

And you thought the tobacco addicts were only putting their own health at risk when they puffed that cigarette, chewed that gutkha, or blew into that those who are consuming it.

TOBACCO TROUBLES

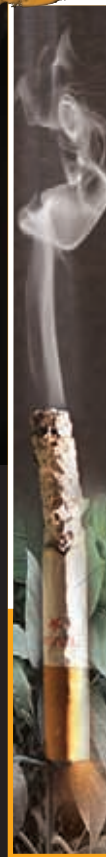
■ Tobacco undergoes a process called curing, which dries it up using fire or sun. Fire curing is most popular as it endows a sweet flavour. Annually 11.4 million tonnes of solid wood, from 600 million trees, is used to process this. One tree for every 300 cigarettes!

■ Paper is gorged at a rate of 6km/hr in a cigarette manufacturing unit

■ Packaging used for gutkha makes up the bulk of the litter mounds found in any Indian city or village. Cigarette stubs constitute a lion's share of trash collected worldwide.

■ The waste generated by the industry is also enormous. As per 1995 records, the global tobacco industry produces an estimated 2,262 million kg of manufacturing waste and 209 million kg of chemical waste.

AS A CROP



■ 10 to 20 million people can be fed if food crops are grown in the lands currently producing tobacco.

■ Sucks up nutritious Potassium six times more than other crops, leaving the soil behind deficient, unfit for further farming.

■ At least 16 pesticides are used during its three-month growing period, as it is extremely disease prone. These include the ozone-depleting chemical methyl bromide.

■ Deteriorates health of its farms with a disease called GTS – Green Tobacco Sickness.

■ What's worse, it is grown mostly in developing countries.

AS A PRODUCT



Probably it is time that cigarette packets carried another warning: Smoking is injurious to the health of the planet!