

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4650
ANSWERED ON:04.05.2012
LABELLING OF CIGARETTES
Jindal Shri Naveen

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the current regulations regarding the labelling of cigarettes into various categories like light, ultra light, low, mild and other such categories;
- (b) whether it is a fact that low tar/light categories of cigarettes are as harmful as other regular categories of cigarettes are and that in many countries, including United States, there exists a ban on tobacco manufacturers from using the terms light, low or mild in tobacco product labelling;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government plans to ban this deceptive labelling exercise; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABIAZAD)

(a) : As per the Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products (Packaging and labelling) Rules, 2008 notified vide GSR No. 182(E) dated 15th March, 2008, which has come into force from 31st May, 2009 whereby no tobacco product package or label shall contain any information that false, misleading, or deceptive, or that is likely or intended to create an erroneous impression about the characteristics, health effects, or health or other hazards of the tobacco product or its emissions. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, the use of words or descriptors, whether or not part of the brand name, such as "light", "ultra light", "mild", "ultra mild", "low tar", "slim", "safer", or similar words or descriptors; any graphics associated with, or likely or intended to be associated with, such words or descriptors; and any product package design characteristics, associated with, likely or intended to be associated with, such descriptors.

(b) & (c): Yes, low tar/ light categories of cigarettes are equally harmful and global evidence shows no reduction in diseases and health risk. In over 50 countries including USA, there exists a ban on use of such misleading descriptors.

Further, Article -11 of WHO- Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) requires parties to the treaty to adopt and implement measures to ensure that tobacco product packaging and labelling are not misleading, false and deceptive, including banning terms such as "low tar", "light", "ultra-light", or mild.

(d) & (e): Government has already banned the use of misleading, false, deceptive labelling vide their notification GSR No. 182(E) dated 15-03-2008.