

Runaway bride

Shakira has
no plans
to marry
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Non-implementation of laws

Tobacco addiction in youth on rise

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ISLAMABAD - Even in the presence of anti-smoking law, tobacco addiction is spreading fast in youth especially females who are often seen busy in smoking at posh sectors of the Federal Capital without realising its harmful effects on health.

The 'Prohibition of Smoking and Protection of Non-smokers Health Ordinance 2002' includes measures to stop people from smoking in public. Under the law, police are authorised to expel anyone found smoking in a public place, and the use of force, if necessary, is also permitted under Section 12 of the Ordinance. But despite the fact it was never implemented, as it should have been.

The situation regarding increasing smoking trend is turning from bad to worse not only in rural but also in the urban

areas of the country. Restaurants, cafés, picnic spots, huts and other public places are openly used for smoking, revealing the fact that more and more youth especially girls and women are becoming tobacco user as a result of changing social norms. The situation can be gagged from the fact that the Bloomberg Initiative's figures revealed that some 25 to 30 million Pakistanis smoke and 1200 young people start smoking each day. An estimated 100000 Pakistanis die each year from tobacco-related illness. According to Pakistan's National Health Survey, 36 percent of men and 9 percent of women smoke.

Tobacco consumption is not limited to cigarettes, but also includes 'beedis' (hand-rolled cigarettes), chewing tobacco and particularly water pipes that have become fashion

among youth a lot. Violations of the anti-smoking laws and increasing smoking trend among young generation reflect the disrespect for rules that prevailed in the country.

In this regard, when contacted Spokesmen of Islamabad Police said, "We have reported 87 cases for smoking at public transport during current year. Under the ordinance we just have responsibility of reporting the smoking cases at public transport and after that sent them to the court for granting punishment or fine."

"Usually people registered their complaints on traffic help line," he informed. As far as smoking at restaurants, cafés or other public places is concerned, he informed, District Administration or Magistrate is concerned authority for reporting the cases.

When approached it was

learnt from the District Administration the ICT Administration has launched a special drive to ensure the implementation of the Prohibition of Smoking and Protection of Non-smokers Health Ordinance 2002 in the Capital and discourage smoking in public service vehicles. In this regard, a concerned official informed that on Friday of last week on the special directions of Chief Commissioner Islamabad and Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Amer Ali Ahmed, Secretary ITA Ch Bashir Ahmed, during checking of public transport vehicles, imposed fines amounting Rs 14,300 on 13 smokers found involved in smoking in public transport vehicles and at bus stops. He also informed, "So far we did not receive any complaint of general public regarding smoking at other places."



-Staff photo