



TOBACCO-FREE Times

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Special Edition: WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY 2024

Tobacco Control Research: RCTC's Significant Contributions towards NAMS Taskforce

It is a matter of pride in the remarkable work being carried out by the Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC), especially in its role as the secretariat of the task force on tobacco control, established by the National Academy of Medical Science (NAMS). RCTC is coordinating and facilitating cutting-edge research on various tobacco-related problems, establishing mechanisms with civil society and academia from across country to generate evidence on tobacco control, assisting program managers, implementers and policymakers in advocating tobacco-related policies in the country and many more. The dedicated RCTC team, along with experts from across the country, tirelessly works on multiple research projects aimed at understanding the myriad health impacts of tobacco use, tobacco endgame strategy, smokeless tobacco products, tobacco industry interference, TAPS- Stop Brand sharing/stretching, bidi and other Indigenous products, youth intervention, e-cigarettes, and tobacco cessation services. The findings not only contribute to the scientific community but also inform public health policies and initiatives.

Tobacco Free Times 29th Edition Released



The national workshop on implementing MPOWER and FCTC Article 5.3 marked the release ceremony of the 29th edition of the bimonthly 'Tobacco Free Times'. Dr. Balbir Singh, the Honorable Health Minister of Punjab, presented this edition, marking a significant milestone in the fight against tobacco use. Distinguished experts from 12 Indian states graced the event. The current edition of 'Tobacco Free Times' focuses on digital intervention and innovation at national and subnational levels. Some of the interventions include the Tobacco Monitoring Application in Chhattisgarh, the Tobacco Monitor Application in Tamil Nadu, the Tobacco-Free School Application in Maharashtra and many more.

EDITOR'S SPEAK



I welcome all the readers to this special bimonthly edition of Tobacco Free Times, dedicated to highlighting the diverse activities carried out across India commemorating World No Tobacco Day 2024. In this issue, we shall also delve into the concerted efforts of various AIIMS, medical colleges, and other organizations that are taking bold steps to combat the harmful effects of tobacco use. From grassroots campaigns in rural areas to innovative initiatives in urban centers, this edition showcases the tireless work being done to raise awareness, educate, and sensitive the public at a mass level.

- Dr Sonu Goel,
E-RCTC and Professor, PGIMER, Chandigarh and Chair,
Tobacco Control Section- The Union

EXPERTS SPEAK

RCTC is making remarkable strides in its mission. It's inspiring to see RCTC reaching new heights, already addressing a wide range of topics and fostering deep-rooted learning. Their webinars are exceptional, offering practical solutions and guidance for those looking to quit tobacco. Together, we can create a significant impact. Let's unite in the effort to quit tobacco.



- Dr. Manasi Wakankar,
Project Head - TCC, Indian Dental Association

PGIMER's Tobacco Control Hub stands as one of India's foremost resource centres. I am greatly impressed by the work Dr. Sonu Goel and his team are doing. Collaborating with RCTC, and PGI would be highly beneficial, allowing us to receive regular updates and follow-ups from the RCTC team. This close and collaborative approach will strengthen our efforts significantly.



- Narinder Singh,
Add. SPO. NTCP, Rajasthan

RCTC is doing an excellent job of spreading the message of No Tobacco Day. I have personally attended their courses on tobacco control and gained extensive knowledge on managing tobacco use at both individual and community levels. The courses also delve into the historical aspects of tobacco control. This year, let's all pledge to promote the message: Say No to Tobacco.



- Dr. S.S.V. Prasad,
AIIMS, Patna, Bihar

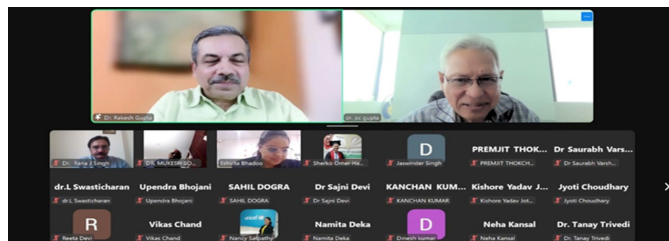


PROJECT UPDATES

4th National Summit on World NO Tobacco Day 2024 (Virtual)

The Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC) under the Department of Community Medicine & School of Public Health, PGIMER, Chandigarh, supported by Vital Strategies, hosted the 4th National Summit on World No Tobacco Day on May 28, 2024, via virtual mode. The theme for this year was “Protecting Children from Tobacco Industry Interference.” The summit featured prominent dignitaries from national and state ministerial offices, as well as various organizations committed to a tobacco-free world. The event saw significant engagement, with over 1300 registrations from India and countries such as the UAE, Ethiopia, Iraq, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Saudi Arabia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, and Zambia. The summit’s primary focus was encouraging youth to avoid tobacco and related products,

understanding the tobacco industry’s tactics, and reinforcing the implementation of the National Tobacco Control Programme. The event included four sessions: two plenary sessions and two panel discussions. Participants ranged from policymakers and advocates to doctors, researchers, and civil society groups took part.



Expert talk to explore the potential models for tobacco taxation:

An online meeting was held on May 5th, 2024, to discuss potential models for research in tobacco taxation. The one-hour session featured distinguished experts, including Dr. Sonu Goel, Director of RCTC, Dr. Tony Blakley, Dr. Driss Ait Ouakrim, Dr. Priyobrat Rajkhowa, and Dr. Nirmal Singh. The primary focus was evaluating various taxation models implemented globally, examining their impact on tobacco consumption, public health, and economic outcomes. Discussions emphasized the importance of behavioural insights, effective tax policies, and data-driven decision-making. The experts underscored the need for interdisciplinary research and collaborative efforts to refine these models. The meeting concluded with an agreement to continue this collaborative approach, scheduling follow-up sessions to develop actionable research agendas further.

World No Tobacco Day Competitions on Slogans writing, Poster making, and videography



To generate mass awareness, a national-level competition for poster making, slogan writing, and videography was organized in celebration of World No Tobacco Day 2024. Participants from across India enthusiastically joined the event, channelling their creativity and dedication towards the cause of tobacco cessation. The competition aimed to highlight the dangers of tobacco use and the importance of quitting through impactful visual and written messages. Submissions showcased a wide array of talents, with entries emphasizing the critical health risks associated with tobacco and advocating for a tobacco-free lifestyle. Winners were awarded prizes for their exceptional works, which stood out for their originality and compelling delivery of the World No Tobacco Day theme. This event not only honoured the creative efforts of the participants but also significantly contributed to spreading vital anti-tobacco messages to a broad audience, reinforcing the importance of collective action and public health awareness.

Induction Training Program

On May 10, 2024, an induction training program for newly joined project staff was held, featuring esteemed speakers including Dr. Sonu Goel, Professor, Department of Community Medicine and School of Public Health, PGIMER, Chandigarh; Dr. Rana J Singh, Director of Tobacco Control for South-East Asia, Vital Strategies, New Delhi; Dr. Rakesh Gupta, President, Rajasthan Cancer Foundation and SIPHER; Dr. Gopal Chauhan, State Nodal Officer, Himachal Pradesh; Ms. Opinder Preet Kaur Gill, Director of Programs, Generation Saviour Association (GSA); Dr. Shivam Kapoor, Technical Advisor for STOP India and Global Monitoring, Vital Strategies; and Mr. Rajeev Kumar, Project Coordinator, Department of Community Medicine and School of Public Health, PGIMER, Chandigarh.



New team members from RCTC, PGIMER, and GSA attended the event. The program aimed to provide these recruits with comprehensive knowledge and insights necessary for addressing tobacco-related issues effectively. Key topics covered included the fundamentals of tobacco control—such as epidemiology, MPOWER, Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), and National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP), tobacco industry interference, an introduction to tobacco taxation, and strategies for achieving the tobacco endgame. This training marked a significant step in fostering a collaborative tobacco control and prevention approach, establishing a solid foundation for future initiatives.





WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY 2024

Theme: Protecting children from tobacco industry interference

WHO, World No Tobacco Day 2024 Awards

The World Health Organization (WHO) commemorated World No Tobacco Day and honours exceptional contributions to tobacco control through its prestigious awards. In 2024, six institutions received this recognition: the Gambia Revenue Authority, Republic of the Gambia; Tobacco Abstinence Club, Federal Republic of Nigeria; National Commission for the Implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, Brazil; Ministry of Health, Ukraine; Odisha State Tobacco Control Cell, Republic of India; and Hangzhou Municipal People's Government, People's Republic of China. Additionally, in India, the WHO Regional Director's Special Recognition Award was presented to Dr. Mir Mushtaq Ahmad, Nodal Officer Kashmir, National Tobacco Control Program, and Generation Saviour Association, Punjab, India. These awards highlight global efforts to combat tobacco use and promote public health.



MoHFW, Govt of India, launches tobacco-free educational institutions campaign

As part of the National Tobacco Control Programme, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, has initiated the Tobacco Free Educational Institutions (ToFEI) campaign. It has outlined nine activities for educational institutions to transform them into tobacco-free zones. The key activities include: placing 'Tobacco Free Premise' and 'Smoke-Free Area' signage, displaying "Tobacco Free Education Institution" signage, ensuring no evidence of tobacco use, displaying awareness materials, organizing tobacco control activities, nominating 'Tobacco Monitors', enforcing no tobacco use through a code of conduct, marking a 100-yard no-tobacco zone, and self-evaluating ToFEI implementation for compliance awards.

State-wise Efforts on World No Tobacco Day, 2024

All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Bathinda

AIIMS Bathinda observed World No Tobacco Day 2024 with the theme "Protecting Children from Tobacco Industry Interference" from 29-31 May. Activities included a poster and slogan competition for MBBS and nursing students, a health check-up camp for non-medical staff screening 62 beneficiaries, and a health awareness talk on tobacco's effects and cessation. Students and beneficiaries took a no-tobacco pledge, emphasizing tobacco-free environments. Additionally, the Central Library released a special issue on tobacco-related news. These efforts aimed to educate, promote cessation, and safeguard against tobacco industry influences.



Adesh Institute of Medical Sciences & Research (AIMSR), Bathinda

The World No Tobacco Day 2024 at AIMSR, Bathinda, was marked by a series of activities aligned with the theme "Protecting Children from Tobacco Industry Interference." Activities commenced with an inception meeting of selected medical colleges on May 1, 2024, as part of the "Consortium of Medical Colleges for a Tobacco-Free India." Throughout May, AIMSR hosted events like slogan writing, speech competitions, health talks, and community-based activities. The institute remains committed to implementing the Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions guidelines and has formed a dedicated Tobacco Control Committee. These efforts underscore AIMSR's integral role in tobacco control through education, community engagement, and advocacy, supported by insights shared during the consortium's inception meeting.



Dayanand Medical College, Ludhiana, Punjab

World No Tobacco Day 2024 at Dayanand Medical College & Hospital (DMC&H), Ludhiana, focused on raising awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco through various activities. MBBS batch 2021 students conducted health awareness talks and played at multiple venues, including the Outpatient department (OPD) waiting area, the college lecture theatre for administrative staff, and the Urban and Rural Health Centres. These sessions, addressing mothers and various hospital workers, highlighted this year's theme of protecting children from Tobacco Industry Interference (TII). With active participation from 44 attendees, the event underscored DMC&H's commitment to promoting a tobacco-free environment and public health education.



Sant Singh Sukha Singh (SSSS) College of Commerce, Amritsar

The National Service Scheme (NSS) unit of SSSS College of Commerce celebrated World No Tobacco Day on May 30, 2024. The event aimed to raise awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco use. Thirty-five NSS volunteers participated, taking a pledge to spread awareness about the dangers of tobacco community.

Bhagat Phool Singh (BPS) Government Medical College for Women (GMCW), Khanpur Kalan

World No Tobacco Day 2024 was observed at BPS Government Medical College for Women, Khanpur Kalan, Sonipat, by the Tobacco Free Educational Institution committee in the hospital's OPD block. The event commenced with the felicitation of the Director and other dignitaries. Talks were given by Dr. Uma Garg on tobacco's harmful effects, Dr. Anand Aggarwal on respiratory diseases, and Dr. S K Jha on legislative measures against tobacco. Emphasizing the theme of protecting children from tobacco industry influence, a pledge against tobacco was administered by ENT department postgraduates. Additionally, a poster competition for 2021 batch students and a signature campaign further promoted awareness.



Special Drive by the Department of Public Health Dentistry

Gurugram, 22nd May 2024 – In commemoration of World No Tobacco Day 2024, the Department of Public Health Dentistry organized a significant No Tobacco Drive at Jainson Eng. Pvt. Limited, Gurugram. This fortnight-long celebration aims to raise awareness about the detrimental effects of tobacco on both oral and general health.

AIIMS, Jodhpur

AIIMS Jodhpur's School of Public Health conducted a series of activities for World No Tobacco Day 2024 from May 27 to May 31. The events included capacity building of MPH scholars by a state program officer, sensitization of housekeeping staff and construction workers on campus, and youth awareness sessions at Jai Narayan Vyas University. A rural sensitization camp at Community Health Centre (CHC) Keru engaged rural communities, emphasizing tobacco cessation. The highlight was a signature campaign in the hospital OPD, drawing participation from over 500 individuals, including students, patients, and healthcare staff, to promote tobacco-free environments and public health awareness. Besides this, oath-taking ceremony was organised at Sawai Mansingh Stadium (SMS) Jaipur with 450 international and National players in various sports categories through collaboration between State Tobacco Control Cell (STCC) and SMS administration.



Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Government Medical College (SLBSGMC), Mandi

SLBSGMC Mandi observed World No Tobacco Day 2024 with impactful initiatives. Activities included an inter-class declamation competition on tobacco's harmful effects, a speech on protecting children from tobacco industry influence in collaboration with the District Tobacco Control Committee, a poster-making contest, a mass media campaign, and the principal administering an anti-tobacco oath to staff and students. Additionally, a reel-making competition and social media campaign reinforced the message against tobacco use. These efforts underscore SLBSGMC's commitment to tobacco control and public health awareness.

Kullu Convent Senior Secondary School Hosts Event on World No Tobacco Day

Dr. Vaidya from the Regional Hospital Kullu addressed the students, providing detailed information on the harmful effects of tobacco and its impact on children. He engaged in an interactive session with the students, answering various questions they had and appealing to them to stay away from tobacco and other substances.

Maharishi Markandeshwar Medical College and Hospital, Solan, Himachal Pradesh

Maharishi Markandeshwar Medical College and Hospital, Solan, organized several activities to promote tobacco control measures under the leadership of the Director and the Nodal Person from the Community Medicine Department. Activities included forming a Tobacco Control Committee, conducting health camps and awareness programs, training staff on tobacco's health impacts, and implementing a signature campaign. These efforts aim to reduce tobacco consumption, prevent related diseases, and create a healthier environment for all.



AIIMS Rishikesh

To commemorate World No Tobacco Day (WNTD), various events were organized across Uttarakhand, including tobacco control initiatives at AIIMS Rishikesh, a tobacco cessation training program & UTFC meeting in collaboration with Balajee Sewa Sansthan, collaborative efforts in schools involving the education police departments, and activities at Inter College Nainital.



Himalayan Institute of Medical Sciences, Swami Rama Himalayan University (SRHU), Dehradun, Uttarakhand

Himalayan Institute of Medical Sciences, SRHU, Dehradun, organized various activities for World No Tobacco Day 2024. These included the Creatathon competition, Ideafusion competition, a TV talk by Dr. Vipul Nautiyal, an extempore competition, a fitness challenge, a tobacco quiz, a pledge ceremony, an awareness video display, and a quiz on tobacco cessation for MBBS students.

Government Medical College, Jammu

Government Medical College, Jammu, commemorated "World No Tobacco Day" with an academic-cultural event themed around "Protecting children from tobacco industry interference." MBBS and nursing students participated in activities, including poster and video reel competitions, Nukkad Natak, and extempore speeches. The event culminated on May 31 with a program in the college auditorium, graced by the Principal & Dean.

J&K Legal Services Authority event at Crescent Public School

The J&K Legal Services Authority, in collaboration with Crescent Public School, Naseem Bagh, Bilaliya Educational Institute, and other local organizations, orchestrated a robust awareness program on World No Tobacco Day at Justice Tashi Rabstan, Senior Judge of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, highlighted the event, emphasizing the role of legal and educational bodies in combatting tobacco use among youth. Activities included a painting competition on "Protecting Children from Tobacco Industry Interference," a rally against tobacco led by students, and educational performances by Crescent Public School and Bilaliya Educational Institute students. The event underscored community commitment to a tobacco-free future.

Maulana Azad College, New Delhi

Maulana Azalhid Medical College, New Delhi, observed World No Tobacco Day 2024 with health talks across its centers from May 27 to May 31. The events highlighted tobacco's health risks and included oral cancer screening camps at four locations in collaboration with Maulana Azad Institute of Dental Sciences. A special newsletter focused on the theme was also distributed by the Department of Community Medicine, promoting awareness and advocating for tobacco-free lifestyles.

Maulana Azad College, New Delhi

Maulana Azalhid Medical College, New Delhi, observed World No Tobacco Day 2024 with health talks across its centers from May 27 to May 31. The events highlighted tobacco's health risks and included oral cancer screening camps at four locations in collaboration with Maulana Azad Institute of Dental Sciences. A special newsletter focused on the theme was also distributed by the Department of Community Medicine, promoting awareness and advocating for tobacco-free lifestyles.



Lokopriya Gopinath Bordoloi Regional Institute of Mental Health (LGBRIMH), Tezpur

In observance of World No Tobacco Day, 2024, LGBRIMH, Tezpur, has published its "No Conflict of Interest" declaration on the official website, constituted a working committee on Tobacco Control, and launched a brief orientation program to raise awareness and educate about tobacco control measures. These activities collectively aim to promote a tobacco-free environment, enhancing health and well-being across the institute.

AIIMS Raebareli

AIIMS Raebareli celebrated World No Tobacco Day with several impactful activities. These included a nukkad natak by students demonstrating the harmful effects of tobacco on children, a health talk for OPD patients, and a media campaign on social platforms featuring real-life stories of cancer patients to raise awareness. Additionally, security personnel conducted checks and disposed of over 400 kg of seized tobacco products to maintain a tobacco-free campus. These activities aimed to educate the public, prevent youth tobacco addiction, and reinforce the importance of a tobacco-free environment, potentially leading to healthier communities and reduced tobacco-related harm.

NTCP Campaign at Amar Shaheed Jodha Singh Attaiya Thakur Dariyav Singh Medical College, Yellow Line campaign, and other initiatives at UP

The National Tobacco Control Program organized the World No Tobacco Day event on May 31, 2024, at Amar Shaheed Jodha Singh Attaiya Thakur Dariyav Singh Medical College in Fatehpur, highlighting the fatal risks of tobacco consumption. The U.P. Voluntary Health Association (UPVHA) has also integrated tobacco control measures into its other projects. In Lucknow, awareness initiatives included poster-making competitions, and the University of Lucknow launched the Yellow Line Campaign to create a smoke-free environment. An awareness rally was organized in KGMU Lucknow with dental college students. These efforts demonstrate a comprehensive approach to reducing tobacco use and raising awareness across Uttar Pradesh.



Junior High School, Morena

The WHO FCTC Knowledge Hub on Smokeless Tobacco organized a tobacco awareness campaign aligned with the theme of World No Tobacco Day 2024 "Protecting children from tobacco industry interference" at Government Junior High School, Morena, Uttar Pradesh, India. On this occasion, various activities like an interactive session on tobacco awareness, No Tobacco Pledge; Poster & slogan-making activities were conducted with school students.



AIIMS, Deoghar

All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Deoghar, observed World No Tobacco Day 2022 with a comprehensive series of activities aimed at raising awareness and combating tobacco use. The initiative included workshops on screening and brief interventions for AIIMS faculty, a spirited skit competition involving MBBS and nursing students, and outreach programs to local schools like Geeta Devi DAV, St. Francis, Divine Public School, and Rama Krishna Mission School. Additional efforts encompassed a health camp at the Community Health Centre, Devipur, and specialized training for police officers. The celebrations culminated in an insightful online symposium on India's efforts against tobacco, emphasizing collaborative public health strategies.



AIIMS Kalyani



AIIMS Kalyani marked World No Tobacco Day 2024 with a multifaceted approach. A panel discussion on "Strategies for Protecting Children from Tobacco Industry Interference" featured faculty from various institutions, fostering insightful dialogue. Simultaneously, tobacco cessation services were initiated at Saguna Primary Health Centre, offering assessments, education on tobacco's harmful effects, and referrals. The institute also began a research project examining the impact of secondhand tobacco smoke on lactating mothers. Additionally, AIIMS Kalyani launched an AI-enabled treatment package for alcohol and nicotine use disorders, known as E-DOSTHI. Their ongoing Tobacco Control Action Program aims to create tobacco-free environments through extensive educational campaigns and community outreach efforts. These initiatives collectively aim to reduce tobacco-related health risks and promote healthier lifestyles.

AIIMS Patna

The Department of Community and Family Medicine at AIIMS Patna organized a comprehensive series of activities from May 27th to May 31st, 2024, to mark World No Tobacco Day. Activities included a poster competition and health awareness session for students and teachers, a recognition ceremony for tobacco cessation champions at the Tobacco Cessation Clinic, a health awareness session at a local college, and another at the Urban Health Centre for patients and the nearby community. The week culminated in a pledge-taking ceremony and Continuing Medical Education (CME) event at the AIIMS Patna auditorium, attended by faculty, resident doctors, students, and staff. Each event aimed to raise awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco and promote tobacco-free lifestyles among various target groups.



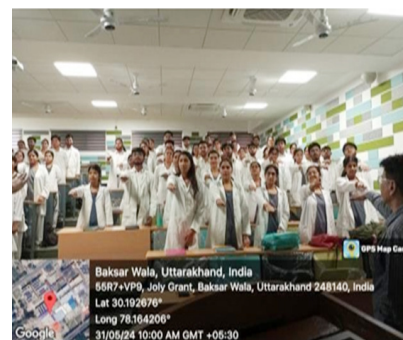
Manipal Tata Medical College, Jamshedpur

On World No Tobacco Day 2024, Manipal Tata Medical College, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, organized a series of activities including poster-making competition on "Protecting children from Tobacco Industry Interference" engaged. An awareness session titled "No Tobacco - Health and Happiness for All" targeted non-teaching, security, and housekeeping staff, covering the theme of the day and addressing tobacco use consequences. The institute declared itself tobacco-free, prominently displaying signages on campus and canteens to enforce the policy, while also adhering to government mandates by displaying Conflict of Interest details on its website. Additionally, 123 staff members signed undertakings committing to uphold the tobacco-free policy, and all participants pledged to promote responsible community behavior.



MGM Medical College, Kamothe, Navi Mumbai

In celebration of World No Tobacco Day 2024, MGM Medical College organized a series of activities to raise awareness about the dangers of tobacco use. The events included a Nukkad Natak/Role Play at the village level, IEC sessions in rural areas, and an outreach camp.



These initiatives aimed to educate the community on the harmful effects of tobacco and promote a tobacco-free lifestyle.

Street play, and signature campaigns were conducted at Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Maharashtra some prominent organizations.



Jagadguru Gangadhar Mahaswamigalu Moorsavirmath Medical College (JGMMMC)

World No Tobacco Day 2024 at JGMMMC in Hubballi, Karnataka featured several impactful activities. These included an e-poster competition and slogan writing centered on the theme 'Protecting Children from Tobacco Industry Interference.' The college collaborated with NSS for a street play highlighting the dangers of tobacco use. Health education efforts were bolstered through media and radio platforms. Observations on May 31st, 2024, were conducted by the Department of Community Medicine.



Faith Foundation Event

On May 31st, in observance of World No Tobacco Day, Faith Foundation launched a unique initiative to raise awareness about the detrimental impacts of tobacco addiction among the public. The organization held an event on the main road of Saffron Tower in the Fatehgunj area, where children prominently displayed placards and banners with slogans such as "Protect Children from Tobacco Producers."

AIIMS Bhubaneswar

The Core Committee for Tobacco Control and the Department of Community Medicine and Family Medicine, AIIMS Bhubaneswar, organized five activities: a symposium, public health lecture, health education sessions, oral cancer screening, and a yoga event. These took place at the OPD area, main auditorium, UHTC Nayapalli, RHTC Tangi and Mendhasala, and the CRUT depot. A total of 587 beneficiaries, including faculty, resident doctors, interns, paramedical staff, patients, and bus drivers, participated. The events covered topics on tobacco's impact, cessation strategies, and screening, engaging participants through lectures, discussions, skits, and interactive sessions.



Jajati Keshari Medical College, Jajpur

As part of the consortium of Medical Colleges aiming for a tobacco-free India, several activities were conducted for World No Tobacco Day 2024 by the Department of Community Medicine. On June 30th, a "No Tobacco" pledge was taken at CDMO Jajpur office with 12 participants, including the Chief District Medical Officer. The same day, 35 security guards and sanitary workers received training at the District Training Unit. An awareness program was held on June 31st at UHTC Srirampur with 25 participants. On June 5th, the OPD block and Psychiatry department conducted an awareness session.



AIIMS Bibinagar

On World No Tobacco Day, AIIMS Bibinagar organized a series of activities to raise awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco use. In the hospital's OPD foyer, an awareness campaign featured informative posters and interactive talks with patients, emphasizing the benefits of a tobacco-free lifestyle. Educational videos on tobacco were played on OPD TVs, highlighting health risks and strategies for quitting smoking. At Bommalamaram village, a community pledge and rally were also conducted, where participants committed to abstaining from tobacco and promoting a tobacco-free environment. Additionally, a skit on protecting children from tobacco industry interference and an educational campaign for rural children and adolescents emphasizing health effects were organized at Govindu Thanda Village. These activities collectively aimed to dispel myths about tobacco and promote a healthier, tobacco-free future.



Dental Surgery Department, King George Hospital

World No Tobacco Day 2024: Oral cancer awareness camp held at KGH - The Dental Surgery Department of King George Hospital (KGH) organized an oral cancer awareness camp at the hospital premises. The tests were conducted at the camp to detect oral cancers. She advised the participants to not consume tobacco, gutka, khaini, and other tobacco products to prevent oral cancers. Toothpaste, mouthwash, and medicines were distributed to needy patients.

Centre for Social Justice and Equity Department, Tamil Nadu

On June 29, 2024, WNTD-2024 Valedictory Ceremony and CAT Annual Event were held at the Madras School of Social Work's Auditorium in collaboration with the Centre for Social Justice and Equity Department. The event featured the CAT Annual event, showcasing the Children Against Tobacco (CAT) model's implementation in schools and communities. A compelling performance by the Sterling Playback Theatre Company presented children's perspectives on tobacco control. Activities included the release of posters, awards presented to WNTD 2024 contest winners, recognition of outstanding CAT members for leadership, and appreciation for CAT Officers. Students shared their experiences related to tobacco and their involvement with the CAT initiative.

Aarupadai Veedu Medical College Initiatives

The Tobacco Control Cell at Aarupadai Veedu Medical College, Pondicherry, organized a comprehensive series of activities for World No Tobacco Day 2024. Led by its dedicated members, the cell conducted awareness sessions, slogan competitions, and signature campaigns across various institutions. Special lectures by experts emphasized tobacco control interventions. Activities included oral screenings, counseling sessions, and interactive quizzes, engaging students and community members alike. The event culminated in acknowledging participants and winners, reinforcing the institute's commitment to promoting tobacco-free lifestyles through education and community involvement.



WHO reports progress in the fight against tobacco epidemic

The WHO reports a significant rise in the adoption of tobacco control measures, with 5.3 billion people now covered by at least one MPOWER measure, up from 1 billion in 2007. These measures include monitoring, protection from smoke, quitting support, health warnings, advertising bans, and taxation. Despite progress, raising tobacco taxes remains slow, with 49 countries yet to adopt any MPOWER measures. Additionally, 84 countries lack regulations for electronic nicotine delivery systems, posing a threat to youth. WHO urges stricter regulations to prevent nicotine addiction among children and protect public health.

Source: <https://www.who.int/azerbaijan/news/item/24-05-2024-world-no-tobacco-day-awards-2024--champions-of-the-tobacco-free-future>



New Zealand Halves heated-tobacco products (HTPs) Taxes



Source: <https://tobaccoreporter.com/2024/07/18/new-zealand-halves-htp-taxes/>

New Zealand has halved taxes on HTPs to encourage smokers to switch to less risky alternatives. Customs Minister Casey Costello hopes the tax cut will make HTPs more attractive and aid smoking cessation. Critics argue the government has yielded to tobacco lobbying. In 2018, Philip Morris suggested lower taxes for HTPs to the Tax Working Group.

Earlier this year, the government scrapped a generational tobacco ban and appears open to industry-backed harm reduction measures. Costello is also considering legalizing oral nicotine products like snus and pouches, despite Health Ministry reservations about their effectiveness and potential addiction risks.

British American Tobacco (BAT), which owns nicotine pouch brands, has lobbied for their legalization, stating that their inclusion in the regulatory framework would advance the Smoke-Free 2025 goals.

Vietnam Wants to Raise Tobacco Taxes

Vietnam's finance ministry plans to raise the excise duty on cigarettes and add an absolute rate per pack, reports Tuoi Tre News. Currently, the excise duty is 75% of the factory price but only 38.8% of the retail



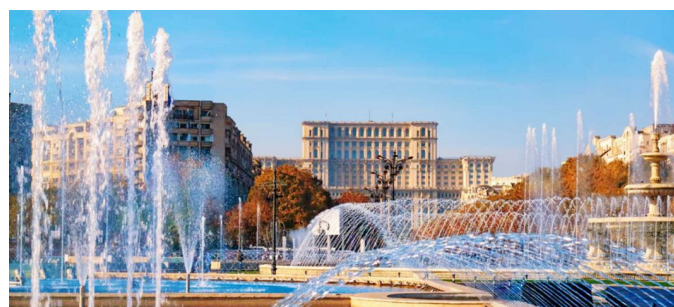
price, lower than Singapore and Thailand. To protect public health, the ministry proposes two solutions. The first is to keep the 75% excise tax unchanged in 2026, adding VND2,000 (\$0.07) per pack, and increasing by VND2,000 annually until it reaches VND10,000 in 2030. The second option is to add VND5,000 per pack in 2026, increasing by VND1,000 annually until it reaches VND10,000 in 2030. Vietnam has one of the highest smoking prevalences, with over 42% of adults smoking.

Source: <https://tobaccoreporter.com/2024/07/22/vietnam-wants-to-raise-tobacco-taxes/>

Romania Restricts ENDS Promotions

Romania has tightened advertising restrictions on electronic nicotine devices and modern oral products, reports Xinhua. President Klaus Iohannis signed new legislation on July 19, banning explicit ads for e-cigarettes, heat-not-burn products, and nicotine pouches on radio, TV, and public transportation tickets. Ads are also prohibited within 200 meters of educational and healthcare institutions and in publications and theaters targeting minors.

Source: <https://tobaccoreporter.com/2024/07/20/romania-restricts-ends-promotions/>





Georgia to Require Production Licenses

Georgian lawmakers approved a law requiring tobacco manufacturers to obtain licenses, with a fee set at GEL50,000 (\$18,521.26), reports Front News Georgia. The amended law mandates licenses for activities like slicing, coating, and producing cigarettes, but excludes importers, leaf growers, and primary processors. The government will outline specific rules for obtaining licenses. An accompanying note emphasized the law's aim to enhance the tobacco production process and improve health protection standards for smokers through high-tech processing by reputable manufacturers.

Source: <https://tobaccoreporter.com/2024/07/20/georgia-to-require-licenses-for-cigarette-makers/>

Pakistan Tobacco Co. (PTC) Risks Losing Sudan Small-Pack Order



The Business Recorder reports that Pakistan Tobacco Co. (PTC) may lose a significant \$20.5 million cigarette order from Sudan if the health ministry delays the necessary regulatory approval. While Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif approved an exemption for small-pack exports, the health ministry has not issued the required amendment.

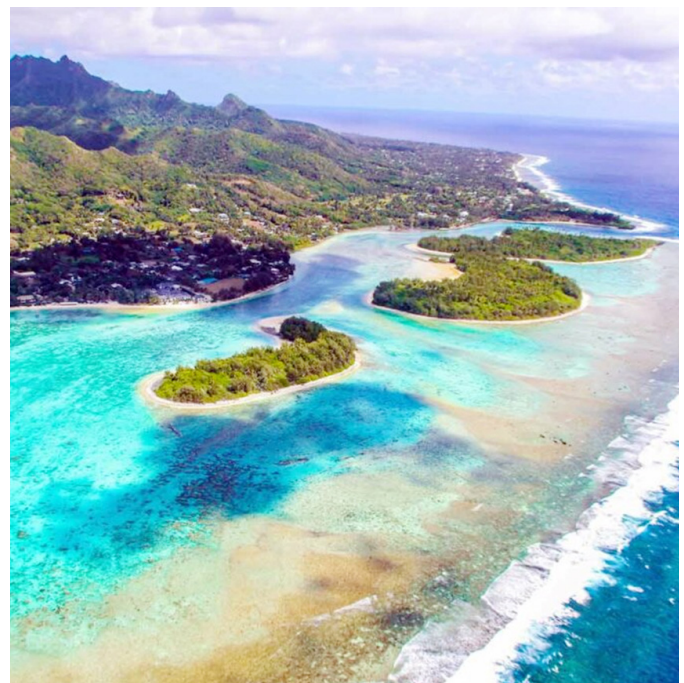
Sudan, needing the cigarettes in 10-stick packets, is considering other suppliers like Bangladesh and Indonesia due to the delay. PTC, which has earned \$156 million in exports since 2019, paid PKR148 billion in taxes last fiscal year and targets \$60 million in exports next year. A similar delay cost PTC a Gulf order in 2019.

Source: <https://tobaccoreporter.com/2024/07/20/ptc-risks-losing-sudan-small-pack-order/>

Cooks Islands Ban Vape Trade

The Cook Islands has enacted the Tobacco Products Control Amendment Act 2024, prohibiting the manufacture, importation, sale, distribution, and advertising of e-cigarettes. The Act also raises the legal age for purchasing tobacco from 18 to 21 and bans smoking in most public places.

Retailers must obtain permits to sell tobacco; 37 of 43 applications have been approved. Authorized sales begin on August 1, 2024. Internet sales are restricted to business-to-business transactions. Violators face fines up to \$10,000 or three months in prison. Tobacco product displays are also banned.



Source: <https://tobaccoreporter.com/2024/07/20/cooks-islands-ban-vape-trade/>



Tackling oral cancer: India's struggle with tobacco chewing (01 May 2024, TOI)

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that tobacco consumption, including chewing, is responsible for over 90 percent of mouth cancer cases in India. Tobacco chewing poses severe health risks, with oral cancer being the most devastating consequence. The habit exposes users to a potential mix of carcinogens, that lead to the development of malignant tumors in the mouth, throat, and surrounding areas. Apart from cancer, chewing tobacco increases the risk of developing other oral health problems such as gum diseases, tooth decay, and leukoplakia.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/health-fitness/health-news/tackling-oral-cancer-indias-struggle-with-tobacco-chewing/articleshow/109721945.cms>



Stopping smokeless tobacco could save India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan \$23bn in lifetime healthcare costs (08 May 2024, Brunel University London)



If India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan's policies on the use of smokeless tobacco stay as they are now, then more than \$23 billion will be spent on healthcare costs across the lifetime of consumers in the three countries, with the biggest health impacts falling on young people who haven't yet taken up the habit. These are headline findings from health economists from Brunel University London, UK, who, together with researchers from South Asia and the University of York, ran the first-ever study of the lifetime impact of smokeless tobacco use on the health, quality of life, and healthcare costs of South Asians – sorted according to country, age group and sex.

Source: <https://www.brunel.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/articles/Stopping-smokeless-tobacco-could-save-India-Bangladesh-and-Pakistan-23bn-in-lifetime-healthcare-costs-study-shows>

Prohibit the use of electronic cigarettes in higher education institutions: UGC (07 May 2024)

The UGC has urged higher education institutions to enforce the prohibition of electronic cigarettes, as mandated by the PECA, 2019. This includes conducting special checks to prevent their use on campuses, following concerns about easy access near educational facilities.

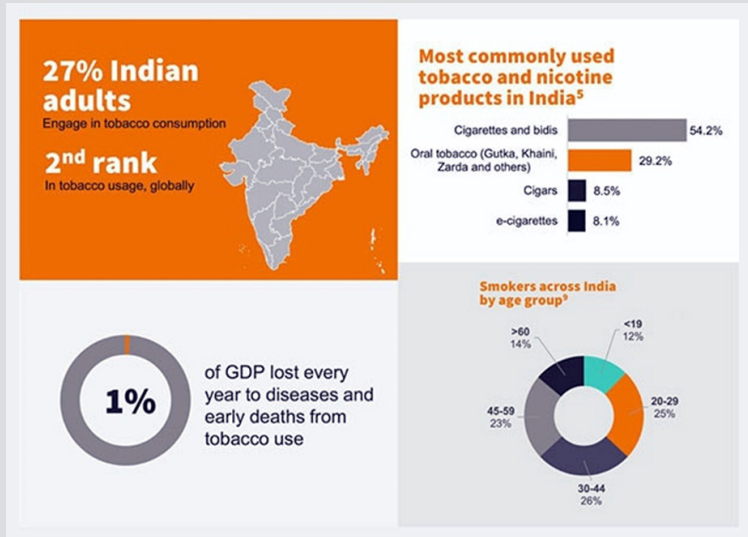
Source: <https://odishatv.in/news/education/prohibit-use-of-electronic-cigarettes-in-higher-education-institutions-ugc-234506>



One per cent of GDP lost, 49 per cent of young adults consume tobacco: KPMG report highlights India's Tobacco crisis (May 15, 2024)

Dr Narender Saini, Former General Secretary of the Indian Medical Association, said "Tobacco use affects both the health and economy. The burden of tobacco-related morbidity and mortality has been on the rise. Respiratory ailments, cardiovascular diseases, and various forms of cancer dominate the landscape, claiming lives prematurely. The economic ramifications are equally profound. Families grappling with the consequences of tobacco-related diseases face financial hardship, often pushing many households into poverty.

Source: https://www.business-standard.com/content/press-releases-ani/1-per-cent-of-gdp-lost-49-per-cent-of-young-adults-consume-tobacco-kpmg-report-highlights-india-s-tobacco-crisis-124051500333_1.html



Telangana bans the sale, production, and distribution of tobacco, and gutka products (Business standard)

The Telangana government has prohibited the manufacture, storage, distribution, and sale of gutka and pan masala comprising tobacco and nicotine statewide. The ban will go into effect for a time of one year, starting from May 24, 2024. The restriction has been imposed in light of a legitimate concern for public well-being. As indicated by the order from the Food Safety Commissioner, the restriction will be upheld under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

Source: https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/telangana-bans-sale-production-and-distribution-of-tobacco-gutka-products-124052700950_1.html

Ban on tobacco consumption in J-K's Katra town (05 July 2024, Indian Express)

The sale, possession, and consumption of cigarettes and other tobacco products has been banned by the Jammu administration in the town of Katra, which is home to the cave shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi, officials said. Reasi District Magistrate Vishesh Mahajan said the initiative, launched on World No-Tobacco Day, aims to maintain the sanctity of the religious place visited by lakhs of pilgrims every year. The administration has already banned the sale, possession, and consumption of meat and liquor in Katra and adjoining areas.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/ban-on-tobacco-consumption-in-j-ks-katra-town-9366861/>



Tobacco Ban: Delhi High Court Asks Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) To Decide on Issue Expeditiously (22, March 2024)

A PIL was filed by the president of the Bhartiya Samridhi Kalyan Party, Sheetal Dhariwal in the high court to seek a ban of various Gutka and pan masala brands for non-compliance with the Regulation 2.3.4 of the FSSAI Regulations, 2011 which prohibits the sale, manufacture, storage, and distribution of any food products which contains tobacco and nicotine as ingredients. The high court observed that the petitioners had not moved any other authority before approaching it, and disposed of the petition. However, the high court asked the FSSAI to consider the petition in court as a representation and decide on it expeditiously.

Source: <https://news.abplive.com/news/india/tobacco-ban-delhi-high-court-asks-fssai-to-decide-on-issue-expeditiously-1673921>



No change in tax on tobacco: ITC shares roar with gains of over 4% after union budget

On July 23, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Union Budget, marking the third Modi government's first full budget and her seventh consecutive budget.

Notably, the budget did not include any mention of an increase in taxes on tobacco or alcohol. This omission has raised business expectations for tobacco companies, particularly ITC (formerly Indian Tobacco Company). Following the budget announcement, ITC's shares listed on the NSE surged, gaining over 4 percent during the trading session.

Source: <https://www.freepressjournal.in/business/no-change-in-tax-on-tobacco-itc-shares-roar-with-gains-of-over-4-after-union-budget>



Palike licence is a must to sell tobacco items in Bengaluru



Bengaluru is moving to regulate tobacco sales and discourage smoking. Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has unveiled a new set of licensing rules for tobacco vendors in the city. The initiative was recently approved by BBMP administrator SR Umashankar. Under the regulations, all tobacco vendors will be required to obtain a license to sell their products. Failure to comply could result in fines, with violators facing a Rs 5,000 penalty and an additional Rs 100 per day for continued non-compliance.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/new-licensing-rules-for-tobacco-vendors-in-bengaluru/articleshow/111911069.cms>

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