Forbidden Temptations

Tanzina Rahman

FLIPPING through the channels I caught up a glimpse of some nerve-racking facts: "Everyday thousands of young adults are inhaling toxic chemicals that are used in toilet cleaners, dish washers and nail polish removers…" MTV, one of the teenage and young adults' popular television channels was revealing scary facts of smoking cigarettes on 31st May with regard to the World No Tobacco Day. Reason why, regardless knowing the harmful facts of smoking, statistics show the young generation still continues to walk down the dangerous aisle.

Campus Voice met with a group of enthusiasts to ask their opinion about what they thought about tobacco consumption.

"I guess peer pressure is one of the factors that drive us to smoking," Ashik, a student of BBA explained his first time experience when he started to smoke. "I started when I was seventeen, during my A levels. My friends were heavy smokers. After coaching, hanging out with them became unbearable, they used to smoke right in front of me and breathing that air was difficult. Anyhow, one of my close friends repeatedly asked me to start smoking. So I picked up a cigarette one day and before I realised, it turned into a habit."

On the other hand Osman, also a BBA student, explained it's not much of the peer pressure that pursues people to smoke. It's more of the curiosity of how smoking feels like that draws attention of young minds.

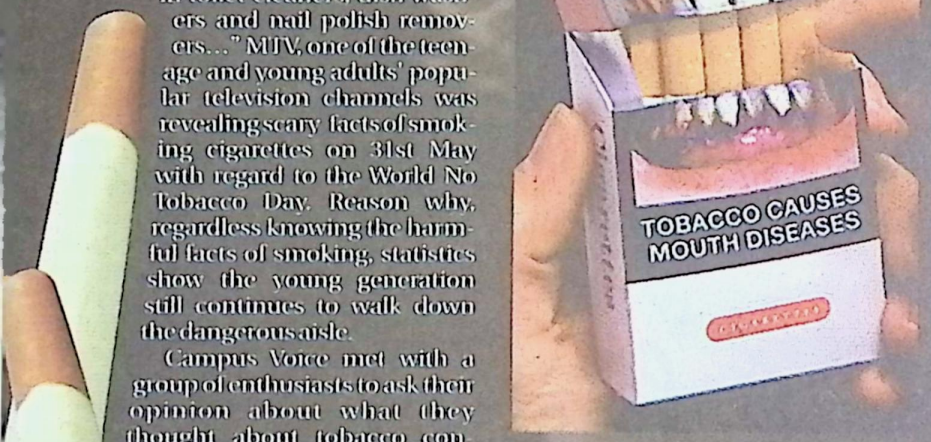
Tobacco use is one of the main risk factors for a number of chronic disease including cancer, lung diseases, and cardiovascular diseases. According to World Health Organization (WHO), people start smoking before the age of 18 and almost a quarter of those before the age of 10. Many tobacco companies market their products wherever youth can be easily accessed - in the movies, on the Internet, in fashion magazines and at music and sports venues. The more young people are exposed to tobacco advertising, the more likely they are to start smoking. Despite this, only 5% of the world's population is covered by comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship. Tobacco companies continue targeting young people by falsely associating use of tobacco products with qualities such as glamour, energy and sex appeal.

"Funny thing is packets of cigarettes are being sold off the counter. Whenever you enter a department store, first thing you'll notice is behind the glass case those cigarette packets are gazing at you," said Rafiq, a student of Electrical Engineering.

WHO also reports about the young women in developing countries who are particularly at risk as tobacco companies are seeking to weaken cultural opposition to their products in countries where women have traditionally not used tobacco.

"I know my friend who started smoking because many of her friends are into it even though she gets a glaring eye from the society. She finds it cool somehow because she is breaking the cultural norm, and it helps her to blend in with her peers," said Farha, student of Mass Communication.

While some find it in vogue, others disagree with the fact that tobacco use is any help to the nation and their personal health. The notion of global tobacco epidemic needs attention and should not be thrown away with another pile of global concerns.



Star Campus Adda Buzz column has been revived to Campus Voice. The platform for pure, unbridled *adda*, and a forum for you to express your thoughts and concerns regarding various campus related issues still continues in this column but with added essence. Please send us your views and ideas concerning any issue in campus that you and your friends would like to talk about to starcampus@gmail.com with the subject heading of 'Campus Voice'. You and your friends will get a chance to showcase your concerns right here!