1 October 2007 KUALA LUMPUR: Consumer Claims Tribunal chairman Rungit Singh feels the manner in which direct-sale transactions are conducted is worrying. <table border="0" cellspacing="3" cellpadding="0" width="200" align="right"></table> He said cases were also on the rise outside Kuala Lumpur. ��They're now targeting areas in the outskirts where they lure housewives unaware of these scams as well as junior government officers, clerks and office workers.�

From the complaints received, Rungit said, direct-sale practitioners were believed to have used pressure tactics that gave the consumer almost no option other than to enter the transaction.

�They are normally surrounded by the sales personnel who give them all kinds of promises, including offers to resell the merchandise they win at higher prices. �This reselling pitch is what consumers should be cautious about. It makes no sense for someone to offer to sell something you get from them at a higher value if you don't like the item.

�If they could do this, they would have sold it themselves and made a profit without duping you into trying to win it. They are just playing on the consumer's psychology.�

He said customers who were pressured into signing up usually had a change of heart and tried to call it off but they would be told that it was a business deal.

�This is done with complete disregard to the cooling-off period. Many of these companies ask for payment up front. Some even ask housewives to pawn or sell their jewellery.

�When the case comes before the tribunal, we find different companies operating at the company's same address of business.�

Rungit said the law was there but it was compliance with the law that was the problem.

�Consumers should know there is no rush to buy something. They should always defer decisions where large amounts of money are asked for immediately.� <table border="0" cellspacing="2" cellpadding="2" class="full"><tr><td class="vgap">�</td></tr></table>