The idea of consumer protection laws was firstly adopted in Pakistan by the Federal Government in 1995 when The Islamabad Consumer Protection Act, 1995 was passed. Later on The Provincial Governments followed this pattern and the provincial assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa passed The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Consumer Protection Act, 1997. The provincial assembly of Baluchistan passed The Balochistan Consumer Protection Act, 2003, the provincial assembly of Punjab passed The Punjab Consumers Protection Act, 2005 and provincial assembly of Sindh passed a Consumer Protection Bill in 2015 to protect the rights of consumers. The basic purpose of making these Acts, a part of our legislation, is to establish a prosperous society where all consumers may feel themselves secured and where there is no room exists for fraudulent acts.

After the approval of these Acts, district consumer courts are established for all the districts of Islamabad, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan while the enactment in Sindh province is in process, so that people may easily access to these courts for the protection of their rights. Along these district consumer courts a network of district consumer protection councils has been spread in all four provinces of Pakistan. These councils are established to create awareness among masses about their basic rights and benefits as a consumer.

**Scope of Practice**

* The law provides for establishing consumer dispute redressed machinery at the district level.
* It applies to all goods and services.
* It covers all sectors, whether private, public or any individual person.
* The law provides for a relief of a specific nature and also for compensation to the consumer as appropriate.
* The provisions of these Acts are in addition to and not in derogation of the provisions of any other law for the time being in force.
* Doctrines of “Privity of Contract” and “Caveat Emptor” has not been covered under these Acts.
* Consumer courts have been empowered to impose penalty in terms of imprisonment and fine as well to the defaulters for non-compliance of the orders passed by them.

**When and how a consumer can access to district consumer court?**

According to “Consumer Laws” a consumer should go to district consumer court:

* If illegal, fake, bad quality and expired products are being sold in the market;
* If receipt is not being provided by the shopkeeper;
* If rate list is not displayed;
* If the consumer has any complaint against the warranty of any product he has purchased;
* If manufacturing date, expiry date and ingredients are not mentioned over packing;
* If any product is being sold through false advertisement;
* If the consumer has experienced bad service by any govt. or private organization/individual; and
* If there is an absence of a clear policy regarding the purchasing and returning of product.

**Requirements as to Filing a Case In Consumer Court**

The complaint must contains:

* Name, address and C.N.I.C number of the petitioner;
* Particulars of the respondent(s);
* Copy of the legal notice must be attached to that application;
* Details of the claims and damages;
* Documentary proof (such as receipt) etc.;
* Relief sought; and
* Affidavit of the Complainant.

It should be kept in mind that no court fee is charged in any case which is filed for the protection of consumer’s rights. But masses are not willing to get benefit of this act. A consumer may also contact District consumer protection councils if he/she has any complaint. All District Co-ordination officers (DCO’s) are also authorized to hear these complaints. Moreover consumer may also file a complaint in district consumer courts for compensation.

Our common people have always been remained unable to protect their basic rights just because of their lack of interest or lack of knowledge. Furthermore people think that such procedures are only wastage of time and money. But Consumer Courts are providing Speedy Remedy to the people/complainants