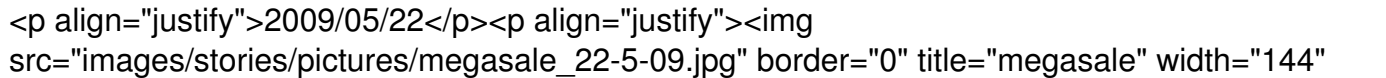


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 OF late, we see items on sale or promotion being advertised every day and everywhere, in newspapers, on television, on billboards and in shopping malls. Many would think this is because the economy is bad and retailers are trying to clear their stock.

But how many of us know that, under the law, sales can only be held four times a year and each sale period should not exceed 30 days?

Many traders use this as a trick to lure consumers into believing that they can save if they buy those items now, since they are on sale. Thus, consumers spend their hard-earned money buying things they don't actually need. So, instead of saving money, they are wasting it.

A sale means that the prices of goods and services should be lower than those on ordinary business days.

However, in many cases, the traders increase the prices of goods and then promote them to be sold at the regular prices.

The National Consumer Complaints Centre received 1,410 complaints in 2007 from consumers regarding this matter. This number is especially high during the festive seasons.

The Trade Descriptions Regulation 1987 states that when there is a price reduction, the traders should clearly state the price before the reduction (i.e. sale price). But this practice is not followed in many places, thus it is easy to mislead consumers.

The shop that holds a sale must exhibit the letter of approval from the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry at its premises. This is to ensure that the items are really on sale and not a trick to fool consumers.

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Source: http://www.nst.com.my/Current_News/NST/Friday/Letters/2562748/Article/index_html