

Govt asked to implement anti-smoking laws

Speakers call 'Shesha' smoking more deadlier than passive smoking

By our correspondent

RAWALPINDI: Sweeping measures should be taken to strictly implement anti-tobacco rules in Rawalpindi District because 22.16 percent households have at least one smoker in the family here.

The local media has a vital role to play in the implementation and monitoring of anti-tobacco laws by reporting any violation of the Prohibition of Smoking and Protection of Non-Smokers Health Ordinance 2002, and creating awareness among the general public about hazards of smoking.

The latest data from Pakistan Social and Living Standards



The Network for Consumers Rights holds seminar on anti-smoking laws

Measurement Survey (PSLM), conducted by the Federal Bureau of Statistics, GoP, reveals that 35.1 percent households have at least one smoker in

Gujrat, 34.4 in Attock and 34.43 in Chakwal. Though situation in Rawalpindi is little better, it could not be ignored. This was the crux of a meeting of The Network for Consumer Protection with journalists and the civil society held at a local hotel on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, Pakistan Medical Association

(PMA) Rawalpindi chapter President Dr Arshad Rana said tobacco had become a social ill, which needed to be stopped at all costs. He said the media was already playing a vital in creating awareness about hazards of smoking. TN advocacy and research coordinator Dr Arif Azad said printing of

pictorial health warnings on cigarette packs was a landmark achievement of anti-tobacco advocates that could be made possible only with the cooperation of the media. He said the journalist com-

munity was also sincerely supporting the endeavours of the civil society to ensure the implementation of anti-tobacco rules.

"The sale of cigarettes to children under 18 and smoking in public

places is continued unchecked due to feeble law implementation machinery," he said, adding even retailers sold cigarette packs with stickers of their shops pasted on pictorial health warnings, but there was nobody to take action against them. "Past surveys reported that 55 percent of the

households had at least one smoker. In Pakistan, 274 people die tobacco-related diseases daily," he added. Dr Anwar Raffay also gave a brief introduction of legislative against smoking and efforts of the media to create awareness about smoking. He said printing of pictorial health warning on cigarette packs was a praiseworthy step. He said Pakistan had alarmingly high rates of tobacco consumption with attendant chronic illnesses. "At least 25% of deaths in the country occur due to tobacco-related diseases such as heart attack, stroke cancer and chronic respiratory conditions," he added.