

Not falling prey to loan sharks

- **Say no to "easy" money** Never turn to individuals offering money loans through quick procedures against high interests or other heavy terms.
- **If possible, choose a bank** Go to licensed banks or finance companies only and always be aware of the cost of the money you borrow.
- **Licensed finance companies** When you turn to a finance company, ensure they are duly authorized and always check all terms are clearly indicated in the contract.
- **Credit Guarantee Consortia and Anti-usury Foundation** If no banks are in a position to grant you a loan, turn to a Credit Guarantee Consortium or to the nearest Anti-usury Foundation.
- **Report the usurer to the police** Report the loan shark to the police authorities as soon as possible. There's no time to waste: the sooner you report the extortioner the sooner you will go back to a normal life. As a matter of fact, the law gives support to victims of usury who report their loan-sharks.
- **Be smart** Be smart so as to nail the usurer: your report will be more effective if you can produce abundant and detailed evidence.
- **Assert your rights** Assert your rights. Remember that usurers cannot force you into bankruptcy, and that no interest is due if the usury is proven.
- **Ask for help** Do not act on your own: look for support from a trade association or an anti-usury foundation or organization.
- **Understanding the reasons** If you cannot get a loan from your bank, ask for an explanation and try to understand the reasons for their refusal.
- **Read the clauses** Read all contract clauses carefully when you are granted a loan: bear in mind that the rates proposed and all other conditions can be bargained for.

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