*<img src="images/stories/pictures/philipmorris 23-11-09.jpg" border="0"</pre> title="philip morris" width="150" height="100" align="middle" />LOS ANGELES, Nov 20 A Florida jury yesterday ordered cigarette maker Philip Morris USA to pay US\$300 million (RM1 billion) in damages to a 61-year-old ex-smoker named Cindy Naugle who is wheelchair-bound by emphysema.The Broward Circuit Court jury assessed US\$56.6 million in past and future medical expenses against the company, part of Altria Group Inc, as well as US\$244 million in punitive damages.
p align="justify">The verdict is the largest of the so-called Engle progeny cases that have been tried so far, both sides said. Philip Morris will seek further review of the verdict because of numerous erroneous rulings by the trial judge, Philip Morris spokesman Murray Garnick said in a statement. We believe that the punitive damages award is grossly excessive and a clear violation of constitutional and state law, Garnick said. align="justify">Naugle s lawsuit was among about 8,000 cases filed in the wake of a 2006 Florida Supreme Court decision that tossed out a massive class action against the tobacco companies. The case, known as Engle v. RJ Reynolds, resulted in the largest verdict in US history at trial • US\$145 billion.The Florida high court ruling, which decertified the class of about 700,000 smokers, allowed some to file individual complaints.The case is Naugle v. Philip Morris USA. • Reuters<p align="justify">Source: http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/index.php/world/44041-philip-morris-ordered-to-pay-rm1b-to-smoker*