

## Consumers blamed for price hike

**Khalid Iqbal**  
Rawalpindi

Consumers are responsible for price-hike, adulteration and shortage of different items to a great extent because they do not have unity and ignorant about their rights.

All Pakistan Consumer Rights Association Chairman Kowkab Iqbal said this while talking to 'The News' on the occasion of Consumer Rights Day being observed worldwide on Monday.

He said that a particular group of buyers purchases things and pay money without any investigation and without any care. The majority of people do not have knowledge about their legal rights.

"Our consumers are sleeping and fully involved in price-hike, adulteration and shortage of things in the country," he said. He said that the substandard and unhygienic items are being sold, but consumers are purchasing them with both hands. "If a commodity becomes short in the market, consumers try to buy more and more and even pay extra money to buy it. Due to it, sellers take full advantage of the situation. Consumers should say goodbye to those items, which are short in supply, for a few days," he said.

Consumers should say goodbye to all things, which are short or selling at higher rates or are adulterated. The government has established consumer courts to protect the rights of buyers

### Consumers urged not to compromise on quality of products

**Obaid Abrar Khan**  
Rawalpindi

District Consumer Protection Council (DCPC) Monday observed World Consumer Rights Day on the theme of 'Our Money Our Rights.'

A large number of lawyers, members of the civil society and consumers attended the ceremony. DCPC Assistant Director Legal Adnan Kareem while addressing the gathering said that consumers should not compromise on the faulty products and poor services provided to them, as this is their right to get best quality product and service because they are spending money.

He said that people compromise with faulty products because they don't know about their rights. Whereas others, who are well educated and know about their rights, don't show any interest in filing a case against any company because they think that it would be a futile exercise.

Adnan Kareem told that the provincial government established the Punjab Consumer Protection Council in 2007. We are providing free services to consumers and assisting

them to get their rights. But only a few people approach the council for registration of their complaints. "Only 135 cases have been registered with the council from 2007 to 2010," he said. He added that the majority of the cases were resolved in the office of Consumer Protection Council.

He said that the World Consumer Rights Day was observed for the first time in 1983 world over with a view to promote basic rights of the consumers. This day has become an important occasion for mobilising the citizens but here in Pakistan people don't have any knowledge about this day as well as their rights.

Adnan Kareem said that this year the theme of the World Consumer Rights Day is 'Our Money Our Rights' which shows that the consumer has the right to spend his money according to his own will and in return he has a right to get quality product and good services. He advised all the consumers to approach District Consumer Protection Council if they are facing any kind of problem regarding the quality of the product and services provided to them.

but unfortunately consumers never bother, he said. If consumers remain ignorant about their rights then sellers would continue to rob them, he said.

All Pakistan Traders Association President Sheikh Muhammad Sadiq admitted that consumers are facing price-hike, adulteration and shortage of kitchen items. He blamed the

government for ever-increasing prices of different items. He told 'The News' that now the government has started imposing 15 per cent tax even on vegetables. The government is increasing charges of electricity and gas. How could prices stabilise against this backdrop? he questioned.

He admitted that adulterated

items are openly being sold, "but unfortunately our political leadership helps them by ending cases against them."

District Food Inspector (DFI) Rana Ghulam Murtaza, while talking to 'The News,' admitted that several people are involved in adulteration of food items. He said that a few days back they sealed a factory where unhy-

gienic, adulterated ghee and cooking oil were being packed in branded tins in Dhoke Najju, Rawalpindi. Consumers are facing difficulties from both sides. They pay money, but buying substandard and unhygienic food items, he said.

Rawalpindi District Consumer Court official Amir Ahmed said that the majority of consumers don't know about their rights. Consumer courts are present in every district. Several consumers filed cases against sellers in the court. The district consumer court has disposed of 120 cases out of total 155 while only 35 cases are pending. The court has imposed fines on sellers and shopkeepers on the complaint of buyers, he said. Consumers never attended any price control meeting organized by the city district government.

Amna Ahmed, lecturer in a government college, said that consumers do not have unity among them. A particular group (rich people) never ask for prices. "The main problem is that we are not ready to say goodbye to some items even for some days. The shopkeepers are taking advantage of this situation and demand prices of their choice, she said.

Zia Mehmood, another consumer, said that everyone knows that the quality of items is substandard and selling at high prices in the market. The concerned authorities are in deep slumber, he added.