



**PRESS RELEASE  
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### **DIWALI INSPECTIONS**

This Diwali the Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission (FCCC) is calling on traders to ensure they carry out their businesses ethically or be prepared to face strict enforcement actions.

The call comes in light of the recent joint inspections undertaken by the FCCC and the Consumer Council of Fiji whereby it has been noted that a handful of traders are engaging in unfair trade practices.

Till date a total of **287** trader inspections have been conducted throughout Fiji of which **86** percent of traders have been noted to be in compliance with the Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission Act 2010 (FCCC Act 2010). However, the FCCC is currently investigating **8** traders found to be in possible breach of the Act. These traders were either found to be selling items without any price display and marking; engaging in false and misleading representations or false or misleading advertisement.

Also, a total of **19** traders have been issued with infringement notices while **12** have been verbally warned.

The FCCC has through its media monitoring and inspections also noted that a handful of traders have been engaging in bait advertising and price advantage. It has been brought to the FCCC's attention that some traders advertise items on "Specials" however at the counter they charge the normal price of the item which is higher. In other words, the price displayed on the shelf does not match the price charged to the customer at the checkout counter.

When advertising special offers businesses must be offering something unusual and better than the normal e.g, lower prices or additional features.

Further, the FCCC has noted that festival specific items such as ghee, semolina, sultanas etc. face price hikes as traders are aware that consumers during this festival will purchase such products. Hence, the FCCC is undertaking a survey on the prices of such items in order to ascertain whether traders have engaged in price hikes.

If consumers come across instances where they find that the prices of specific items related to the festival have significantly risen, then they are encouraged to report such incidents to the FCCC in person, via phone call or email.

Given that the inspections will continue for the next two days, the FCCC anticipates that traders comply with the requirements under the FCCC Act 2010 and provide consumers with value for money.

It is a known fact that during the pre-Diwali period consumer spending considerably increases with all the enticing Diwali 'specials' and 'sale promotions'. Naturally, consumers are drawn to rush and take advantage of these specials. However, the FCCC urges consumers to be vigilant and shop responsibly.

Consumers are also urged to refrain from engaging in last minute rushed shopping but rather to plan out their shopping and stick to a budget.

Consumers should avoid purchasing items purely because they are on special, but rather purchase items which are needed. Also, consumers need to note that some products which may be marked on very special prices may be close to expiry and purchasing them in large quantity and being unable to use in a timely manner can result in waste of money.

The FCCC encourages consumers to be vigilant this Diwali and enjoy responsibly in terms of staying within one's budget and exercising caution with firecrackers.

For more information, please contact FCCC, Communications Officer, Ms. Khusboo Singh on 9987783 or email: [khusboo.singh@fcc.gov.fj](mailto:khusboo.singh@fcc.gov.fj)