



## **Awareness drive to promote iodised salt's consumption launched**

In collaboration with Unicef, TheNetwork for Consumer Protection has launched a campaign "Advocating and promoting the consumption of iodised salt to combat iodine deficiency." Sources told *Business Recorder* here on Saturday that iodine deficiency was a public health problem in Pakistan where 50 percent of the population was at risk - 72 percent of children are iodine deficient and two million are born with mental impairment.'

According to the recent National Nutrition Survey (NNS)-2011, 64 percent of the country's population has knowledge about iodised salt, but only 40 percent use it for cooking, 70 percent of households in the country cannot link it with any problem, 26 percent link it with goiter while negligible (four percent only) consider it as cause of intellectual impairment. There is a dire need for raising awareness among the consumers and create demand for iodised salt consumption to prevent iodine deficiency disorders in Pakistan.

In consultation with Unicef, TheNetwork for Consumer Protection has launched a campaign "Advocating and promoting the consumption of iodised salt to combat iodine deficiency disorders". The advocacy is aimed at sensitising consumers through media to opt for iodised salt as simple and easy remedy for preventable mental impairment. The campaign is focusing on the critical impact of iodine deficiency, causing 10-15 point loss in IQ level, resulting in retarded mental growth, low school performance and higher school dropouts. According to the TheNetwork for Consumer Protection, it is believed that media plays a pivotal role in influencing the behaviour change process.