

# Daily Times

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## Smoking kills over 273 persons daily in Pakistan

### Staff Report

**ISLAMABAD:** More than 273 persons die daily in Pakistan due to smoking-related diseases, and failure of the government to introduce pictorial warnings on cigarette packets has been indirectly contributing to it. The Network (TN) said this in a statement to highlight the failures of the Pakistani government to implement a decision of May 31 2009, which was to introduce pictorial health warnings to make people understand the hazards of smoking. "Almost 273 people die daily of tobacco related causes in Pakistan. The more delay in pictorial warnings means more preventable tobacco deaths," said TN Executive Director Dr Arif Azad in a statement. Azad said the tobacco industry was given a time period of six months to comply with the amendments but it did not work. He said it seems tobacco industry has been given a too much of a say over the pace and direction of the implementation process of pictorial warning. Picture warnings on cigarette packs are central to reduce tobacco consumption in a country like Pakistan where literacy rate is very low. International studies have shown the efficacy of pictorial warnings. Health experts believe that printing of health warnings would go a long way in eliminating smoking from the country, as most of the people are illiterate and hence unable to read to prevalent written warning.