



Action against Shisha smoking sought

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ISLAMABAD - Expressing grave concern over the growing Shisha smoking that is causing addiction to teenagers, citizens have demanded of authorities to initiate proper action.

It is general misconception among the teenagers and youth that Shisha smoking contains less nicotine as compared to the cigarette smoking, as per the survey conducted by TheNation.

Cafés and restaurants are rapidly growing across Pakistan especially in twin cities of

Islamabad and Rawalpindi. "It is social evil being operated under the supervision of police," Muhammad Ali, Zakar Khan, Khawaja Naseem, Zaman Mansoor and others told TheNation.

When contacted, Spokesman Federal Ministry of Health Dr Qazi Abdul Saboor admitted that he was well aware of the reports published by World Health Organisation (WHO) and the studies conducted by different competent organisations across the globe on Shisha smoking menace. "This is indeed 100 times more

dangerous than cigarette for human body," he confirmed.

To a question, the spokesman said anti smoking law 2002 is in place to prevent this sort of addiction activities in Pakistan. Notification has been disseminated to the provincial health ministries of all four provinces and to the heads of law and enforcement agencies as well, he added. "Health education campaign on Shisha smoking will be started very soon," he assured.

When contacted, District Health Officer (DHO) Rawalpindi Khalid Randhawa

said Shisha is less harmful than cigarette smoking. That's why the Pure Food Act 1960 couldn't be imposed on Shisha smoking, he added.

To a question, he pretended unaware of any WHO report or studies on Shisha smoking. "However, I am not having any scientific study to prove that Shisha is less harmful than cigarette smoking," he added.

While scribe visited few of cafes situated in Commercial Market Rawalpindi. It was observed that teenager girls and boys were busy in Shisha smoking.

To a question, Muhammad Bilal student of ICom at Punjab College of Commerce said, "When I started Shisha smoking I remained under coughing for a week time and felt burning in his chest." Another student of Siddique Public School wishing not to be named said, "I went unconscious very first day when I inhaled Shisha, but now it is fine with me".

After repeated attempts, Federal Director General Health Rashid Juma and Secretary Health Khusnud Akhtar Lashari could not be contacted for their comments.