

Smoke Out



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The Monthly Newsletter

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Khmer Quit Now!
Helping you gain
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UN Calls On Prime Minister to Ratify Historic Treaty

Phnom Penh, 25 June 2003: Following the adoption by health ministers of 192 nations of the World Health Assembly, of the Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (FCTC) the UN and World Bank have asked the Prime Minister **Hun Sen** to strengthen action for tobacco control in Cambodia.



Lung Cancer Caused by Smoking Habit

'I was extremely sorry when the doctor told me that I had lung cancer. I cried out everyday but now my feeling is calm down.' said Mr. Bun Theun, a patient staying at Preah Bat Norodom Sihanouk hospital.

'I am so regret about my husband. I cried out seriously and I was unconscious when the doctor told me at first time that he had lung cancer caused by his smoking habit. If I knew that smoking will harm my husband's health I would ask him to quit for a long time. I want him to be recovered.', said Mr. Bun Theun's wife.

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Singapore Regulation to Require 50% Pictorial Warnings As Of August 1, 2004

Wednesday: Singapore became the first Asian country to require rotational pictorial warnings on cigarette packs to cover at least 50% of the front and back of the package. This new regulation, "Smoking (Control of Advertisements and Sale of Tobacco) Act" will take effect on August 1, 2004. Singapore is the third country, after Canada and Brazil, to require pictorial warnings on cigarette packs. It has legislated six pictures to appear on a rotation basis. Several other Asian countries have also indicated that they are actively reviewing legislating pictorial warnings on cigarette packs. Thailand is in the process of short listing suitable warning pictures to use and is awaiting cabinet approval to change over from text only warning to graphic health warnings.

Through this move Singapore has once again taken the lead in Asia in legislating stringent tobacco control measures. 50% health warnings is the ideal size recommended in the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control recently adopted by the World Health Assembly in Geneva. While the minimum size recommended in the FCTC is 30% with pictorial warnings as a option, Singapore has adopted the ideal. In 1971 Singapore became the first Asian country to ban tobacco advertisements and extended this ban to include indirect advertisements in 1986. In 2000 cigarette retailers in Singapore were licensed.

It will augur well for other Asian countries particularly in the ASEAN to follow suit as warning labels

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smoking tobacco advertisement on the front and back of the pack
The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) requires that at least 50% of the front and back of the pack be covered by pictorial warnings.

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Hem Rady, a medical doctor at Preah Bat Norodom Sihanouk hospital claimed that Mr. Theun has lung cancer and he would not completely recover due to his serious condition.

For twenty four years of being smoker Mr. Bun Theun used to smoke one pack of cigarette a day started when he was 16 years old as he was living in Kampong Cham province. The only reason he quit smoking as he had difficulty of breathing and he heard the about dangers of smoking from TV and radio broadcasting. He tried to quit many times and he was finally quit in 2000.

Mr. Theun's wife said that before she didn't realize about the bad effects of smoking but now she does. She stressed strongly that now she dislike smoking and she will walk away when some one smoking near by her.

Mr. Bun Theun show his sadness and hopeless about his life. At the age of forty three he has two sons and a daughter and he work as a jeweler to earn money for supporting his family. He said that now he much concern about his children.

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Smoke-Out!

Have your say about tobacco use and control in Cambodia! Share your thoughts, your opinions, your ideas, and your questions about cigarettes, tobacco and health. Send letters to : **Smoke-Out!**

To :

----- P.O Box : 105, House: 4, Street: 554,
----- Phnom Penh, Cambodia
----- Telephone: (855) 23 882-634
----- Fax : (855) 23 880-305
----- E-mail:dinas@toh.adracambodia.org

The FCTC is the first ever global health treaty and is a major step forward in the worldwide battle against the death and disease caused by tobacco.

The UN has urged the Prime Minister to join the other forty-one countries and the European Community who began signing the treaty as of 16 June 2003 in Geneva, Switzerland.

"It (The Treaty) provides the basic tools for countries to enact comprehensive tobacco control legislation and take on the powerful tobacco industry. We urge the government to sign and ratify the treaty immediately," said Dr Jim Tulloch, World Health Organisation Representative.

Smoking rates of nearly 60% for Cambodian men are among the highest in the world. Countries that have led the way and introduced tobacco regulation have seen declines in tobacco use. Cambodia has not yet developed similar regulation. The Treaty provides an impetus for change.

According to the WHO representative in Cambodia, Dr Jim Tulloch. "The ratification of the FCTC provides an opportunity to make a stronger effort to regulate tobacco and demonstrates a commitment to public health in Cambodia."

The UN advocates swift actions in Cambodia to implement the Treaty with respect to:

- Increasing tobacco taxes and enforcing their collection;
- Banning advertising, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco products;
- Banning smoking in public places;
- Requiring tobacco packaging to include large, strong health warnings.

The UN Partners and World Bank believe that "The current level of poverty in Cambodia amplifies the need to prevent individuals,

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families and communities from losing lives, productivity and money to an addiction that kills half of all long-term users."

Countries that have signed the treaty in the week since it was opened for signature on 16 June are: Algeria, Bangladesh, Botswana, Brazil, Burundi, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Italy, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mongolia, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Paraguay, Qatar, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, the United Kingdom, Uruguay and Yemen. The European Community signed the FCTC as a regional economic integration organization.

The treaty must be signed and ratified by 40 countries for it to become law. The Convention has been deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and was open for signature until 22 June at the World Health Organization. From 30 June until 29 June 2004, it will be available for signature at the UN headquarters in New York.

The World Health Organization estimates that around 4.9 million people die each year from tobacco use. If these trends continue, this figure will reach 10 million per year by 2030 with seventy per cent of those deaths occurring in developing countries.

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Dr. Rady stressed that 'In Cambodia, cancer patient mostly can not be cured because patients come to see doctor very late and they are mostly in serious condition. But in other countries people need to see doctor annually even they do not have problems. So if they have any problems then the doctor can treat them early'. He continued that smoking causes many kinds of cancer such as lung, mouth, stomach, bladder....etc.

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