

Suriname Promotes Awareness on Consumer Protection

The Consumer Affairs Department of the Ministry of Commerce Industry (HI) has successfully organized awareness activities for consumers in the past period . From December 7 to December 17, several activities have been organized, to inform the consumer about his rights and duties. "We are satisfied; we have had more responses as a result of the campaign, "says Daniella Sumter head of the Consumer Affairs Department.

On December 7, there was a panel discussion on the STVS, after the documentary "Way beyond weight". The Consumer Affairs Department wants to aware the consumers about the wrong use of food and excessive use of junk food, which can lead to obesity, diabetes and heart disease. After this activity the head of the Consumer Affairs Department, Daniella has informed consumers about the state of the consumer protection law and information on consumer affairs through various talk shows.



The highlight of the activities was on Friday, December 13, in which the First Lady of Suriname Ingrid Bouterse - Waldring along with Minister Raymond Sapoen HI, Assembly members, district commissioners, youth representatives, representatives of consumer organizations and other interested parties, revealed a huge billboard with information for consumers. This billboard with the contact details of Consumer Affairs (CoZa) department, where complaints can be submitted, is located on the corner of Toekomstweg and Kankawastraat, opposite of Rudisa Shipping. Beside this, promotion material of consumer rights has been provided to schools and youth ambassadors.

This is also the beginning of a national campaign regarding the distribution of promotional event starts with stakeholders and partners. The range of activities ended Tuesday, December 17 with a seminar at Courtyard Marriott. Stakeholders and other interested parties were informed about the state of the consumer protection law and competition law. Through the monthly program, Consumer guard information is provided to the community via television.

There is also a Facebook page Consumer Affairs, where tips and information is updated daily.

Stakeholders informed of progress Competition and Consumer Protection

In a one-day seminar, organized by the Ministry of Trade and Industry on December 17 at the Marriott Hotel, stakeholders and interested parties were informed about the progress with regard to the draft competition law and the preparations in the area of consumer protection draft bill. The acting director of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Dankerlui Jessy, who did the opening speech, said that the ministry aims to protect consumers against unfair trade practices through laws and regulations. The Consumer Affairs Department that was set up on February 1, 2013 is committed to maximizing consumer protection by ensuring the health of the consumer and the product. Also stimulate economic activity competition, efficiency and innovation, and overall access to ethical and competent market providers, which will have sustainable consumption as a result, is among the tasks of the Department. The approach and guidance



of complaints, information to the consumer, research and monitoring and legal advice are among some of the main activities of the department.

Daniella Sumter, head of the Consumer Affairs Department and Chair of the Working Group on Consumer Protection has presented some highlights of the law during her presentation. The Consumer Protection law should lead to the establishment of a consumer authority. The long process to the judge and the costs that come with it shall cease to exist. The authority will

also be able to give verdicts and shall be able to take actions against violations both individually and collectively.

There have been several consultations on competition. Currently, the law is in its last phase and after placing the adjustments it will be finalized. According to the acting director there is an effective competition policy needed to promote fair and healthy competition between entrepreneurs. Competition also leads to innovation. Jenny Karmin, head of the legal department of the ministry of Trade and Industry, informed the attendees about the state of affairs, conditions and possible consequences of the Competition law during her presentation.

The Consumer Protection Law and competition law will be fully presented to the interested parties and stakeholders during the next seminar in the coming period.

Consumers can go for information and complaints to the Department of Consumer Affairs on the Havenlaan no 1, phone nr 402- 080 extension 1053 phone and via electronic mail consumentenzaken@minhi.gov.sr. The hotline can be reached at 402080 phone numbers: 1217, 1218 and 1219.