



Traditional lanterns made from about 4500 Gold Leaf cigarette packs, on display at a Buddhist temple in Sri Lanka.

About 4500 Gold Leaf packets were used to make the lanterns, which were seen by some 20 000 people.

Meanwhile, a more sinister turn of events concerns the Samurdhi government agency, whose work focuses mainly on poverty alleviation. In the past, it has participated in World No Tobacco Day on a significant scale, by running an ingenious smoking cessation scheme that also raises funds for charity. It provides money boxes to young smokers who want to quit, for saving what they would otherwise spend on

smoking, then collects the money and uses it to build a house for one of its aid recipients. Many countries would relish such a creative scheme that not only helps people stop smoking, but also produces a highly tangible, worthwhile benefit for the needy. However, a senior government official recently revealed that CTC has offered to build a house every year and make donations to Samurdhi recipients, in place of Samurdhi's cessation savings scheme. What could more neatly illustrate BAT's idea of social responsibility?

## FCTC: how will they keep pushing?

More clues are emerging about how, apart from using Formula One and a few other high profile renegades, tobacco companies think they can keep on promoting their brands as increasing numbers of countries adopt comprehensive tobacco control laws under the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). In those without existing or effective legislation, of course, an obvious first line of action is to lobby hard to ensure that any new legislation introduced is ineffective. Japan leads the way here, with the ministry of finance, not the health ministry, formulating Japan's response to the FCTC, due to its status as guardian of the government's controlling interest in Japan Tobacco (JT).

In such pushover conditions, it is not surprising to find proposed new health warnings for industry apologists to die for, with misleading texts such as "Smoking could be one of the causes of lung cancer for you", and sentences mentioning "epidemiological studies" which are guaranteed to bore or bamboozle and, seeing it is proposed that the warnings cover only 30% of the pack, be hard to read, too. JT was taking advice from US tobacco companies from as far back as the mid 1980s, and industry documents show that Philip Morris in particular assisted with and sometimes also supervised JT's actions and statements on smoking and health issues. It looks as though this sort of relationship still exists.



Brazil: Continuing its leading role in Latin American tobacco control, Brazil is forging ahead with new health warnings. Based on the principle that familiarity can lessen effectiveness, the health ministry's tobacco control agency Anvisa has developed some of the most striking images in the world. The warnings, due to appear on a rotating basis on all cigarette packs sold in Brazil by late August, include some which even the most determined smoker may find hard to ignore. Could anyone really face pictures like this before breakfast? The text of the warnings are (from left to right): "This necrosis was caused by tobacco consumption"; "Smoking causes spontaneous abortion"; "He is a victim of tobacco. Smoking causes vascular disease that may lead to amputation"; "Smoking causes cancer in the larynx".

On advertising, Japan's finance ministry does not seem to understand that a ban on promotion means just that—a ban; instead, it is proposing mere restrictions on tobacco ads, based partly on those tired old tobacco industry voluntary curbs. Thus Japan is proposing to allow advertisements up to 12 times a year and three times a month in daily newspapers, with no restrictions at all on magazine ads.

Meanwhile, in Europe, the industry has been getting back to basics, trying to prevent ratification or accession to the treaty by governments yet to take such action. In Georgia, for example, industry officials were working with members of the new parliament earlier this year, to try to prevent ratification, and will no doubt be keeping up the pressure to avoid accession. Even in countries with moderately good tobacco control, tobacco companies may still have about a decade of what they would call “a level playing field”—business as usual—while proper enforcement backed up by public support and compliance catches up.

But in countries where reasonably strong legislation already exists, more sinister plans are being hatched. In the UK, where public debate on banning smoking in public places has at last broken through to include cabinet level discussion, the industry must feel particularly vulnerable. Not only have there been widespread reports that a commitment to act will feature in the governing Labour Party's next general election manifesto, but the much cited success across the Irish Sea prompts an industry nightmare of a British government following Ireland's lead.

The Irish ban on all workplace smoking, including hospitality premises, was fought tooth and nail by the hospitality industry, with the usual support from

tobacco interests. Britain would be an even greater loss to the tobacco industry, both in terms of subsequent market decline and the likely international domino effects. Perhaps this is one reason why British American Tobacco (BAT) recently advertised for “Business Managers (Hotels, Bars Restaurants and Clubs)” to “forge lasting strategic relationships with key customers in this dynamic sector... to optimise business performance”. The job involves “building strategic business relationships, influencing customer awareness, planning and executing brand strategies”. This sounds like a two-for-one objective—ensuring any proposed ban is resisted as strongly as possible, and promoting BAT's brands while they're at it.

The BAT job ad was illustrated with a sample of what the successful applicants' diaries might look like, filled with appointments from morning through to the small hours at some of London's most glamorous hotels, clubs, and bars. Reminiscent of industry attempts to use such venues for promotion in Australia, the ad indicates that existing ad bans are unlikely to be enough to stop the next generation of promotion. Only ensuring that any and every effort to promote tobacco is a serious legal offence, as for heroin or cocaine, can stop it altogether.

### Turkey: F1 keeps on coming

Having started in a surreptitious way, the advance of Formula One (F1) on the previously auto-sportingly uninterested people of Turkey went public in 2003, when a curious ceremony was held to begin work on the country's first F1 track (see *Tobacco Control* 2003;12:346–8). It was curious not because the prime



A small child (just right of car) admires a Benson & Hedges F1 racing car displayed recently in Metroland, a large shopping mall in Istanbul.

minister attended, but because he appeared to feel no embarrassment about the site. Any such construction was supposed to be strictly forbidden there, due to it being a protected forest area that also serves as a collection basin for Istanbul's drinking water. Nor did the premier appear to be concerned about apparently giving in to pressure from F1 bosses to allow tobacco sponsorship as a condition for organising a Turkish F1 race, even though Turkey had passed a total ban on all tobacco promotion. Health advocates got their protests as far as the mayor of Istanbul, who confided that the issue was beyond his authority: the prime minister had decided the project should go ahead.

Confusingly, government authorities and the Turkish Automobile Federation subsequently sought to reassure the public health community that the race would, after all, be tobacco-free. If the tobacco companies agreed, presumably they had in mind the sort of “tobacco-free” extravaganza of tobacco



Left: A smoker at Madrid airport blatantly ignores the no-smoking sign behind him. Right: A UK ad placed by BAT, advertising for “Business Managers (Hotels, Bars Restaurants and Clubs)”, indicates that existing ad bans are unlikely to be enough to stop the next generation of tobacco promotion.

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drive business in a social setting.  
(and look beyond tomorrow)

**Business Managers**  
(Hotels, Bars, Restaurants & Clubs)  
£28-33k + healthcare + pension + bonus + car  
London

So, how does your day pass out?  
Looking to get your teeth into something more challenging and thrive when:

- Building strategic business relationships?
- Influencing customer awareness?
- Planning and executing brand strategies?

We're looking for Business Managers to forge lasting strategic relationships with key customers in this dynamic sector, relationships which will be driven by you. The focus is on working in partnership to optimise business performance.

BAT is one of the leading tobacco companies in the world. It's a business that offers exciting career development on a global scale.

*So, join your career and look beyond tomorrow.*

Get a date in the diary today and email your CV to [beyondtomorrow@britishamericantobacco.com](mailto:beyondtomorrow@britishamericantobacco.com) or call our Recruitment Hotline on 01491 842 718

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