

Non-Smokers Health Ordinance 2002 to be implemented

OUR STAFF REPORTER

FAISALABAD - DCO Saeed Wahlah has pledged that collaborated measures would be taken for the implementation of 'Prohibition of Smoking for Protection of Non-Smokers Health Ordinance 2002' in the district for achieving the desired results as govt's commitments.

He was presiding over a meeting of District Implementation Committee (DIC), which was constituted by the Punjab health department in order to coordinate the mechanism of implementation of the relevant laws. The DCO informed that the federal ministry of health had also established 'Tobacco Control Cell' for providing catalytical /technical support and manifesting govt commitment besides constitutions of DICs by the Punjab health department.

He said the special campaign would be launched in the district for creating awareness among the general public and govt department as well for sensitising against the hazardous effects of smoking on human health.

Unfolding the plan of anti-smoking drive, the DCO informed that a circular would be issued to declare all the district govt offices and education institutes smoking-free as defined in the relevant ordinance while awareness seminars would also be arranged in schools and colleges besides organising speech/posters competitions on tobacco hazards.

He asked the City Traffic Officer to hold the meeting with transporters to sensitise them about the prohibition of smoking in public vehicles under law and stickers pertaining to the slogans of anti-smoking and injurious effects of use of tobacco should be placed in public transport.

The DCO said that the food inspectors would also be mobilised to educate the hotels/restaurants managements for implementing the prohibition of smoking ordinance. He said that

behavioural change was needed in the society to make the railway stations, hospitals, conference rooms, restaurants, wagon/bus stands, gymnasium clubs, indoor stadium and other public places smoking-free. He said that under the law, the youth under 18 cannot be sold cigarette by the vendors and storage, sale and distribution of cigarette within 15 meters of educational institutions was prohibited under the law but there was crises of implementation of concerned law in this regard.

He directed the relevant departments to prepare a comprehensive plan for launching plan for anti-smoking drive. Additional Director General Implementation (FCTC) Dr Shahid Mehmud Qazi briefed the meeting about the Tobacco Control Legislation and Implementation. He said tobacco use in Pakistan is among the highest in South East Asian region and there are approximately 100,000 tobacco related deaths annually in the country.

He said that an average 300 Pakistanis died every day due to tobacco related causes and 5,000 were admitted to hospitals. He said that the youth of Pakistan were being targeted by the tobacco industry in particular and as approximately 1,200 young Pakistanis between the ages of 6 and 15 years took up smoking every day.

Dr Qazi said that the diseases like cancer, cardiovascular, respiratory, reproductive, neonatology and endocrine caused by cigarettes to the smokers. He informed the details of implementation mechanism and hoped that desired results could be achieved through the efforts of District Implementation Committee. EDO Health Dr Capt Siddique, Prov Coordinator for Tobacco Control Punjab Dr Salman Shahid, EDO Literary Asif Tarar, SP Admn Robin Yamin, SAO Muhammad Saeed Dilohn, DO Social Welfare Kausar Ali Gill and General Secretary Insdad-e-Munshiat Muhammad Anwar Khan attended the meeting.