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## Courts, bars to be smoke-free

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**ISLAMABAD, June 28: The leaders of Rawalpindi and Islamabad lawyers community on Thursday agreed to work for making the premises of courts and bar associations smoke-free.**

Islamabad Bar Association president, Syed Javaid Akbar Shah, and the Rawalpindi Bar Association president, Sajid Ilyas Bhatti extended the support at a session of professional bodies and citizen groups, which was organised by ‘TheNetwork for Consumer Protection’.

The smoke-free courts and bar associations will create a positive impact and set an example for different segments of the society, Mr. Nadeem Iqbal, Executive Coordinator of TheNetwork said while applauding the Rawalpindi and Islamabad bar associations announcement.

Dr Hassan Mahmood, Project Coordinator Tobacco Control of the TheNetwork made a comprehensive presentation to elucidate the misconceptions related to tobacco use. Smokeless tobacco is as dangerous to health as smoking tobacco, Dr Mahmood said.

“Tobacco is deadly in any form or disguise,” he added.

Pakistan needs strong political will to stop the tobacco epidemic that kills more than 274 people each day. Recently held UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro also acknowledged “the global burden and threat of non-communicable diseases which constitutes one of the major challenges for sustainable development in the 21st century”.

Tobacco is a strong risk factor for all four top non-communicable diseases and number one preventable global killer, said Mr Iqbal.

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