

## Cancer patients want more 'realistic' warnings on tobacco packets

Pratibha Masand | TNN

**Mumbai:** Warnings on cigarette and tobacco packets should be made more realistic, demanded cancer patients from Tata Memorial Hospital who presented a charter of demands to state health and family welfare minister Di-nesh Trivedi on Thursday.

The patients claimed that the pictures of lungs and a scorpion on a cigarette or a paan-masala packet did not have the desired impact on a consumer. "I started having pan masala at a very young age. Initially, I thought it was fun, and then I got addicted. However, after years of consumption, I developed cancer in the mouth and throat," said



**SAY IT WITH A ROSE:** Mayur asked his friend Bhavika, a cancer patient, for her hand in marriage. Cancer patients submitted a charter of demands to the health minister, asking for stricter warnings

18-year-old Malegaon resident Sheikh Shafiq, who has been undergoing treatment at Tata Memorial Hospital over the past four months. "I did not know why they had put the im-

age of a scorpion on the packet," he said, explaining that it was a warning of cancer.

The cancer patients even suggested that their photos should be printed on the pack-

ets, with a caption: "Tobacco Kills". "That will have a better impact," one of them said.

Even as the health minister promised to take action according to the demands, he admitted that there was a need for better anti-tobacco advertisements. "Tobacco packets have negative advertising but they definitely do not have much effect. We need to put it in so many words on each packet that tobacco is a substance that kills," said Trivedi.

Many health activists and doctors have also been questioning why the production of tobacco itself cannot be banned. "Prohibiting the production of tobacco in one region or country would not help," he said.