
Another attempt at enforcing ban on smoking

By Syed Irfan Raza

ISLAMABAD, Feb 25: The local administration is set to begin sustained efforts from March 1 to enforce regulations barring smoking on public transportation.

"It would be a regular exercise being initiated in collaboration with the World Health Organisation and the Ministry of Health," Deputy Commissioner Islamabad

Amir Ali Ahmed said on Thursday after chairing a meeting with some transporters.

It has been observed that several such campaigns launched in recent years proved futile.

"In the first phase, we would try to make public transport 'smoking free', and in the second phase smoking would be discouraged at public places like parks, markets, hotels and restaurants," Mr Ahmed said.

According to him, almost all transporters plying vehicles in Islamabad had assured their cooperation in the drive, and said they would discourage passengers from smoking in the vehicles.

"The administration would also seek cooperation of the Islamabad Traffic Police, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, heads of educational institutions, NGOs, business community and transport-

ers to make the vigorous awareness drive against smoking in Islamabad a successful endeavour," the deputy commissioner said.

The main objective of the drive, he said, was to create awareness among people of the hazards of smoking, and urge the smokers to quit the practice and a healthy lifestyle.

Mr Ahmed said in the first phase of the drive (100 days), the target groups would be approached and educated

about the hazard of smoking, and posters and leaflets would be distributed among the target groups. In the second phase, strict enforcement of anti-smoking law will be ensured.

The meeting was attended by the high-ranking officials of the health ministry, SSP Traffic Dr Moeen Masood, Additional Deputy Commissioner (G) Agha Mohammad Ali, Islamabad Transport Authority Secretary Bashir Ahmed, besides

representatives of NGOs and Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

It was decided in the meeting that posters and leaflets would be distributed among the target groups for creating awareness and discouraging smoking at public places.

The officials of the health ministry would hold orientation sessions for the target groups, including transporters, students and traders.
