

Press Release

TheNetwork Urges to Activate Consumer Protection Laws

Islamabad: TheNetwork for Consumer Protection demands the Administration Authorities of Capital Territory Islamabad to immediately activate Consumer Council and make Islamabad Consumer Protection Law 1995 functional. Mr. Nadeem Iqbal, Executive Coordinator TheNetwork said in a statement issued to share the celebrations of World Consumer Rights Day on March 15, 2012.

In Pakistan, Punjab, KhyberPakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and federal capital have their own consumer protection laws. The most unfortunate however is the Sindh Consumer Protection Ordinance which was revised three times by Governor Sindh but never presented in provincial assembly and finally lapsed in 2007. Karachi, the capital of Sindh and economic hub of Pakistan, where corporate sector is more powerful, still lacks the basic legislation for consumers' protection.

TheNetwork for Consumer Protection joins the world consumer groups in celebrating fifty years of John F. Kennedy's historic Declaration of Consumer Rights, on 15 March 1962. It was the first time that a serving world leader, the United States President, acknowledged the importance of consumers having basic rights and a true voice in the marketplace. The original four rights, and four more that were added by Consumers International, have been a cornerstone for consumer activists ever since.

While pointing out the lacunas in system, Nadeem Iqbal said, Punjab has a better system to protect the consumers with consumer councils and courts functional in 11 districts of province. Similarly, KhyberPakhtunkhwa has also notified consumer councils and courts in 10 districts but so far functional in 6 districts however the system deem inefficient to provide protection to consumers. Balochistan has also enacted Consumer Protection Act however the provincial government is still dragging its feet to establish consumer courts and councils.

Consumer Protection mechanism, despite several lacunas is a positive initiative to address consumer grievances however the capacity of district consumer councils and courts need to be enhanced.

Consumer education is an important component of protecting consumers but remains ignored in consumer laws' implementation. Consumer councils are mandated to educate consumers to make them aware of their rights under consumer laws however no such initiative has been taken to educate consumers of Pakistan.

World Consumer Rights Day is an opportunity to promote the basic rights of all consumers, for demanding that those rights are respected and protected, and for protesting the market abuses and social injustices which undermine them.

On this special occasion TheNetwork is calling up consumers to advance the eight consumer rights, with unrelenting determination with a fierce commitment to fighting as hard and as long as it takes to secure basic consumer protections for individuals and families everywhere.

TheNetwork is a member of Consumer International, which is bringing to these battles the combined force of more than 220 organisations in over 115 countries. The collective voice, the consumer movements share is growing stronger, clearer, and more powerful - with benefits in Pakistan and other regions, and benefits for consumers throughout the world/ **End.**