



TOBACCO-FREE Times

www.rctepgi.org

Issue XXXI : June-July, 2024

RNI Title Approval No : CHAENG01153

Building a Tobacco-Free India: The Contribution of Medical Institutes to Public Health

Implementing Tobacco Control Activities: RCTC's Significant Contributions towards strengthening role of medical institutions in tobacco control in India



RCTC plays a crucial role in advancing tobacco control efforts across India. Launched in 2018, the RCTC portal has garnered over 800,000 viewers from 110 countries, including program implementers, academicians, and researchers dedicated to tobacco control. The RCTC serves as a comprehensive platform, providing access to key resources such as policies, legislations, NTCP structure, and IEC materials. It also covers the global impact of tobacco use on health, the economy, and the environment while exposing the tobacco industry's tactics. By offering vital information and tools, RCTCs empower stakeholders to make meaningful contributions towards a tobacco-endgame in India.

Furthermore, the RCTC has been instrumental in strengthening the role of medical institutions in tobacco control by fostering collaboration, providing resources, and guiding the development of structured action plans across medical colleges in India. These efforts have significantly contributed to the engagement of academic institutions in nationwide tobacco control strategies.

RCTC is excellent and their team is a dedicated team. I am really grateful that I am now the part of this organisation. Best wishes to RCTC in its missions to end evil effect of tobacco use in India Together we will achieve it definitely.



- Dr. Durgesh Kumar,
Associate Professor, SLBSGMC, Himachal Pradesh

EDITOR'S SPEAK



The Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC) remains dedicated to advancing tobacco control by sharing reliable information with diverse stakeholders. As we aim to elevate our efforts and align with sustainable development goals, it is essential to shift from 'Tobacco Control' to the 'Tobacco Endgame.' In this context, we are launching a theme-based newsletter called Tobacco Free Times (TFT), titled "Building a Tobacco-Free India: The Role of Medical Institutes in Public Health." As medical institutions play a crucial role in tobacco control by leveraging their influence, expertise, and resources to advocate for policy changes, support tobacco cessation, and implement tobacco control initiatives. Their collaboration with authorities at the national and local levels enhances the enforcement of tobacco control measures. Hence, this edition of TFT underscores the importance of their involvement and encourage all medical institutions to strengthen their efforts as we work towards achieving India's tobacco endgame.

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

EXPERTS SPEAK



RCTC is a wonderful initiative for advancing Tobacco Control in India. It is definitely a go-to portal for Tobacco Control documents and other data relevant to policymakers, implementers and academicians. Congratulations and kudos to Dr. Sonu Goel and the team at RCTC.

- Dr. Reena R. Kumar,
Academic Director ICanCaRe,
Regional Clinical Advisor Special Olympics, Asia Pacific

I am extremely happy to write my observations on RCTC, which is doing an exceptionally good work in this important field of Tobacco control. Dr. Sonu Goel is doing an exceptional work updating the scientific community in recent updates in tobacco control & endgame. I wish him & RCTC all the success in his endeavors.



- Dr. Annarao Kulkarni,
National President
Indian Association of Preventive and Social Medicine (IAPSM)



PROJECT UPDATES

National Workshop on Implementation of WHO-MPOWER and FCTC Article 5.3, scheduled for 18th – 20th June 2024

The National Workshop on Implementation of WHO-MPOWER and FCTC Article 5.3, held from 18th to 20th June 2024 in Chandigarh, brought together Government officials and distinguished experts from 12 Indian states. The Honourable Health Minister, Dr. Balbir Singh (Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Punjab), served as the chief guest at this important event. The workshop highlighted the current status and progress of

FCTC Article 5.3 implementation across different states, focusing on critical issues related to Tobacco Industry Interference (TII) in tobacco control and public health policy. It emphasized the importance of evaluating and strengthening efforts to enforce FCTC Article 5.3, addressing TII challenges, and enhancing the overall effectiveness of tobacco control initiatives at both state and national levels.



The Launch of the 30th Edition of the Newsletter “Tobacco Free Times”



The RCTC has launched a bi-monthly newsletter called “Tobacco Free Times” (TFTs), which aims to shed light on tobacco control efforts in India through various themes during the National Workshop on Implementation of WHO-MPOWER and FCTC Article 5.3, scheduled for 18th – 20th June 2024. Each issue of TFTs focuses on a specific theme related to tobacco control and provides insights, updates, and analysis on related policies, research, and interventions.

This edition of Tobacco Free Times (TFT) highlights a range of digital innovations in tobacco control throughout India. It explores various mobile applications that support increased awareness of the effects of tobacco, monitor tobacco-related violations, facilitate the certification of schools in accordance with Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions (ToFEI) guidelines, and provide a platform for fostering collaboration between civil society and government entities in tobacco control efforts, oversee compliance with the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), etc.

Webinar on “Enforcement of Prohibition of Electronic Cigarette Act (PECA) 2019: Banning E-Cigarettes by Govt. of Gujarat”

The RCTC, in collaboration with the Strategic Institute for Public Health Education & Research (SIPHER), conducted a webinar on June 26, 2024, titled “Enforcement of Prohibition of Electronic Cigarette Act (PECA) 2019: Banning E-Cigarettes by Govt. of Gujarat.” This webinar was part of the theme “Good Replicable & Innovative Practices in Tobacco Control in India.” The esteemed presenter for this webinar was Dr. Rakesh Gupta, President- SIPHER, Chandigarh. During the webinar, the discussion centered on the enforcement strategies of the PECA 2019 Act and the measures taken by the Government of Gujarat to effectively ban e-cigarettes.



Webinar on “Monitoring Tobacco Exposure in Over-the-Top Service Providers: A Case Study”:

The RCTC, in collaboration with the Strategic Institute for Public Health Education & Research (SIPHER), conducted a webinar on July 3, 2024, titled “Monitoring Tobacco Exposure in Over-the-Top Service Providers: A Case Study.” This webinar was part of the theme “Good Replicable & Innovative Practices in Tobacco Control in India.” The esteemed presenter for this webinar was Mr. Cyril Alexander, Executive Director of Mary Anne Charity Trust (MACT) in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. During the webinar, the discussion focused on the methods for monitoring tobacco exposure in OTT service providers, highlighting effective strategies and innovative practices in tobacco control.



Webinar on “Involving School Teachers in Tobacco Control: A Story from Bihar, India”:

The RCTC, in collaboration with the Strategic Institute for Public Health Education & Research (SIPHER), conducted a webinar on July 17, 2024, titled “Involving School Teachers in Tobacco Control: A Story from Bihar, India.” This webinar was part of the theme “Good Replicable & Innovative Practices in Tobacco Control in India.” The esteemed presenter for this webinar was Dr. Pakash C Gupta, Director, Healix Sekhsaria Institute of Public Health, Navi Mumbai, India. During the webinar, the discussion focused on the role of school teachers in tobacco control efforts, sharing successful strategies and experiences from Bihar.



Building a Tobacco-Free India: The Contribution of Medical Institutes to Public Health



CONVENING THE AIIMS CONSORTIUM ON TOBACCO CONTROL

- Event:** 3rd National Consultation on Dissemination of Good Replicable and Innovative Practices of Tobacco Control in India
- Date & Location:** 18th July 2023, New Delhi
- Participants:** 15 Directors of AIIMS and over 30 national and international representatives from premier organizations, including WHO SEA @ Geneva, NHRSC, NIIHF, PHFI, NAMS, and various civil society organizations.
- Objective:** Discuss the framework and establish the AIIMS Consortium on Tobacco Control

Reference: <http://treesphaiimsjdj.org>

Thanks

AN ABRIDGED BEEDI TAX REPORT: NAVIGATING THE IMPLICATIONS OF BEEDI REGULATION AND TAXATION

Medical institutions play a critical role in advancing tobacco control by utilizing their influence, expertise, and resources. They are key in advocating, policymakers, and supporting tobacco cessation through research, education, and direct implementation of tobacco control initiatives. These institutions are held in high regard within society, making them effective advocates for stronger tobacco control policies and vital partners in communicating challenges to governments. Their collaboration with authorities at national and local levels ensures better enforcement of tobacco control measures.

As centers of learning, medical institutions uphold compliance with frameworks like the Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions (ToFEI) guidelines, fostering tobacco-free campuses and serving as role models for other organizations. They also play a pivotal role in training future healthcare providers—including doctors, nurses, and allied health workers—by incorporating tobacco control into their curricula. This equips graduates with the necessary skills to address tobacco-related health concerns effectively.

Medical institutions contribute to the implementation of the World Health Organization's MPOWER strategy and the National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) by developing innovative interventions and monitoring the enforcement of tobacco control policies. Through training programs and workshops, they equip healthcare professionals with the skills needed to support tobacco cessation. Their ongoing research efforts also provide crucial data on tobacco

use trends, policy impact, and industry interference, helping to refine and strengthen tobacco control strategies.

In addition to education and research, medical institutions engage communities by organizing awareness campaigns and collaborating with district tobacco control committees to extend tobacco control efforts into both urban and rural areas. Medical, Dental and Nursing colleges, with their large student bodies, play an important role in advancing tobacco control through education, research, and advocacy. Multidisciplinary committees within these institutions monitor and drive tobacco control activities, further enhancing their impact.

Many medical institutions have established Tobacco Control Committees (TCCs) to implement tobacco-free policies, organize public awareness initiatives, and conduct relevant research. Their participation in national programs like NTCP ensures sustainable tobacco cessation and prevention programs in collaboration with local health authorities.

To highlight these efforts, the Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC) at PGIMER, Chandigarh, conducted a National Webinar that showcased the crucial role of medical institutions in India's tobacco control strategies. This event demonstrated the collective influence of these institutions in shaping the future of tobacco control efforts across the country.



Potential Activities for Medical Institutes in Tobacco Control

Medical institutes can leverage their vast human resources, infrastructure, and strategic positioning within the healthcare system to execute a wide variety of activities aimed at reducing tobacco use and its impact. Below is an expanded list of activities they can undertake:

1. Establishing Tobacco-Free Campuses:

- I. Implement strict no-smoking policies across all college campuses, including affiliated hospitals and clinics.
- II. Ensure visible signage, awareness programs, and regular monitoring to enforce compliance.
- III. Organize “Tobacco-Free Campus” certification programs, which could be a model for other institutions to follow.

2. Setting up Tobacco Cessation Centers (TCCs):

- I. Establish Tobacco Cessation Centers on campus where both patients and staff can receive counseling and treatment.
- II. Provide services such as nicotine replacement therapies, behavioral counseling, and follow-up support.
- III. Encourage medical students to participate in tobacco cessation efforts as part of their clinical rotations or internships.

3. Curriculum Integration and Student Training:

- I. Integrate tobacco control into the core medical, dental, and public health curricula.
- II. Develop and offer elective courses focused on tobacco control strategies, including public health policy, pharmacotherapy, and community outreach.
- III. Assign practical case studies related to tobacco cessation and management during clinical rotations.
- IV. Conduct workshops, seminars, and simulation exercises to teach students the “5 A’s” of tobacco cessation (Ask, Advise, Assess, Assist, and Arrange follow-up).

4. Faculty and Student-Led Research:

- I. Encourage faculty and students to conduct research on various aspects of tobacco control, such as the economic impact of tobacco, smoking cessation methods, and tobacco-related health conditions.
- II. Promote interdisciplinary research across departments like community medicine, public health, psychiatry, and oncology.
- III. Publish findings in scientific journals to contribute to evidence-based policymaking and best practices.

5. Community Outreach and Engagement:

- I. Partner with local government bodies and public health organizations to conduct outreach programs in communities, focusing on educating the public about the harmful effects of tobacco.
- II. Organize health camps, especially in rural and underserved areas, to screen for tobacco-related illnesses and provide cessation support.
- III. Train students to conduct awareness drives in schools, workplaces, and public spaces, targeting youth to prevent tobacco initiation.





6. Collaboration with Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):

- I. Collaborate with District Tobacco Control Committees (DTCCs) to integrate medical institutions into state and national tobacco control programs.
- II. Work with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and public health groups on tobacco control initiatives, contributing to policy advocacy and public awareness.

7. Implementing Anti-Tobacco Counseling in Hospitals:

- I. Ensure all patients visiting the affiliated hospitals are routinely screened for tobacco use as part of standard care.
- II. Include tobacco use status in patient medical records and provide cessation advice to every identified user.
- III. Make cessation counseling a mandatory part of discharge protocols for patients with tobacco-related diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, and respiratory illness.

8. Developing Educational Campaigns:

- I. Create and disseminate educational materials such as brochures, posters, videos, and infographics on the risks of tobacco use and the benefits of quitting.
- II. Use digital platforms (institutional websites, social media) to reach a broader audience with anti-tobacco messages.
- III. Organize events such as World No Tobacco Day celebrations to raise awareness among the general public and the institution's own community.

9. Supporting Government Policies and Legislative Advocacy:

- I. Engage in policy discussions and provide expert opinions to support tobacco control legislation at the local, state, and national levels.
- II. Develop advocacy campaigns that highlight the importance of increasing tobacco taxes, banning tobacco advertisements, and enforcing smoke-free laws.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation of Tobacco Control Programs:

- I. Conduct periodic evaluations of the tobacco control programs within the medical institute to assess their effectiveness and areas of improvement.
- II. Participate in national and regional surveys such as the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) to provide data on tobacco use trends and the impact of control measures.

11. Training Healthcare Professionals Beyond Medical Students:

- I. Provide training and workshops for allied healthcare professionals, including nursing staff, pharmacists, and social workers, on tobacco cessation techniques.



- II. Develop specialized courses or certificate programs in tobacco control for undergraduate and postgraduate students from fields such as dentistry, public health, and nursing.
- III. Encourage peer education programs where senior students train juniors in tobacco cessation counseling and public health advocacy.

12. Promotion of Quitlines and Digital Tools for Cessation:

- I. Establish institutional partnerships with national quitlines, ensuring patients are aware of these resources.
- II. Develop mobile applications or digital tools that provide educational content, track quit progress, and offer motivational support for tobacco cessation.
- III. Introduce patients to government-supported mobile apps for cessation and smoking cessation support systems.

13. Engaging Students in Tobacco Control Advocacy:

- I. Create student-led tobacco control clubs or societies that actively promote anti-tobacco initiatives within the campus and the broader community.
- II. Encourage students to participate in debates, competitions, and public speaking events on tobacco control policies and health advocacy.
- III. Involve students in legislative advocacy efforts by conducting meetings with policymakers and submitting recommendations for stronger tobacco control regulations.

14. Promoting Alternative Livelihood Programs:

- I. Educate tobacco farmers and vendors about the health risks of tobacco and assist them in identifying and transitioning to alternative livelihoods.
- II. Collaborate with governmental initiatives that promote agricultural diversification in tobacco-growing regions.

15. Developing Multidisciplinary Tobacco Control Programs:

- I. Engage departments such as psychiatry, cardiology, respiratory medicine, oncology, and nutrition to create comprehensive, multidisciplinary programs addressing tobacco cessation from various health perspectives.
- II. Implement follow-up care programs for individuals who have quit smoking to ensure long-term cessation.

16. Documenting Tobacco Control Efforts for Replication:

- I. Document best practices and success stories from the institution's tobacco control initiatives to share with other medical colleges.
- II. Compile case studies and reports to serve as models for other institutions to replicate and scale similar efforts.



PGIMER's Role in Advancing Medical Consortia for Tobacco Control

AIIMS Consortium on Tobacco Control

The AIIMS Consortium on Tobacco Control marks a pivotal advancement in the collective efforts of premier medical institutes across India to combat tobacco use. Comprising 15 AIIMS institutions, the consortium focuses on developing and implementing comprehensive tobacco control strategies. Each AIIMS has established dedicated Tobacco Control Committees, integrating students and faculty from various departments to foster collaboration. Activities are monitored through short-term, mid-term, and long-term action plans, ensuring sustained effectiveness. The consortium encourages collaboration among institutions to share resources and best practices, while also facilitating mentorship programs for colleges seeking to enhance their tobacco control initiatives. Additionally, by incorporating tobacco control research into master's theses and integrating it into the Master's in Public Health curriculum, the consortium equips future healthcare professionals with the necessary skills to address tobacco-related challenges effectively. Through these coordinated efforts, the AIIMS Consortium aims to establish a robust framework for tobacco control across India.

Medical College Consortium on Tobacco Control

The journey towards creating the Medical College Consortium on Tobacco Control was spearheaded by PGIMER, building on the success of AIIMS Consortium and recommendations from key figures, including the Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Additional Deputy Director General of Health Services, along with various experts in tobacco control.

In response, the RCTC at PGIMER issued a national call for medical institutions to join the Medical College Consortium on Tobacco Control. From 30 applications, 22 medical colleges were selected for the pilot phase based on the commitment towards working on tobacco control. Each participating institution has established dedicated Tobacco Control Committees, comprising faculty and students from various disciplines to promote interdisciplinary collaboration. These committees operate under structured action plans—short-term, mid-term, and long-term—to ensure sustained and measurable progress.

The consortium is engaged in various scholarly initiatives, including the implementation of Tobacco-Free Educational Institution guidelines, organizing national-level awareness programs such as poster-making and slogan-writing competitions, youth awareness campaigns, and the publication of a special newsletter focusing on tobacco control themes. Moreover, many institutions have adopted a "No Conflict of Interest" declaration on their official websites to reinforce their institutional integrity in tobacco control efforts.

The consortium facilitates resource sharing and the exchange of best practices among its members, strengthening their collective capacity for effective tobacco control interventions. Through this coordinated approach, the consortium is working towards building a comprehensive and scalable framework for tobacco control across India.





WHO releases first-ever clinical treatment guideline for tobacco cessation in adults

The World Health Organization (WHO) has issued its first comprehensive guideline on tobacco cessation, recommending a range of interventions, including behavioural support from healthcare providers, digital cessation tools, and pharmacological treatments. The guideline aims to assist over 750 million tobacco users who want to quit, addressing various products like cigarettes, waterpipes, and heated tobacco products. WHO emphasizes the importance of combining pharmacotherapy with behavioural interventions to increase success rates and encourages countries to make these treatments more accessible, especially in low- and middle-income regions. WHO Director-General highlighted this guideline as a key milestone in global efforts to combat tobacco-related diseases.

Source: <https://www.who.int/news/item/02-07-2024-who-releases-first-ever-clinical-treatment-guideline-for-tobacco-cessation-in-adults>

Black Buffalo unveils new packaging design to propel retail growth



The updated colour schemes and branding elements are the result of extensive consumer research and retailer feedback.

American smokeless tobacco alternative company Black Buffalo has revealed a bold new packaging design for its nicotine-containing products. The redesigned packaging, set to roll out next month through a national network of wholesalers, features updated colour schemes and branding elements inspired by extensive consumer research and retailer feedback. The changes reflect Black Buffalo's commitment to innovation in the moist smokeless tobacco alternative and modern oral nicotine categories, while also maintaining the brand's quality and core values. The new design aligns with the company's marketing principle of not appealing to former or non-users of tobacco.

<https://www.packaging-gateway.com/news/black-buffalo-packaging-design/>

Vape retailers move to reinstate their legal challenge of 2024 Kentucky law

Kentucky vape retailers are appealing the dismissal of their challenge to a 2024 state law banning the sale of certain vaping products. The appeal follows a late July decision by Franklin Circuit Judge Thomas Wingate, who ruled that the law did not violate the state Constitution. The retailers, represented by the Kentucky Smoke-Free Association, argue that the law, which takes effect on January 1, 2024, is unconstitutional. The legislation, House Bill 11, aims to reduce underage vaping by restricting sales to products with FDA certification. Critics claim the law favours big retailers like Altria, which supported the bill and could harm small businesses while pushing youth towards traditional cigarettes.

Source: <https://kentucky Lantern.com/briefs/vape-retailers-move-to-reinstate-their-legal-challenge-of-2024-state-law/>



Brand 'Zambia'

A significant disparity exists in tobacco production between Zambia and its neighbor Zimbabwe. Despite Zambia's larger land area, it produces only about one-eighth of the Virginia flue-cured tobacco that Zimbabwe does. This disparity is primarily due to the greater emphasis placed on tobacco in Zimbabwe's economy, where it plays a crucial role in GDP and foreign exchange earnings, in contrast to Zambia, where mining is the dominant economic activity. Although both countries have favorable conditions for tobacco cultivation, historical economic decisions have reinforced these priorities, making adjustments challenging. Furthermore, Zambia has faced difficulties in attracting international tobacco buyers, resulting in a cycle where the relatively small crop size deters buyer interest and further restricts industry growth.

Source: <https://tobaccoreporter.com/2024/07/01/brand-zambia/>



FDA's First Marketing Order for Menthol E-Cigarettes: A Milestone in Tobacco Harm Reduction



The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has granted marketing orders for four menthol-flavored e-cigarette products, marking the first approval of non-tobacco-flavored products through the Premarket Tobacco Product Application (PMTA) pathway. This significant development is seen as a crucial step forward in tobacco harm reduction, offering adult smokers regulated alternatives to combustible cigarettes. The FDA's decision was based on evidence showing that menthol-flavored e-cigarettes, like the Njoy Ace and Njoy Daily, facilitate higher rates of smoking cessation compared to their tobacco-flavored counterparts. This ruling could pave the way for more flavored electronic nicotine-delivery systems (ENDS) to receive approval, potentially broadening the options available to smokers seeking to quit. However, the FDA emphasized the need for stringent measures to mitigate the risk of youth access to these products. This landmark decision underscores the importance of robust evidence and careful regulation in advancing public health goals.

Source: <https://tobaccoreporter.com/2024/08/05/the-takeaways-3/>

Politically charged tobacco policy document that NZ First Minister Casey Costello tried to hide

Associate Health Minister Casey Costello of New Zealand First is under scrutiny after forwarding a controversial document to health officials that advocates for tobacco tax cuts and minimizes the risks of nicotine. Initially denying the document's existence, Costello later released it with redactions, claiming she doesn't know its origin or author. Critics, including Labour's health spokeswoman Ayesha Verrall, have questioned the transparency of Costello's actions, suggesting the handling of the document raises concerns about potential tobacco industry influence, despite Costello's denial of any ties to the industry.

Source: <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/in-depth/526139/revealed-politically-charged-tobacco-policy-document-that-nz-first-minister-casey-costello-tried-to-hide>



Philip Morris to invest \$232 million to expand ZYN production at Kentucky plant

Philip Morris International (PMI) announced a \$232 million investment to expand production of ZYN nicotine pouches at its Owensboro plant. This move follows PMI's recent \$600 million investment to open a ZYN manufacturing facility in Colorado. The expansion, driven by strong demand, is expected to boost production capacity to around 900 million cans by 2025. The facility will begin operating 24/7 later this year, with completion slated for the second quarter of 2025. ZYN, a tobacco-free nicotine pouch, has seen slowed shipment growth due to supply chain constraints, prompting this significant expansion effort.

Source: <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/business-news/philip-morris-invest-232-million-expand-zyn-production-kentucky-plant-rcna168572>



Pan masala makers to pay Rs 1 lakh penalty from October 1 for failure to register machines with taxmen-India

The government of India has set October 1, 2024, as the deadline for implementing penalty provisions for manufacturers of pan masala and similar tobacco products who fail to register their packing machinery with GST authorities. This follows earlier notifications in May and June that introduced forms GST SRM-I and II for registering machinery and reporting inputs and outputs to tax authorities. The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) announced that from October 1, a penalty of up to ₹1 lakh will be imposed for non-compliance. This measure is part of efforts to enhance GST compliance for these manufacturers, initially outlined in the Finance Bill 2024 and effective from April 1, but later extended to May 15.

Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/tobacco/pan-masala-makers-to-pay-rs-1-lakh-penalty-from-october-1-for-failure-to-register-machines-with-taxmen/articleshow/112338866.cms?from=mdr>

Godfrey Phillips to go ahead with exit from retail business under 24Seven

Cigarette maker Godfrey Phillips India Ltd is proceeding with plans to exit the retail business under the '24Seven' brand after a district court in Delhi set aside an interim injunction. The board approved the exit on April 12, 2024, citing stakeholder feedback and market conditions. The retail business division had a negative net worth as of March 31, 2024, with revenue of Rs 403 crore in FY23-24.

Source: https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/tobacco/godfrey-phillips-to-go-ahead-with-exit-from-retail-business-under-24seven/articleshow/112174049.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst



Tobacco crackdown: India mulls stricter FDI norms



The Commerce and Industry Ministry plans to tighten foreign direct investment (FDI) norms in the tobacco sector to curb promotional activities and smuggling. Currently, FDI is banned in manufacturing but allowed in technology collaboration. The proposed changes aim to prohibit all promotional activities in line with India's commitment to the WHO's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/dpiit-working-on-proposal-to-further-tighten-fdi-norms-in-tobacco-sector/articleshow/112078477.cms?from=mdr>

Ban on tobacco consumption in Jammu & Kashmir's Katra town

The Jammu administration has banned the sale, possession, and consumption of cigarettes and other tobacco products in Katra, the town hosting the cave shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi. This initiative, launched on World No-Tobacco Day, aims to preserve the sanctity of the religious site, visited by thousands of pilgrims daily. Reasi District Magistrate stated that the ban, imposed under Section 144, extends from Numaae and Panthal check posts up to Bhavan. This measure follows an existing prohibition on meat and liquor in the area, reinforcing efforts to maintain a tobacco-free environment around the shrine.

Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/tobacco/ban-on-tobacco-consumption-in-jammu-kashmir-katra-town/articleshow/110633161.cms?from=mdr>



BCCI faces directive to stop showing tobacco ads during cricket matches

The Union Health Ministry is set to direct the BCCI to halt hoardings advertising smokeless tobacco at cricket venues, aiming to reduce youth exposure to tobacco products. Concerns have risen over surrogate advertisements featuring tobacco brands during matches, indirectly targeting young spectators. These ads, often endorsed by celebrities, skirt regulations by posing as ads for pan masala or mouth fresheners. The initiative aligns with existing laws prohibiting tobacco promotion in media and aims to curb tobacco-related health risks among India's youth, reflecting broader efforts to enforce stricter advertising regulations.



Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/cons-products/tobacco/bcci-faces-directive-to-stop-showing-tobacco-ads-during-cricket-matches/articleshow/111760291.cms?from=mdr>

Tobacco farmers ask govt to include sector under duty refund scheme Rodtep



Tobacco exporters have urged the government to include the sector under the duty refund scheme, Rodtep, to boost exports. During a meeting with Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on June 29,

traders highlighted that tobacco exporters currently receive no export incentives and requested inclusion in the Rodtep scheme. They also raised concerns about the unauthorized production of chewing tobacco, which they said is causing significant revenue losses, and reported an increase in illicit cigarette sales. Goyal assured that efforts would be made to support tobacco farmers, including potentially waiving penalties for excess tobacco production and extending the validity of farmer registrations from one to three years. The export value of un-manufactured tobacco and products reached a record ₹12,005.80 crore (\$1.5 billion).

Source: https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/tobacco-farmers-ask-govt-to-include-sector-under-duty-refund-scheme-rodtep-124063000454_1.html

Send us your feedback, comments and suggestions at rctcupdates@gmail.com,

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