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Mothers demand ban on novel nicotine products

Our correspondent

Islamabad

A group of 60 women, representing all four provinces, Azad Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, minorities, political activists from all mainstream and religious political parties, met in Islamabad for two days to discuss harmful effects on tobacco and novel nicotine products.

These representative women called 'Concerned Mothers' met with MNAs Naeema Kishwar Khan, Ghazala Khan, Mahjabeen Abbasi, Huma Chughtai and Saher Kamran. A comprehensive briefing was given to the Concerned Mothers by the officials of Tobacco Control Cell of the Government of Pakistan. The concerned mothers, whose children and family members are on the risk of smoking, resolved that the taxes on all tobacco products should be increased so that such products could not be in the purchasing power of youth and an incremental decrease in the use of tobacco is achieved.

MNA Naeema Kishwar Khan said that during the years the parliament and the government promulgated many laws and regulation through SROs on tobacco control in Pakistan especially Prohibition of smoking in public places, ban on cigarette sales to children under 18, and in 500 meter radius of education institutions,

Prohibition of a pack of less than 20 sticks, mandatory health warnings on cigarette packs and a price ceiling.'

MNA Naeema Kishwar Khan promised that we, as parliamentarians shall do whatever is needed for tobacco control. MNA Saher Kamran said in her closing remarks that as a parliamentarian, previous tenure as Senator, and now member of the National Assembly, she always raises voice at the floor of the house as well as in public arenas like media, social media, and public gatherings for the public interest especially for weaker segments of our society like children, women and minorities. She informed that the provincial government of Sindh banned gutka and Sheesha cafés.

MNA Saher said, "I am mindful and working with Aurat Foundation and civil society for stricter control of tobacco, its other products like gutka, cigar, niswar, biri as well as banning novel products injurious to health. I am working with Women Parliamentary Caucus to amend existing laws on tobacco and introducing new laws banning novel nicotine products like vapes. She continued, "New products are targeting youth in our educational institutions, we need to take measures to address this issue not only by creating awareness but also to make related laws."