

NEW CHINESE BAN TO HIT SMOKERS HARD



Despite having a total of over 300 million smokers, China has banned smoking in a number of public places. The ban is clearly great for health organizations, yet not so good for the government's revenue.

The recent smoking ban in Spain was met with just a little more complaining than the similar bans in the UK and Ireland some years ago. Most people in Europe have already understood that smoking is dangerous and even smokers have started to consider the wishes of others and recognize the effects of passive smoking. Some of them used to avoid pubs themselves due to smoke.

However, the situation in China is very different since smoking is considered to be a fair way of relaxing in a tough country and a mere 23% of people believe inhaling the fumes of burning tobacco to be harmful.

This is why the recently imposed ban on smoking in public places (since May 1) throughout China is likely to cause quite a stir. The ban affects restaurants, hotels, railway stations, as well as airports. After all, even most Chinese doctors and nurses like to light up after a hard shift. The World Health Organization considers the move to be a massive breakthrough and a huge turnaround. Indeed, factory premises used to be the only places in China where smoking was not permitted. Now the ban has been imposed on most public places but most workplaces still accommodate smokers.

The Chinese government's resolve in terms of the ban will be tested. Some may argue that less people smoking will mean a lesser strain on the health system. One thing is for sure, the smoking ban will have interesting repercussions in China.

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