



# ADVOCACY NEWSLETTER ON TOBACCO Control Reforms

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1** One picture on a pack says a thousand words
- 2** Tobacco Control: How you can make the difference?
- 3** Activities
- 5** Media Scan

**G**overnment of Pakistan finally announced on the occasion of "World No tobacco Day" on May 31 to implement its earlier decision to print pictorial health warnings on cigarette packs and all other outer packings of tobacco product.

It is a welcome step which was overdue since May 31, 2009 when the authorities committed to print health warnings after Pakistan became a party to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). It is believed that prominent health warnings showing the hazardous effects of tobacco on human health prove instrumental in creating awareness about the long term consequences of smoking.

Tobacco has become a leading killer in Pakistan where an estimated 33% males and 4.7% females smoke and this percentage is increasing day by day. About 100,000 people annually die due to tobacco-related diseases. In this backdrop pictorial warnings become important as more than fifty percent of population of the country is illiterate and tobacco consumption in form of smoking and smoke-less tobacco is growing in youth and women, which are the most vulnerable section of society.

Pakistan was using text warnings on cigarette packages but they were woefully ineffective to get attention of smokers and communicating health risks or motivating smokers to quit. After Pakistan announced pictorial warnings on cigarette packaging as a measure to reduce tobacco consumption, the health ministry adopted regulations to implement the pictorial warnings from January 2010. But the tobacco industry became active and the decision was delayed. However, the civil society waged a historic struggle to persuade the government to go ahead and implement the decision.

The printing of pictorial health

## Implementation of pictorial health warnings

warnings is a great achievement in the history of tobacco control in Pakistan, and both the government and the civil society have a reason to celebrate it. It shows that commitment to a right cause and patience to work harder pay at the end. It gives courage to the protagonists of tobacco control to set new goal posts for greater objective of tobacco free Pakistan.

It is also important to add a cautious note here as Pakistan has a history of improper implementation of decisions. It has been seen that some of the best actions taken by the government were not implemented in letter and spirit, thus bringing great initiatives to a sad end. It is hoped that current leadership at tobacco control cell of Ministry of Health will monitor the actual printing of health warnings and no body will be allowed to violate the set standards in this regard and the decision about health warnings will be implemented. The current leadership deserves the credit for setting in motion the process of implementation of pictorial health warnings.

TheNetwork for Consumer Protection stands with the government in its tobacco control efforts.



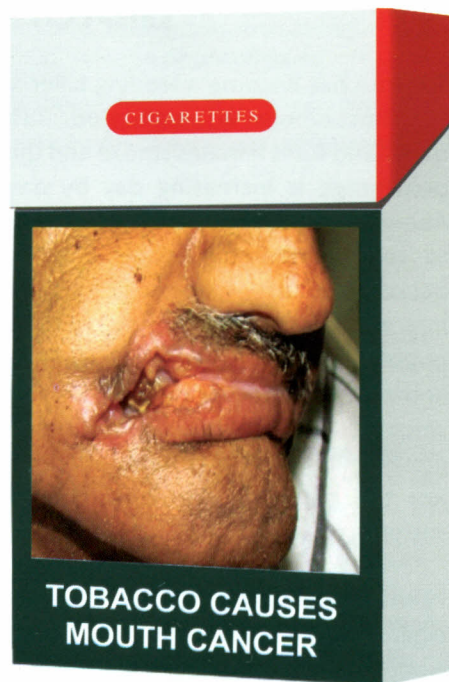
# One picture on a pack says a thousand words

By Dr Arif Azad

**O**n the day of World No Tobacco days on May 31 all over the world, a flurry of events are organized to highlight the deadly effects of tobacco on human health. Tobacco has been in use for centuries, with no countervailing public health campaign to raise public consciousness of its fatally harmful effects. This is beginning to change in recent decades, with tobacco control advocates becoming more visible and making highly visible interventions. As a result public education about health effects of smoking is gaining an uncontested hold. To say that tobacco kills 5.4 million people every year world wide no longer produces howls of protests. This is largely due to growing world wide tobacco movement which is coming into its own since the introduction of Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. This treaty, drafted under the aegis of World Health Organization (WHO), was adopted by world health assembly in 2003. So far 168 countries have signed up to this landmark treaty which places mandatory obligations upon all the parties to the treaty to incorporate the FCTC into domestic legislation to give teeth to domestic legislation on tobacco control. Like other countries Pakistan ratified the FCTC on 3rd November 2004 binding herself into legal obligations enshrined in the framework convention. FCTC is a comprehensive convention which embraces full panoply of tobacco control measures which, if fully adhered to, can make a big dent to tobacco consumption worldwide.

This document has proved to be the single most important document in the armoury of governments and public health activists to boost joined

up tobacco control efforts. With tobacco regulation regimes becoming more stringent in the west, tobacco industry has targeted developing countries for business expansion. In a year end review, the Guardian weekly, in its 18-31 December 2009 issue, surveying the state of tobacco industry's profitability, revealed that while profit of big tobacco giants have fallen in Europe and elsewhere where tobacco control laws are strict, the tobacco industry has more than made up for these losses by making



record profits from countries like Pakistan and Nigeria. In Pakistan 274 people die every day on account of tobacco causes disease. Yet tobacco control efforts in Pakistan have been sluggish and patchily enforced despite health officials and tobacco control advocates' oft-repeated knowledge that cigarette smoking has been on the rise.

Again, like global tobacco control movement, this may be about to change in Pakistan as well thanks to one provision of FCTC which the

government of Pakistan has pledged to honor in implementation in recent years. The provision relates to article 11 of FCTC which requires all member countries to introduce picture based health warnings to stem the rising tide of smoking epidemic.

Pictorial health warnings have been demonstrated to be effective in making smokers aware of ill effects of smoking on health; embracing the intention of either quitting smoking or indeed quitting smoking; doing away with smoking within homes. Since, together, these interrelated actions add to reduction in smoking, industry has resolutely, and with some success, resisted the introduction of pictorial health warnings. One simple reason for resistance, apart from falling revenues from reduced sales, is the fear of losing out industry's carefully cultivated area of cigarette pack to public health campaigners.

It is important to keep in mind that ever since the introduction of restrictions on tobacco advertising, cigarette pack has become the vehicle for subtle advertising by tobacco industry. This has taken various forms from making cigarette pack attractive by sophisticated design, using different colours to convey different message about smoking being cool or using terms like mild or tar to make smoking look less hazardous than it actually is. That is why everything from previously textual health warnings to recently pictorial health warnings have been robustly resisted by the industry to protect its last resort advertising space from being squeezed by counters public messages and pictures. Article 11 and existing best practices are quite



clear cut and stipulate that pictorial health warnings should be concise and clear, rotated regularly and shocking pictures should desirably occupy 50 percent of the front and back of a cigarette pack. These clear cut specifications of article 11 are already beginning to make their way into domestic legislation of many countries, with Australia heading into the direction of plain packing and Paraguay introducing pictorial warning on 90 percent of the cigarettes pack

Despite this massive financial and political pressure being applied on the governments, a sizeable and growing number of governments are increasingly leaning in the direction of introducing pictorial health warnings. This is a happy augury for

public health advocates and government concerned with protection of health of their citizens. This year world no tobacco day brought glad tidings for Pakistan where the government is finally heading in the direction of implementing article 11 of FCTC

Pakistan made significant leap forward on pictorial warning legislation when, on 31 May 2009, on world no tobacco day, the then federal minister for health, Mir Ijaz Jakarani, announced the introduction of pictorial warnings on cigarette pack by 1 January 2010. This put Pakistan among 20 or more lead countries that have undertaken to implement article 11 of FCTC. One year after the announcement, the decision to implement came into

force on 31 of May 2010 when Director General Tobacco control cell, ministry of health, Yusuf Khan, announced the implementation. This long overdue step needs greater appreciation than has been accorded so far as Pakistan becomes among very few countries that has taken this leap forward. The next difficult step remains of implementing and monitoring its enforcement. Government and tobacco control activists now shoulder a heavy responsibility of ensuring effective implementation of pictorial health warnings. This is crucial tobacco control tool in a country where literacy rate is lower than some of regional countries. In such a scenario, one picture on a cigarette pack says what thousand words cannot.

---

## Tobacco Control: How you can make the difference?

*By Mehnaz Ajmal Paracha*

(It is the second part of the article that appeared in the previous news letter)

**T**obacco control is a diverse and complicated area of work. It involves various stakeholders and needs clear understanding and findings in term of population surveillance on the prevalence of tobacco use, tobacco consumption, interventions by the health professionals, policies and initiatives by the policy makers and implementers as well as complete assessment of population at risk, health problems caused by tobacco and tobacco use behavior, context of youth tobacco use and social consequences. Not only this, it also requires to monitor tobacco industry and to investigate tobacco allied

groups in order to assess the link between general factors.

Based on the existing evidences and observations, it is pertinent to share that in recent years tobacco consumption in Pakistan has increased. In South Asia, Pakistan is one of those countries which are having the largest youth population. This young population is the main target and market of the industry. Similarly weak implementation of the anti-tobacco policies in the country, weak regulatory mechanisms and low rates of tobacco, provides a potential market to tobacco industry. In order to develop a robust, action oriented understanding of a country's tobacco control situation there is need to first raise awareness among various stakeholders about

their role in tobacco control measures in order to strengthen collaboration among actors involved in tobacco control in the country.

### Government servants

Government servants are key implementer of the law in its real spirit at grass roots level, and they can also keep check on the violations





of anti tobacco law. They can help devise tobacco control strategies besides, being the main source of implementation. They can help:

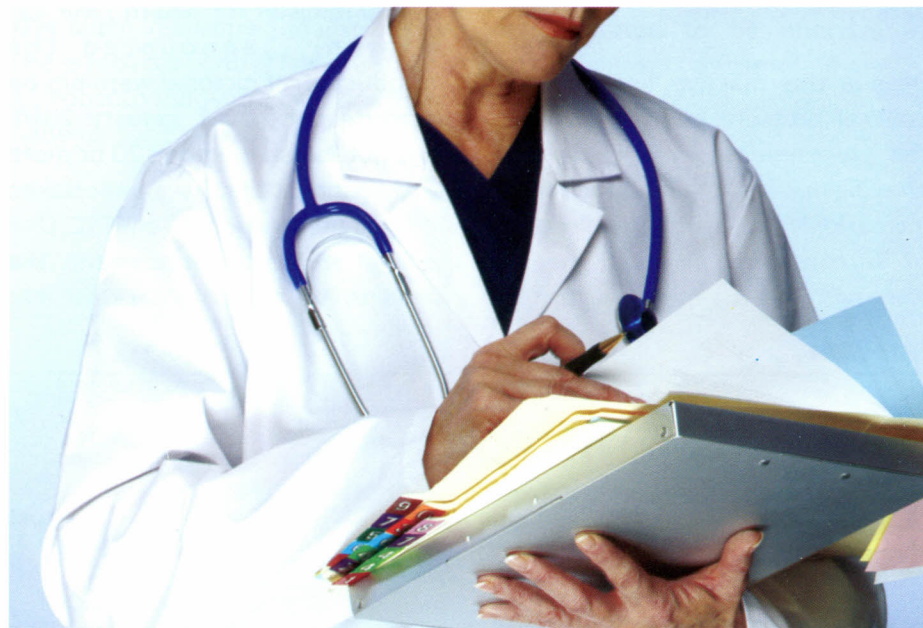
1. To build and increase the capacity of the policy makers and implementing agencies at national, provincial and district level in tobacco control, to plan, implement, and evaluate tobacco control programs.
2. To define practical modalities for creating, strengthening and sustaining partnership between tobacco control advocates and parliamentarians in order to support comprehensive tobacco control at all levels.
3. Ensure enactment and enforcement of comprehensive legislation including tax increase.
4. Capacity enhancement in comprehensive tobacco control planning, implementation and evaluation.<sup>1</sup>
5. Discourage undue pressure by the tobacco industry and reliance on tobacco generated revenue.
6. Ensure production and provision of evidence-based information to enable effective policy advocacy.
7. Ensure comprehensive enforcement and regulation on tobacco control at national, provincial and districts levels.
8. Dissemination of data on economic benefits of tobacco control to counter false claims by the tobacco industry.
9. To build a national coalition of all stakeholders including civil society for tobacco control
10. To develop a comprehensive and holistic national policy framework for tobacco control
11. To provide technical and

financial assistance to those involved in tobacco control

12. To monitor and evaluate the success of anti-tobacco laws across the country.

### Health professionals<sup>2</sup>

Smoking in all forms including cigarettes is cause of major non-communicable diseases. According to a WHO research report, tobacco use is a risk factor for six of the eight



leading causes of deaths in the world. Tobacco's deleterious effects on health include increased risks of heart and lung disease and as many as fourteen types of cancer.

Health professionals are the key workforce and human resource, having the trust of people from social, economic and political arenas. They can play a prominent role in tobacco control at local, national and international level, both professionally and individually. In the health sector, health professionals can bring forth the disadvantages of tobacco use and educate people. They are obviously

the final authority and hold the extra advantage of being successful in tobacco control as compared to other professionals and can bring behavioral change in society at large. They can help in the following ways:

1. Be a tobacco-free model by quitting smoking.
2. Make people aware of the consequences of tobacco use and exposure to second hand smoke and help and educate tobacco users to overcome the addiction.
3. Be initiators, promoters and supporters of smoke free workplaces, public transport, sport events, hotels. Display and make available communication material in their workplaces about tobacco control.
4. Influence local, provincial and national governments to ban tobacco advertising and promotion, and ban on sale to minors.
5. Introduce tobacco control in the public health agenda at country level by highlight the scientific evidences, politics and

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.afro.who.int/tfi/publications/nairobi\\_meeting\\_proceedings.pdf](http://www.afro.who.int/tfi/publications/nairobi_meeting_proceedings.pdf),

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.fdiworldental.org/public\\_health/assets/Tobacco/Tobacco\\_or\\_Oral\\_Health.pdf](http://www.fdiworldental.org/public_health/assets/Tobacco/Tobacco_or_Oral_Health.pdf),

[http://strategyguides.globalink.org/pdfs/guide1\\_AdvocacyGuide.pdf](http://strategyguides.globalink.org/pdfs/guide1_AdvocacyGuide.pdf)



economics of tobacco.

6. Introduce the tobacco control contents in curricula of health professionals.
7. Use the print and electronic media especially health journalists on tobacco control related issues, and contribute and encourage news stories, features, radio and TV program.
8. Contribute to the formulation of national plans of action for tobacco control and help establishing a coalition.
9. Awareness raising on tobacco industry strategies to influence policy makers and health professionals on any scientific research, association, donations and gifts.
10. Raise their voices and can campaign against national and international tobacco control efforts i.e. implementation of "Prohibition of Smoking and Protection of Non-smokers' Health Ordinance 2002", promoting the FCTC and tax increase on tobacco industry.

### Parliamentarians

Tobacco is a problem faced by the whole country and all national, provincial and district level policy makers need to take lead in fine-tuning the existing laws and provide oversight to the implementation mechanisms. Government of Pakistan announced a landmark decision to implement pictorial warnings on cigarette packs and joined the select list of countries effectively using picture based

warnings. Ministry of Health announced amendments in the Printing of Warning Ordinance 1979 to incorporate pictorial health warning into domestic law. The ministry announced on May 31, 2009 that above mentioned warnings will come into effect from January 1, 2010 and tobacco industry was given a time period of six months to comply with the amendments.

In order to ensure strict enforcement of the current legislation at all level, parliamentarians can use their positions in the assemblies and play the role of policy makers in protecting the health and rights of the citizens and consumers that they represent.

**Smoking bans in public places would be politically popular.**

### They can contribute to tobacco control by following ways:

1. The policy of "No-smoking" in parliaments should be promoted.
2. Promote the cause of "Tobacco free Pakistan at all forums and create a core group of parliamentarians to advocate control at national and international level.
3. The lawmakers in Pakistan can lobby against tobacco use within the parliament, make tobacco control a part of their political party manifesto and draft comprehensive tobacco control parliamentary bill.
4. Parliamentarians can be more actively involved in building comprehensive, cohesive and synergetic systems for reducing tobacco use in the country by involving the standing

parliamentary committees on health, education, commerce and industry.

5. Take steps for the enforcement and implementation of the tobacco control legislation at federal, provincial and district levels.
6. Establish a comprehensive system of tobacco control, using not only anti-tobacco laws but also taxation of tobacco and tobacco products, health education, social mobilization and stringent control of the direct and indirect practices of the tobacco industry.
7. Raise voice and exert their influence for necessary amendments in the current anti-tobacco legislation and liaise with relevant civil society organization to use their expertise in research and advocacy on tobacco control.
8. Ensure transparency in government interaction with the tobacco industry and in tobacco industry activities and operations.
9. Emphasize the tobacco's industry fundamental conflict with public health.
10. Use the print and electronic media, to speak on tobacco control related issues, and encourage radio and TV program
11. Contribute to the formulation of national plans of actions for tobacco control.
12. Help develop and strengthen initiatives by national and international parliaments to implement relevant WHO recommendations.

**Show leadership and become role models.**





# Activities

## Poster competition on "tobacco control and youth"



TheNetwork for consumer protection (TN) organized a poster competition on the theme of "Tobacco Control and Youth", aimed at encouraging students to better understand the danger of tobacco. The organizers received more than 40 posters from different universities including National University of Modern Languages, Hamdard University Islamabad Campus, Islamabad Medical and Dental College, SKANS School of Accountancy and Bharia Medical and Dental College Karachi. The posters were reviewed by jury including Mr. Abbass Shah, Ex Chief Designer PTV/ Art teacher for sculpture at National College of Arts – Rawalpindi Campus, Mr. Zia Zaidi, Chief Executive ZEED Muralist and Mr. Riffat Khattak, Chief Designer Ministry of Population.

### Certificates, Cash prizes and shields were given to winning students.

The group of students from Bahira Medical and Dental College, Karachi was awarded the first prize for his poster and cash prize of 15000/- Ms.



Sarah Hussain, MBBS 2nd Year from Islamabad Medical and Dental College, got the second prize and cash award of Rs. 12000/- Ms. Attifa Muhktar Chaudary, 3rd Year, D. pharmacy, Hamdard University – Islamabad bagged the third prize and cash prize of Rs. 10,000/- While the consolation prize of Rs. 5000/- was awarded to the student of Islamabad Medical and Dental College, who has prepared the three dimensional model of cigarette pack showing picture warnings on it.

### Media coverage of poster competition

The poster competition was given wide coverage by the media. Representatives from daily "The News", Radio Pakistan, FM-93, Dunya TV, and FM-97 attended the event.

Talking to various media organizations Mehnaz Ajmal and Waheed Iqbal discussed about the demand of packaging reforms, its objectives and outcome. Dr. Arif Azad, Abbas Shah, Zia Zaidi, Dr. Farwa Rizvi, Dr. Adul Star Chaudhary and students talked about various aspects of the tobacco use, consumptions and hazards.

### World no tobacco day 2010

TheNetwork planned a series of awareness raising activities around Pictorial Health Warnings, before and on the day of World No Tobacco Day (31st May 2010). Some of them are listed below:

- 1- Public service messages on "Importance of Packaging Reforms/Pictorial Health Warnings on Cigarette Packs"
- 2- Radio FM Sunrise Pakistan Broadcast 24 hour programs from FM-97 Islamabad, FM -96 Sargohda, FM-96 Sahiwal and FM-95 Jehlum to entertain and educate listeners of wide range area of Punjab province and Islamabad Capital Territory.
- 3- On 31st May 2010 – World No Tobacco Day, 24 hours public service messages from 09:00 AM to 08:00 PM on FM-97 Islamabad, FM-96 Sargodha, FM-95 Jehlum were broadcast. Free of cost, one week campaign of public service messages (10 spots daily) were also aired after world no tobacco day.
- 4- Total 864 public service messages on packaging reforms were broadcasted on three regional channels of Sunrise





Pakistan (288 messages per channel).

### **Radio program on "Importance of Packaging Reforms"**

A radio talk show on "Importance of Packaging Reforms" was broadcast on 31st May 2010 on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day at FM-97 Islamabad at 07:20 PM – 08:00 PM. The speakers of the program were Mehnaz Ajmal Paracha - Advocacy and Research Coordinator - TheNetwork for Consumer Protection and Waheed Iqbal, Assistant Project Coordinator - Tobacco Control – TN. In addition to appreciating the government's decision about implementation of pictorial warnings, the discussion covered the requirements of the "Prohibition of Smoking and Protection of Non-Smokers Health Ordinance 2002", its violation and penalties.

### **Banners display at main avenues in Islamabad**



Around 100 banners were displayed for three days (31st May 2010 to 2nd June 2010) at ten major avenues, markets and bus stops including 7th Avenue, 9th Avenue, Jinnah Super Market F-7, Super market F-6, G-9 Markaz, F-8 Markaz, F-10 Markaz, Zero Point, Melody market, and Aabpara Chowk. The main focus of the banners was to create demand for packaging reforms, promote tobacco control, mobilize stakeholders, create awareness among youth, and help implement

activities on World No Tobacco Day 2010.

### **Joint press conference**

The Network along with Coalition for Tobacco Control and Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Center addressed a press conference on 31st May 2010 at Islamabad Press Club from 03:00 PM - 04:00 PM, and strongly appreciated the government's land



mark decision about the implementation of packaging. The speakers said that graphic warnings play a vital role in a country like Pakistan, where majority of adult population is illiterate, to highlight the ill-effects of smoking and help people quit the habit. They said it was a great achievement in the history of tobacco control in Pakistan to implement pictorial warnings, however still there is dire need to adopt more stringent measures for effective implementation of tobacco control law and to strategize the enforcement mechanism. The speakers said tobacco was leading killer in the world including Pakistan where about 100,000 people die due to tobacco-related diseases every year.

### **Stickers campaign with Traffic Police Islamabad.**

For awareness rising on pictorial health warnings and tobacco control and to create demand for packaging reforms, TN carried stickers-campaign in collaboration with the Islamabad traffic police. Around



1500 stickers were printed with two specific messages:

Implementation of pictorial warnings on cigarette packs leads to decrease in mortality rate, and smoking is prohibited at public places and public transport. Three crowded bus stops in Islamabad were selected where three groups, each one consisting of two TN's representatives and one representative of traffic police, were present to provide stickers to motorists. Each group with 500 stickers, newsletters and posters covered one bus stop.

### **Talk show on ATV**

The Network arranged a talk show on ATV to highlight the importance of pictorial warnings. The participants were: Yousuf Khan, DG Implementation FCTC, Ministry of Health, Hassan Raza Pasha, former secretary health, and Dr Arif Azad executive coordinator The Network. The participants talked at length about the issue and concluded that pictorial health warnings will go a long way to reduce smoking in the country.

### **Dr Arif Azad article on WNTD**

The Network, executive coordinator's Dr Arif Azad article on the importance of pictorial warnings on cigarette packs was carried by TheNews on May 30, 2010, ahead of World No Tobacco Day (WNTD).



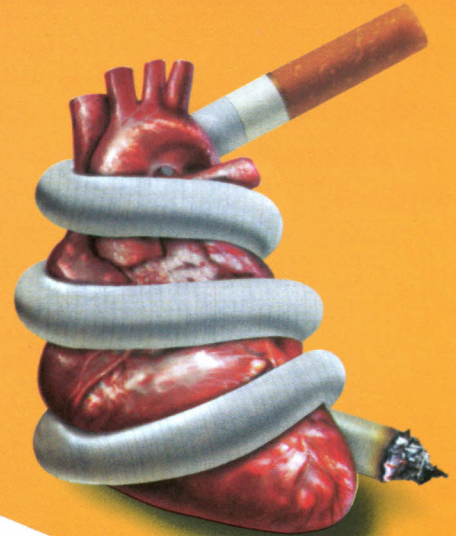
## Heart attack cases declines

Anti-smoking laws in England prevented, 1200 heart attacks in their first year, according to a study published by the British Medical Journal (BMJ).

The analysis is based on emergency hospital admissions for England, a country with a population of 49

million, from July 2002 to September 2008. The legislation, introduced on July 1, 2007, outlawed smoking in all enclosed work places and public such as bars and restaurants. In its first year of implementation, there was a significant drop of 2.4 percent in acute myocardial infarction, the paper says. Men and women aged over 60 were the biggest beneficiaries.

Source: The News June 9, 2010



## Paraguay increases pictorial warnings

Paraguay is aiming for pictorial warnings to cover 60 per cent of the top of cigarette packaging front and back by 2012.

According to current world rankings, this amount of coverage will bring Paraguay into second place (tied with Mauritius), after Uruguay which has 80 per cent coverage front and back. Paraguay will implement its warnings in three stages.

Stage one, implemented by 7 April 2010, pictorial warnings must cover the bottom 50 per cent of the package front, and the bottom 40 per cent of the package back.

Stage two, to be implemented by 7 April 2011, pictorial warnings must cover the bottom 50 per cent of the package front and back.

Stage three, to be implemented by 7 April 2012, pictorial warnings must cover the top 60 per cent of the package front and back.

Paraguay will also require a message on side panels concerning toxic emissions but with no ISO machine yield numbers included. Descriptors such as "light" and "mild" will also be prohibited.

[http://www.ftc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=338:paraguay-increases-pictorial-warnings&catid=239:packaging-and-labelling&Itemid=243](http://www.ftc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=338:paraguay-increases-pictorial-warnings&catid=239:packaging-and-labelling&Itemid=243)

## Pakistan imposes FED on cigarettes

Islamabad: The government of Pakistan has increased federal excise duty (FED) on cigarettes on all three slabs.

After the imposition of FED, the rate of FED has been increased from 4.75 percent to 5.25 percent on price of 10 cigarettes per packet, and on cigarettes price per packet from Rs 10 to Rs 19.50, the rate of FED has been increased from 4.75 percent plus 70 percent of retail price incremental to 5.25 percent plus 70 percent incremental value at retail stage.

For third slab, where the price of cigarette per packet is more than Rs 19.50 the rate of FED has been jacked up to 65 percent from existing 64 percent.

The upward revision of FED rates on cigarettes will generate net additional revenues by Rs. 13 billion in 2010-11. The government has imposed Federal Excise Duty @ Rs. 1/- per filter rod for cigarettes. The filter plug is a material used at the one end of cigarette stick to filter the smoke. One filter rod is sufficient for manufacturing six cigarettes.

## Government allocates funds for Tobacco Control Cell

Islamabad: With the government announcing a budgetary allocation of Rs30 million per year over next two years for tobacco control, the woes of the financially-starved Tobacco Control Cell have finally been heard. And with this financial cushion comes the commitment to make 2010 a year that will go down in the history of tobacco control in Pakistan as one marked by tangible progress in 'enforcement' of anti-tobacco laws.

**Disclaimer:** This Newsletter has been produced with grant from the World Lung Foundation or the Tobacco Free Kids Action Fund. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the authors and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases (The Union), the Tobacco Free Kids Action Fund (TFKAF) or the donors.

Editor-in-chief  
Dr Arif Azad

Editor  
Sajjad Malik

Assistant Editor  
Waheed Iqbal

Graphic Designer  
Muhammad Rafiq



**The Network**  
for Consumer Protection

Flat No. 5, 2nd Floor, 40-A, Ramzan Plaza,  
G-9 Markaz, Islamabad, Pakistan.  
Ph: +92 51 2261085 Fax: +92 51 2262495  
E-mail: [main@thenetwork.org.pk](mailto:main@thenetwork.org.pk)  
Website: [www.thenetwork.org.pk](http://www.thenetwork.org.pk)