

Drinkers, smokers feel budget pinch

By [Gabi Khumalo](#)

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Drinkers and smokers won't be smoking the peace pipe with Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan any time soon after he hit them where it hurts most.

BuaNews took to the streets in Pretoria on Thursday, 18 February 2010, to find out how ordinary people feel about having to pay R1.24 more for a pack of cigarettes and 6.5c more for a can of beer.

A troubled Kganya Moeketsi, 29, from Atteridgeville said he was forced to cut down on his smokes and beer. "It's obvious the government is determined to see us quitting," he told *BuaNews* while lighting his cigarette.

Moeketsi said even though it has become a norm for government to increase prices of alcohol and cigarettes, he was hoping that this year they would be spared.

"I was hoping that since the country will be hosting the world cup this year, they will make an exception. How are we going to entertain ourselves when celebrating the win (while watching our pockets)?"

"With the increase, now I'll have to adjust and cut down on the case of beer I buy every month. I can't keep wasting my money on alcohol while petrol is going up, which will then affect the food prices," Moeketsi said.

Thabo Siza, 24, from Mpumalanga said despite the increase in sin tax, people will not stop drinking.

"It doesn't matter, I won't stop drinking because that is how I entertain myself," Siza told *BuaNews*.

Thabiso Hlongwane who sells cigarettes in the city centre said he was only concerned about his business.

"No more profit for me, if I increase the cigarette price, my customers will run away and if I don't, I won't get any profit," said Hlongwane.

However, Willies Magwaza from Akasia feels that the increase was too little as alcohol and cigarettes are not a necessity.

"Good, they should have increased it more. In that way we can see less road accidents due to drinking and driving and a decrease in numbers of domestic violence," Magwaza said.

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