

<p style="text-align: justify;">August 6, 2021 7:30 AM
PETALING JAYA: When Leona Lopez received her bulk order of household products from an online shopping platform, she was surprised to find some of the items damaged.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Lopez said it was difficult to get a refund or have her items replaced as it took days for a seller to reply to her inquiries and, usually, there would be no satisfactory solution.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">◆When I tried returning just one item, I was told it was rejected and they (online shopping platform) would return the item to me. I was confused. Would they send me back a new item or the damaged one?◆ she asked.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">She said that with the pandemic, many have resorted to buying items online as they do not want to risk going out.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">◆When we purchase items online, we hope that they come as per the image shown on the site,◆ she said.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Recently, she said, she had purchased a mountain bike hub and when it arrived, the front hub was damaged, and her refund request is still under review.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">She said it is frustrating when this happens, especially when sellers do not pack their items properly.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">◆I am sure I am not the only one experiencing this. I just hope that shopping online platforms can assist and protect their buyers. We should not be forced to accept wrong items or damaged ones,◆ she said.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations (Fomca) CEO Saravanan Thambirajah said it has received many complaints on such issues since the movement control order (MCO) was implemented.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Saravanan said Fomca has received about 380 complaints this year.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">◆One of the common complaints is on customer service. There are cases where consumers have to file the same complaint a few times before they are heard,◆ he told FMT.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">He said online shopping platforms should appoint customer care consultants to look into the complaints rather than use automated machines.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Saravanan also said another problem is improper handling by courier companies.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">◆The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), which oversees the courier services, should regulate the sector and provide feedback regarding complaints,◆ he said.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">

justify;">On what consumers can do, he said they should lodge a report with the online shopping platform if they encounter a problem or are not satisfied with an item.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">If there is no response from the platform, they may file a report with the domestic trade and consumer affairs ministry or the Tribunal for Consumer Claims.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Receipts, communication history and payment details should be retained for submission to these bodies, and a review posted on the seller's page so other consumers are aware of the issue.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Malaysia Consumers Movement (MCM) secretary-general Sukhdave Singh said complaints have increased during the pandemic as more rely on online purchases and delivery.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">◆Consumers must ensure that they only use reliable online platforms when making purchases.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">◆It is important to do background checks on random sites. This is not difficult as information is readily available on the internet,◆ he told FMT.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Sukhdave said online shopping platforms should ensure that there is a proper redress mechanism in place should a consumer file a complaint.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">◆It is easier to deal with reputable sellers but the problem arises when it involves smaller companies, especially those based overseas,◆ he said.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">◆Online shopping firms should have information on all the companies allowed to trade on their platforms.◆</p> <p>◆</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Source: https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2021/08/06/frustration-builds-over-refunds-from-online-shopping-platforms/</p>