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## Need to implement Islamabad Consumer Protection Act 1995 underscored

### RECORDER REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at a seminar have stressed the need for implementation of Islamabad Consumer Protection Act 1995 to protect the rights of consumers effectively.

Speaking at a training workshop titled "Consumer Protection and Energy Sector Laws in Islamabad" organised by TheNetwork here on Wednesday, legal fraternity including member of district judiciary, said that the authorities concerned have failed in enforcing Consumer Protection Act in any part of the Capital.

In his presentation, Kamran Basharat Mufti, Additional Session Judge of Islamabad District Court said that the Consumer Protection Law of Islamabad needs to be seen as a whole. It also requires an active Consumer Protection Council mainly consisting of bureaucrats and eminent people from the Capital and the associations of consumers.

The litigation in the Consumer Court is only done after exhausting all these forums. But he lamented that in Islamabad there is no Consumer Council as per law. "Until and unless the Islamabad Consumer Protection Council is formed, the Consumer Courts cannot provide redress effectively to the Consumers under the Islamabad Consumer Protection Act 1995".

Funded by USAID, the

workshop has the aim of orientation of lawyers on the city's 17 years old Consumer Protection Law making it more proactive in providing relief and redress to consumers of the capital city.

The workshop has a specific focus on energy sector laws and regulations as in the recent past the twin cities have experienced violent electricity protests bringing the public life to standstill. Thousands of people suffered during those protests.

The workshop has full cooperation of Chief Justice Islamabad High Court, Justice Iqbal Hameed-ur-Rahman, who nominated Additional District and Sessions Judge to attend the workshop.

He also stressed upon the need for the formation of a Consumer Watchdog Association in Islamabad Capital Territory to safeguard the consumer rights of the citizens.

Nadeem Iqbal, Executive Coordinator of TheNetwork for Consumer Protection, briefed the participants about the nature of three types of regulations - self, co and third party - to make the consumer redress framework more effective in consumer sector.

He said that Nepa and Ogra laws provide for the effective contribution of consumers in the open hearings for price determination of the tariff, but the consumer representation is negligible.