

44 held for selling milk at higher prices, says minister

KARACHI: As many as 44 milk sellers have been apprehended for selling milk at unauthorised rates and two of them have been put behind bars, said Sindh Minister for Agriculture, Supply and Prices Ismail Rahu on Thursday.

Addressing a press conference, the minister said complying with instructions of the provincial government, the city administration raided milk shops in various parts of the city a day earlier during which 44 shopkeepers were apprehended who had been selling milk at prices much higher than the notified rates.

“Two of them have been sent to jail while all those found fleecing people were fined to the tune of Rs270,000 in total.” Reports had emerged that retailers had jacked up prices by up to Rs23 a litre in the city on Wednesday.

Mr Rahu said the government had listened to the issues of dairy farmers, yet they were not permitted to increase the rates set by the government.

“No one, whether one is a retailer, wholesaler or a dairy farmer, can charge more rates of milk than the ones notified by the government.”

Mr Rahu said the federal government’s policies had caused unprecedented price hike; however, the issues would be resolved through dialogue; “But, that does not mean that anyone can increase rates of anything on a whim”.

He added: “Milk will be sold at the rates notified by the government and strict action will be taken against all those who are found involved in increasing milk prices on their own.”

He said that the government had no issue in taking action against any dairy farmer or wholesaler and the recent action against them proved it.

He said price magistrates of the six districts of Karachi had taken action against milk sellers in their respective districts found selling milk at exorbitant rates.

He asked people to lodge complaints with the office of the deputy commissioner concerned if they found any milk seller fleecing people in any area.

“Rest assured, prompt response will be given to all these complaints.”

City Commissioner Iftikhar Shallwani told reporters that he had met the representatives of dairy farmers’ associations and discussed the issue. He said the authorities were committed to ensuring that milk prices did not reach exorbitant levels.

The Newspaper’s Staff Reporter