY YADAV	Mock Interview Programme	1st June, 2021	1 Day	0
26	286	UTKARSH AGRAWAL	Mock Interview Programme	3rd may, 2021	1 Day	0
27	311	VEERAGANDHAM LAKSHMI SUJITHA	Mock Interview Programme	6th Feb, 2023	1 Day	0
28	313	K N CHANDANA JAHNAVI	Mock Interview Programme	10th April, 2021	1 Day	0
29	327	AKSHAY PRAMOD SABADRA	Mock Interview Programme	2nd May, 2023	1 Day	0
30	346	N CHETANA REDDY	General Studies Foundation	15th June 2019	10 Months	94000
31	348	HIMANSHU SAMANT	Mock Interview Programme	16th March, 2023	1 Day	0
32	362	SHRUTI YARAGATTI S	Mock Interview Programme	28th July, 2021	1 Day	0
33	367	HARISHANKAR GANESAN	Mock Interview Programme	31st Jan, 2023	1 Day	0
34	393	DARADE PARMANAND PRAVIN	Mock Interview Programme	19th May, 2021	1 Day	0
35	397	CAPRIL ARORA	Mock Interview Programme	9th August, 2021	1 Day	0
36	409	ISHAN AGARWAL	Mock Interview Programme	7th Jan, 2023	1 Day	0
37	410	DONGRE REVAIAH	Mock Interview Programme	27th Jan, 2023	1 Day	0
38	415	AKSHAT JAIN	Mock Interview Programme	20th August, 2021	1 Day	0
39	418	HARSHVARDHAN SINGH	Mock Interview Programme	22nd July, 2021	1 Day	0
40	426	CH SHRAVAN KUMAR REDDY	Mock Interview Programme	17th Feb, 2023	1 Day	0
41	431	RAVI KUMAR MEENA	Mock Interview Programme	1th Feb, 2020	1 Day	0
42	435	DAMINI DIWAKAR	Mock Interview Programme	24th June, 2021	1 Day	0
43	441	MOHAMED RISWIN I	Mock Interview Programme	31st May, 2021	1 Day	0
44	460	PATHIPAKA SAIKIRAN	Mock Interview Programme	27th Jan, 2023	1 Day	0
45	489	ASHUTOSH SANI	Mock Interview Programme	24th may, 2023	1 Day	0
46	501	DHANUSH KUMAR B S	Mock Interview Programme	15th July 2021	1 Day	0
47	508	RAHUL	Mock Interview Programme	6th June, 2021	1 Day	0
48	519	SULEKHA JAGARWAR	Mock Interview Programme	20th July, 2021	1 Day	0

49	525	SHRIDEVI B V	Mock Interview Programme	21st Feb, 2020	1 Day	0
50	583	YERRAMSETTI U S L RAMANI	Mock Interview Programme	25th June, 2021	1 Day	0
51	594	VARUN K GOWDA	Mock Interview Programme	10th May, 2021	1 Day	0
52	602	PRANAY KUMAR SINGH	Mock Interview Programme	5th July, 2021	1 Day	0
53	630	S DEEPTHI CHOWHAN	Mock Interview Programme	17th Feb, 2023	1 Day	0
54	645	AASHISH KUMAR	Mock Interview Programme	3rd March, 2023	1 Day	0
55	669	LOKESH CHOUDHARY	Mock Interview Programme	12th June, 2021	1 Day	0
56	671	CHANDAN PRASAD	Mock Interview Programme	1st June, 2021	1 Day	0
57	689	RAMKRISHNA SARAN	Mock Interview Programme	2nd June, 2021	1 Day	0
58	742	RAMDENI SAINATH	Mock Interview Programme	26th April, 2021	1 Day	0
59	772	POTUPUREDDI BHARGAV	Mock Interview Programme	18th Feb, 2023	1 Day	0
60	827	DONEPUDI VIJAY BABU	Mock Interview Programme	13th June, 2021	1 Day	0
61	844	ABHIJAY PAGARE	Mock Interview Programme	31st may, 2021	1 Day	0
62	858	A RAGHUL	Mock Interview Programme	7th August, 2021	1 Day	0
63	866	NAGULA KRUPAKAR	General Studies Foundation + Maths Optional	7th June, 2018	10 Months	74000
64	909	SUNIL KUMAR	Mock Interview Programme	16th May, 2021	1 Day	0