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Consumer Council of Fiji



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PRESS RELEASE

Consumer Council of Fiji Takes Stand Against Unfair Pricing Practices Amid VAT Increase

In the aftermath of the recent VAT increase from 9% to 15%, reports of profiteering by certain traders have raised concerns about the equitable pricing of common goods such as newspapers and recharge top-ups for mobile phones.

Complaints have surfaced from concerned consumers regarding a few traders who are unscrupulously charging prices exceeding the clearly marked VIP (VAT Inclusive Price) labels on newspapers and recharge top-ups. This concerning complaint undermines the very foundations of fair business practices and consumer protection laws.

In one of the complaints, a consumer informed the Council that a trader was retailing a local newspaper at \$1.58 cents whilst the VIP price written on it was \$1.50 cents. In a separate case, a trader charged a consumer \$26.67 cents for a recharge worth \$25.00.

“All traders have a responsibility to adhere to the principles of ethical business conduct, ensuring transparent transactions and fair pricing. The recent complaints of price discrepancies between VIP-labeled newspapers and recharge card prices and their corresponding monetary values, are deeply troubling. We urge traders to immediately rectify these pricing inconsistencies,” said CCoF CEO Ms Seema Shandil.

Ms. Seema Shandil has also expressed her strong support for stringent measures to combat price exploitation. She emphasized the significance of proactive enforcement against traders engaging in such practices, ensuring that consumers' interests and financial wellbeing are safeguarded.

In line with our mission to protect consumer rights, we encourage consumers to report instances of unjustified price increases, price gouging, or any form of unfair pricing. Consumers can contact our toll-free number 155 or email complaints@consumersfiji.org to share their concerns.

Ms Seema Shandil

Chief Executive Officer