

<p><font color="#000000"><span style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma">Dear Mr Editor,</span></font><span style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma"><font color="#000000">◆</font></span></p><p><span style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma"><font color="#000000">It◆has been◆a healthy trend that nowadays more and more people are being concerned about their health. This is evident◆from the many◆fitness centres mushrooming in the country. These◆fitness centres provide strict exercise regime and the exercise sessions are well structures.◆Most of◆these centres do hire well trained and qualified instructors. </font></span></p><p style="margin: 0in 0in 0pt" class="MsoNormal" align="justify"><font style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" color="#000000">Some of them do have equipment of world class standards. With stiff competition,◆these fitness centres has designed various marketing tactics to increase membership. The most interesting tactic is by offering 1-2 years membership. Once they has convinced a prospective customer to subscribe to their membership, immediately a not more than 3-4 page contract is signed between both parties. </font></p><p style="margin: 0in 0in 0pt" class="MsoNormal" align="justify"> </p><p style="margin: 0in 0in 0pt" class="MsoNormal" align="justify"> </p><p style="margin: 0in 0in 0pt" class="MsoNormal" align="justify"><font style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" color="#000000">The problem which arises here is that the member is not allowed to cancel the agreement. There is no cancellation provision provided. This has led to many members being shortchanged. What happens if a member meets an accident or a member gets transferred to a different state and so on? </font></p><p style="margin: 0in 0in 0pt" class="MsoNormal" align="justify"> </p><p style="margin: 0in 0in 0pt" class="MsoNormal" align="justify"> </p><p style="margin: 0in 0in 0pt" class="MsoNormal" align="justify"><font style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" color="#000000">These members are forced to continue with their membership. Legal letter of demand◆is sent and proceedings are instituted against the member should the members fail to pay up the membership dues. </font></p><p style="margin: 0in 0in 0pt" class="MsoNormal" align="justify"> </p><p><font style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" color="#000000">Although the◆Consumer Protection Act 1999 (CPA )does provide for cancellation of future contracts◆and the tribunals are empowered to cancel such contracts, these decisions may be overturned by the High Court via judicial review as the CPA is merely a supplementary Act and the main Act which governs contract is the Contract Act 1950. </font></p><p><font style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" color="#000000">The problem discussed here is merely◆confined to fitness centres but this problem effects many other areas such health centres. It is suggested that the authorities seriously looks into anacting the Unfair Contract Terms Act (UCTA) in order to protect consumers from unethical businessess.</font><span style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma"><font color="#000000">◆</font></span><span style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma"><font color="#000000">◆</font></span></p><p><span style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" class="searchinto">Darshan Singh</span></p><p><span style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" class="searchinto">Manager</span></p><p class="searchinto"><font style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" color="#000000">National Consumer Complaints Centre (NCCC</font><font style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" color="#000000">)</font></p><p class="searchinto"><font style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" color="#000000">1D, Jalan SS9A/17,</font><font style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" color="#000000">47300 Petaling Jaya,</font><font style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" color="#000000">Selangor</font></p><p><span style="font-size: 8pt; font-family: Tahoma" class="searchinto">03-78779000 - tel</span></p><p></p>