

Direct selling & marketing bill: MoC seeks trade bodies' suggestions

The Ministry of Commerce has sought recommendation on the proposed "Direct Selling & Network Marketing Bill 2019" from all trade bodies, including chambers of commerce and industry of the country to make it more comprehensive. Industry sources say that a significant progress has been made on Direct Selling & Network Marketing Bill 2019 as the Ministry of Law and Justice after accepting it and fulfilling all legal requirements, has sent the proposed bill to the Ministry of Commerce for final shape.

Now, the Ministry of Commerce is in the process of seeking the opinion of all trade bodies so that the economy and consumers could get optimum benefit. "If the proposed bill is approved, this industry will create about 3.5 million new job opportunities and the dream of making Pakistani women self-reliant economically in real terms would come true," they added.

Draft of the Direct Selling & Networking Marketing Bill 2019 was proposed by the Selling Association of Pakistan and now the industry expects that a way has been paved for imminent approval of the bill. The Ministry of Law and Justice has already supported this bill for approval. In order to seek the opinion of all the stakeholders, it was also sent to the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) to incorporate its recommendations.

TDAP after reviewing the draft of bill in detail and after carefully reviewing the existing laws under which this industry is working in other countries of the world, has given its consent in support of this bill and termed it very important and useful, industry sources said.

While giving their opinion TDAP has said that before reviewing the Direct Selling and Network Marketing Bill 2019, they reviewed the laws of Singapore, Malaysia, UK and USA. After that they reviewed the progress that has taken place in India with reference to this business.

FICCI has played an important role and done excellent work by making a comparative analysis of laws in other countries of the world with reference to direct selling. In these laws it has been pressed upon that the cheating with consumers is to be stopped.

When a comparative analysis was made with respect to the direct selling and network marketing business in UK, Malaysia and Thailand, then it was transpired that there has been given a different name to the activities of direct selling.

According to TDAP, Direct Selling and Network Marketing Bill 2019 has dual advantage as on one hand this will create job opportunities in the country while on the other hand it will give due protection to the consumers, industry sources said. On the other hand according to the report of the Research Council of Direct Selling Association of Pakistan, there has taken place extraordinary progress in the business of direct selling in the world during the past five years.

There are well over 100 million people directly involved in this business of which 65 percent is women. On getting the legal framework to the direct selling & network marketing industry in Pakistan, there will have created about 3.5 million jobs in the coming five years.

In Pakistan the direct selling industry will prove to be a "game-changer" with reference to make women self-reliant economically. It is hoped that soon Direct Selling & Network Marketing Bill 2019 will get passed from the Parliament and will become a part of the law and with the promulgation of this bill, the business of direct selling and networking marketing will enter into a new era.