



TOBACCO-FREE *Times*

www.rctcpgi.org

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RNI Title Approval No : CHAENG01153

The Role of Media in Tobacco Control

RCTC Strengthens Strategic Commitment to Article 5.3 Implementation in five focused states:



As part of its focused efforts to support five key states (Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, & Uttarakhand) in advancing the effective implementation of Article 5.3 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), the Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC) marked a significant achievement through a high-level engagement with the Government of Himachal Pradesh. On March 5, 2025, RCTC held a successful meeting with Ms. M. Sudha Devi (IAS), Health Secretary, to discuss strategic collaboration for tobacco control. During the meeting, RCTC presented a tailored set of action points aimed at institutionalizing and operationalizing Article 5.3, which protects public health policies from tobacco industry interference. The Health Secretary expressed full agreement with the proposed measures and affirmed the state's commitment to implementing them in a time-bound manner. This collaboration marks a major step forward in creating a robust governance framework for tobacco control in Himachal Pradesh and reinforces RCTC's pivotal role in driving policy action and capacity building for Article 5.3 across its five focus states.

EDITOR'S SPEAK



The Power of Media: Turning Headlines into Health Wins

In the battle against tobacco, media is more than a storyteller—it's a force for change. Whether it's busting myths, exposing industry tricks, or rallying public support for stronger laws, the media holds the mic that can amplify impact.

In this edition, you'll dive into powerful stories of media-driven advocacy, bold campaigns that challenged tobacco norms, and expert insights on how headlines can spark healthier choices. From print to digital, national to local, the message is clear: when media speaks, people—and policies—listen.

Let's keep the spotlight on tobacco control and turn every story into a step toward a tobacco-free India.

- Dr Sonu Goel,

Director, RCTC & Professor, Department of Community Medicine & School of Public Health, PGIMER, Chandigarh

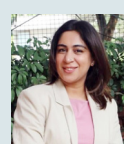
EXPERTS SPEAK

The Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC) is rendering yeoman service to humanity as a leading force in organizing, conducting, and advising all stakeholders engaged in combating the tobacco menace. Its seminars are truly outstanding—informative, inspiring, and a constant reminder of the importance of pursuing this noble cause with unwavering dedication. May RCTC continue to strengthen its efforts and strive even harder in supporting and advancing tobacco control initiatives.



- Dr. Uma Garg,

Professor and Head, Department of ENT & Head and Neck Surgery
BPS Government Medical College for Women, Khanpur Kalan, Sonipat



The Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC) at PGIMER has made a significant impact through advocacy, research, and capacity building. It supports policymakers, empowers health professionals, and engages communities, fostering sustainable tobacco control efforts across India.

Opinder Preet K. Gill,

Project Director - Tobacco Control,
Generation Saviour Association, Punjab



PROJECT UPDATES

RCTC's Participation in PHASECON-2025: Advancing Tobacco Control Through Digital Innovations



The Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC) actively participated in the 2nd National Students' Conference, PHASECON-2025, held on February 8-9, 2025, at the National Institute of Nursing Education, PGIMER, Chandigarh. As part of its engagement, RCTC set up a dedicated exhibition stall showcasing its key publications, community engagement initiatives, and interactive activities. Highlights included a poster-making competition, batch designing contest, and educational games aimed at promoting tobacco control awareness. The event witnessed an overwhelming response, with over 205 visitors, 140 competition participants, and significant social media engagement. A key feature of the event was the plenary session on "Transforming Tobacco Control in India: Digital Innovations

and Addressing the Burden." The session brought together esteemed experts, including Dr. Rakesh Gupta (President, Strategic Institute for Public Health Education and Research), Dr. Sonu Goel (Professor, Department of Community Medicine and School of Public Health), Ms. Arushi Sabharwal (State Consultant, NTCP Haryana), Mr. Rajeev Kumar (Project Coordinator, RCTC), and Dr. Swati Chauhan (MPH Scholar, PGIMER), to discuss the role of digital interventions in strengthening tobacco control. Key discussions focused on bridging the gap between innovation and grassroots implementation, improving digital literacy, ensuring data privacy and scalability, and aligning digital strategies with national policies.



The 5th National Workshop on Enhancing Monitoring & Evaluation of NTCP/ MPOWER in India

The 5th National Workshop to Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation of NTCP/ MPOWER in India was scheduled from 2nd to 4th March 2025 in Chandigarh, organized by Vital Strategies in collaboration with RCTC. This workshop aims to provide a platform for policymakers, public health experts, and stakeholders to review and enhance monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks within the National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) and MPOWER strategies. Participants from central and state governments, academic institutions, and civil society organizations will engage in discussions to refine M&E strategies, share best practices, and document challenges and success stories in tobacco control.

The workshop played a crucial role in strengthening data-driven decision-making and policy implementation at both the state and district levels. Selected participants contributed valuable insights and case studies, which helped in shaping a more effective and sustainable tobacco control framework in India.



Regional Consultation on Strengthening NTCP: Advancing Tobacco Control Through Multi-Sectoral Collaboration, 18-19 March 2025



The Regional Consultation for Key Stakeholders on the National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) was held on 18-19 March 2025 at Tata Memorial Centre (TMC), Navi Mumbai, organized by the Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC), PGIMER Chandigarh, in collaboration with TMC and Vital Strategies. The workshop brought together government officials, public health experts, law enforcement agencies, civil society organizations, and academic institutions to assess NTCP progress, identify challenges, and develop strategies for strengthening tobacco control policies. Dr. Sonu Goel emphasized the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration, while speakers

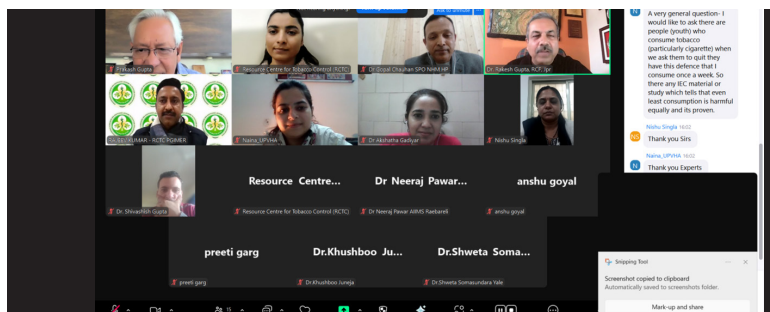
such as Dr. Rana J. Singh, Dr. P.C. Gupta, and Dr. Pankaj Chaturvedi highlighted the need for stronger COTPA enforcement, awareness campaigns, and evidence-based policy interventions. Representatives from Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka, Gujarat, and Jharkhand presented their state-wise NTCP progress, including efforts in COTPA enforcement, Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions (ToFIE), Tobacco-Free Villages (TFV), and cessation services.

A brainstorming session generated state-specific recommendations, such as expanding Tobacco Cessation Centers (TCCs), strengthening vendor licensing, enhancing enforcement, and leveraging digital platforms for awareness and monitoring. The workshop concluded with a call to action for collaboration and innovation, with the recommendations to be further deliberated in the next session for effective implementation.



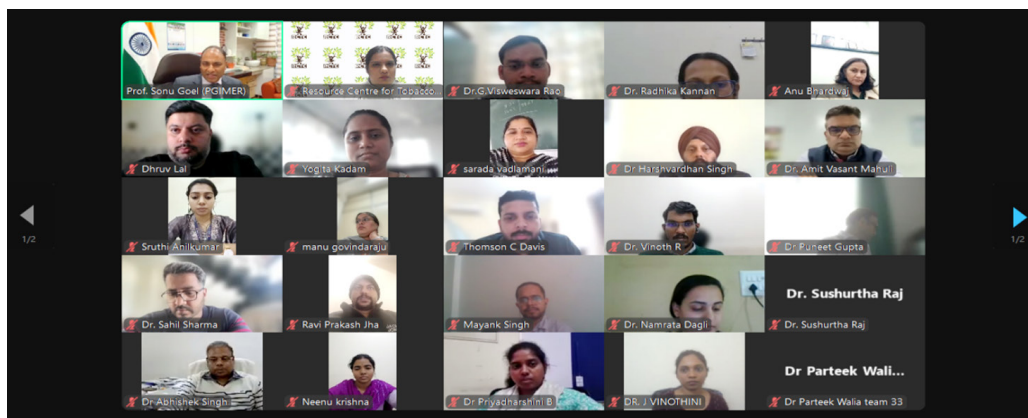
Advanced Course on Tobacco Control (ACTC) Activities

On January 31, 2024, the Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC) successfully conducted the fourth live interaction session for the Advanced Course on Tobacco Control (ACTC). This session provided participants with a platform to engage with facilitators, seek clarifications, and enhance their understanding of Modules 14 to 17. With the module-based learning phase nearing completion, individual performance reports covering all 17 modules were shared, reinforcing the importance of timely course completion.



Strengthening Research Excellence: Third Review Meeting of the Bibliometric Manuscript Writing Programme

On February 5, 2025, RCTC successfully facilitated the third review meeting for the 3rd Batch of the Bibliometric Manuscript Writing Programme. The session brought together program mentors and mentees to assess progress following the completion of ten live sessions. Key discussions focused on mentees' performance, mentor-mentee engagement, and strategies to streamline manuscript development.



RCTC's Participation in CME Programme on Tobacco Control Strategies in India and Future Interventions

RCTC actively participated in the CME Programme on Tobacco Control Strategies in India and its Future Interventions, organized by the National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), New Delhi, on 7th February 2025. The virtual event featured expert discussions led by Dr. Sonu Goel, Professor of Health Management at PGIMER, Chandigarh, and Dr. Rakesh Gupta, President of the Rajasthan Cancer Foundation, Jaipur. The session provided valuable insights into innovative strategies and future interventions for effective tobacco control in India, reinforcing RCTC's commitment to public health advocacy and policy implementation.

AIIMS-NAMS NAVIGATE (National Virtual Postgraduate Medical)

CME Programme on Tobacco Control Strategies in India and it's Future Interventions


Dated: 7th Feb, 2025 (Friday) | Time: 3.00 pm – 5.00 pm

EXPERTS:
Dr. Sonu Goel
Professor of Health Management,
School of Public Health, PGIMER, Chandigarh

Dr Rakesh Gupta
President,
Rajasthan Cancer Foundation, Jaipur


Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/92784735278?pwd=2cwUT5b2QCh1Kwr4Wz1apW268RQwZQ.1>
Meeting ID: 927 8473 5278

Organised by
National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), New Delhi



National Webinar on Herbal, Nicotine, and Newer Tobacco Products: Understanding Health Risks and Regulatory Challenges

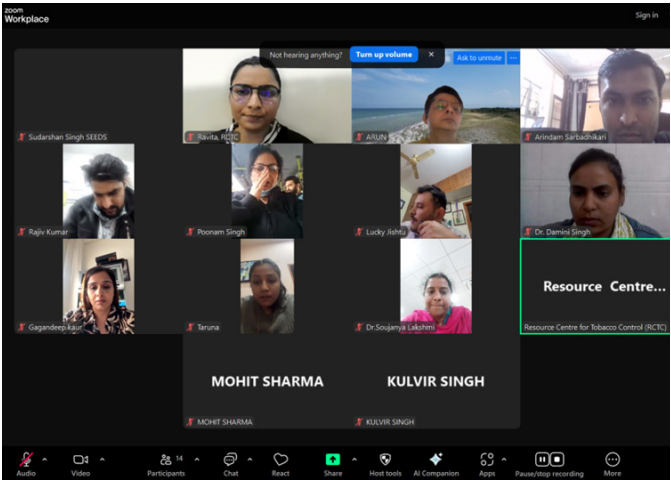
NATIONAL WEBINAR
"Herbal, Nicotine and Newer Tobacco Products: Understanding Health Risks and Regulatory Challenges in India"
on 24th Feb, 2025
Organised by: Resource Centre for Tobacco Control (RCTC), Department of Community Medicine & School of Public Health, PGIMER, Chandigarh
In Collaboration with: Vital Strategies



The Resource Center for Tobacco Control, PGIMER Chandigarh, in collaboration with Vital Strategies, organized a national webinar on February 24, 2025, focusing on the health risks and regulatory challenges of herbal, nicotine, and newer tobacco products. The webinar provided a platform for experts, policymakers, legal professionals, and researchers to discuss misleading marketing tactics, public health risks, and regulatory gaps associated with these emerging products. Dr. Sonu Goel, Dr. L. Swasticharan, Dr. P.C. Gupta, and Dr. Rana J. Singh highlighted the urgent need for immediate regulatory interventions, scientific validation of health claims, and stricter enforcement measures. Technical sessions explored market analysis, aggressive online promotion of nicotine pouches, and policy recommendations, including expanding tobacco control laws, strengthening online surveillance, and enforcing stricter advertising regulations. The event concluded with a call for urgent regulatory action, with stakeholders agreeing to submit a policy brief to government authorities to strengthen tobacco control efforts. With 83 attendees, 12 experts, and over 61 chat interactions, the webinar reflected strong engagement and commitment to addressing the growing challenges posed by newer nicotine and herbal tobacco products.

Launch of the Fourth Batch of the Basic Course on Tobacco Control – March 3, 2025

The Resource Center for Tobacco Control (RCTC), PGIMER Chandigarh, launched the fourth batch of the Basic Course on Tobacco Control on March 3, 2025, reinforcing its commitment to capacity building in tobacco control. This structured program equips health professionals, policymakers, law enforcement officials, and advocates with essential knowledge of tobacco control policies, cessation strategies, and enforcement mechanisms. Covering key topics such as COTPA, WHO-FCTC, behavioural interventions, and countering tobacco industry interference, the course fosters multi-sectoral collaboration and practical skill development. The launch event included an overview of the course structure, introductory sessions, and testimonials from previous participants who highlighted its impact on strengthening tobacco control initiatives. With enthusiastic participation from professionals across sectors, the program continues to empower stakeholders with the expertise needed to drive effective tobacco control policies and interventions.





Role of Media in Tobacco Control



Media is one of the most powerful tools in public health communication, capable of influencing beliefs, shaping behavior, and shifting social norms. Whether through traditional platforms like television and newspapers, or digital channels like Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube, media helps bring critical health messages into homes, schools, workplaces, and communities.

In the context of tobacco control, this influence becomes even more crucial. With tobacco killing over 8 million people each year, global and national efforts increasingly rely on media to: Educate the public about health risks, promote cessation services, Support enforcement of tobacco laws, expose deceptive tactics of the tobacco industry and inspire collective action toward tobacco-free living. A well-executed media strategy is not just supportive—it is central to successful tobacco control.



Tobacco control efforts use a diverse range of media to reach different audiences:

Type of Media	Role in Tobacco Control
Television & Radio	Air powerful PSAs, expert interviews, survivor stories
Print Media	Publish editorials, awareness articles, and policy highlights
Cinema Advertising	Run anti-tobacco ads and disclaimers before films
Outdoor Media	Billboards, posters, transit ads spread awareness in public spaces
Digital & Social Media	Target youth with creative content on Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp etc.
Community Media	Local cable channels, community radio, and street theatre
News Media & Journalism	Investigate tobacco industry tactics and report policy progress

Why Media Matters in Tobacco Control

Media influences knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors at scale—especially when public health messages are delivered consistently and creatively. Strategic media engagement helps:

- **Raise awareness** about the harms of tobacco use.
- **Support enforcement** of tobacco laws (e.g., smoke-free zones, advertising bans).
- **Promote cessation services**, such as quitlines and digital interventions.
- **Debunk misinformation** spread by the tobacco industry.
- **Normalize tobacco-free lifestyles**, especially among youth.
- **Empower communities** to participate in local tobacco control movements.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN TOBACCO CONTROL



Tobacco Control Elements Catered Through

Media Media can support several components of the WHO MPOWER strategy:

- M** : Monitor tobacco use – through public engagement in surveillance campaigns.
- P** : Protect people – by promoting smoke-free environments.
- O** : Offer help to quit – by advertising cessation services and success stories.
- W** : Warn about dangers – via graphic PSAs, campaigns, and anti-tobacco warnings.
- E** : Enforce bans – media can report violations and highlight legal enforcement.
- R** : Raise taxes – media can advocate for policy change and economic disincentives.

Global Presence of Media in Tobacco Control: Good Practices and Real-World Examples

Globally, media campaigns have played a pivotal role in countries with successful tobacco control outcomes. The U.S. “Tips from Former Smokers” campaign led to millions attempting to quit. Australia’s hard-hitting anti-tobacco ads were instrumental in reducing smoking prevalence. WHO and The Union regularly use multimedia storytelling to strengthen global tobacco control advocacy.

Media has emerged as a critical pillar in global tobacco control, playing a powerful role in shaping public attitudes, encouraging cessation, and countering tobacco industry narratives. Effective media strategies, especially when integrated into broader tobacco control policies, can contribute to reductions in tobacco use prevalence and initiation.

1. Public Awareness and Graphic Campaigns

Australia’s “Every Cigarette is Doing You Damage” campaign utilized visceral, graphic television ads to convey the internal harm caused by smoking. It significantly increased public awareness and contributed to reduced smoking rates (Wakefield et al., 2003).

In the United States, the CDC’s “Tips from Former Smokers” campaign featured real individuals suffering from smoking-related diseases. Between 2012 and 2018, the campaign was responsible for over 16.4 million quit attempts (CDC, 2022). Similarly, Brazil implemented strong mass media campaigns alongside graphic pictorial warnings on cigarette packaging. These efforts were instrumental in reducing smoking prevalence and improving public health outcomes (National Cancer Institute, 2011).

2. Youth-Oriented and Digital Media Campaigns

The Truth Initiative in the U.S. successfully engages youth using platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, countering tobacco industry messaging and promoting a smoke-free lifestyle (Truth Initiative, 2023).

Canada’s “Break It Off” campaign, modeled after a breakup scenario, targeted young adults using social media, a mobile app, and interactive web tools, proving effective in increasing quit attempts (Health Canada, 2020).

In New Zealand, media campaigns tailored for Māori populations included storytelling on television and radio in Indigenous languages, supporting cultural relevance and smoking cessation (Thompson et al., 2000).

3. Integrated National Campaigns

The United Kingdom’s “Stoptober” campaign offers a comprehensive, multi-channel intervention each October, using TV, online, and social media to promote quitting. Evaluations showed it generated high quit rates and engagement (West et al., 2015).

Similarly, France’s “Moi(s) Sans Tabac” (Month Without Tobacco) used coordinated media messaging across television, radio, SMS, and digital platforms, alongside local health partner support (Santé publique France, 2019). India’s National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) mandates health spots and disclaimers before films and OTT content, and its campaigns like “Tears You Apart” have helped raise awareness across diverse audiences (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2021).

4. Media Advocacy and Industry Counteraction

In South Africa, sustained media advocacy campaigns such as “Be the Generation” galvanized public support for plain packaging and tobacco advertising bans, with strong participation from civil society and journalists (Van Walbeek et al., 2019).

Ukraine’s media engagement, supported by WHO, helped build momentum for tax increases and graphic warnings, contributing to policy reform and a decline in tobacco use (WHO, 2017).

In the Philippines, investigative journalism and NGO-led media campaigns exposed tobacco industry interference, strengthening the case for stricter enforcement of the Tobacco Regulation Act (SEATCA, 2020).

Vietnam launched celebrity-endorsed anti-smoking media initiatives, which improved public support for smoke-free policies (WHO Western Pacific Region, 2019).

Thailand’s “Sponsorship is Advertising” campaign highlighted industry sponsorship of events and influenced legislation (WHO, 2013).

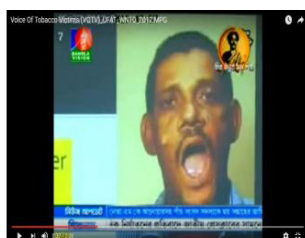
Nigeria’s youth-driven Tobacco-Free Nigeria campaign used Instagram influencers and viral messaging to mobilize support for tobacco control policies (Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, 2020).



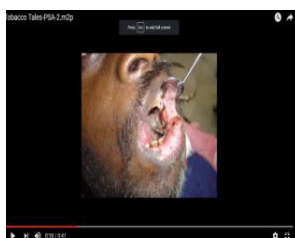
Good Practices Identified

Practice	Example Country	Impact
Graphic Visual Warnings	Australia, Brazil	Increased fear appeal and recall
Real-life Testimonials	USA	Improved quit rates and risk perception
Multi-platform Strategy	UK, Canada	Broadened reach and improved engagement
Youth-centric Content	USA, Nigeria	High engagement and peer sharing
Culturally Adapted Messaging	New Zealand, Vietnam	Greater receptivity among Indigenous groups
Media Advocacy against Industry	Philippines, South Africa	Policy reforms and public opinion shifts

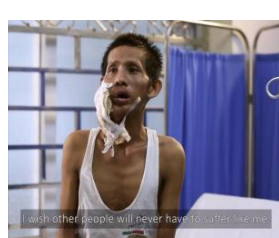
Nepal



Bangladesh



Myanmar



Media Landscape in India and Its Contribution

India has a diverse and powerful media landscape, including more than 400 news channels (NDTV, Aaj Tak, India Today, Times Now, Republic TV, CNN-News18, ABP Ananda (Bengali), TV9 Kannada, Sun News (Tamil), ETV Telugu, Zee Punjab Haryana Himachal etc.), thousands of newspapers: (The Times of India, The Hindu, Hindustan Times, Indian Express, Dainik Bhaskar, Dainik Jagran, Amar Ujala, Malayala Manorama, Eenadu, Saksh etc.), and rapidly growing digital platforms (YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter/X, WhatsApp and OTT platforms (e.g., Hotstar, SonyLIV)).

In India, the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), commonly known as the Censor Board, plays a critical role in regulating the portrayal of tobacco use in films, particularly Bollywood productions. Following the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's guidelines under the Cigarettes and Other

Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), the CBFC mandates that any film or television program depicting tobacco use must display anti-tobacco health warnings. This includes a 20-second audiovisual health spot at the beginning and middle of the film, a static health warning displayed during scenes showing tobacco use, and a disclaimer on the ill effects of tobacco. These measures, enforced through collaboration between the Ministry and CBFC since 2012 and strengthened in subsequent years, aim to reduce the glamorization of smoking and its influence on youth. Despite initial resistance from filmmakers citing creative freedom, studies have shown increased awareness and recall of anti-tobacco messages among moviegoers, highlighting the effectiveness of integrating public health messaging into mainstream entertainment (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2021; Arora et al., 2016).



भारत सरकार/GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
केन्द्रीय फिल्म प्रमाणन बोर्ड/CENTRAL BOARD OF FILM CERTIFICATION

यह प्रमाणपत्र केवल थिएटर में प्रदर्शित करने के लिए वैध है
THIS CERTIFICATE IS VALID FOR THEATRICAL RELEASE ONLY

प्रमाणपत्र सं. 14166
Certificate No. DIL/2/270/2018-MUM

तारीख 10/08/2018
Dated 10/08/2018

श्रेणी
Category

फिल्म
Film: GOLD (HINDI) (Color) (2-D)

अभिभावक मार्गदर्शन
PARENTAL GUIDANCE

अव
UA

Duration 153.42 min:sec

निम्नलिखित परीक्षण समिति के सदस्यों द्वारा परीक्षण के पश्चात तथा उक्त परीक्षण समिति की सिफारिशों पर बोर्ड द्वारा यह प्रमाणित करता है कि पीछे संलग्न भाग - 2 में उपदर्शित काट-छांट और उपान्तरो के अधीन फिल्म इस चेतावनी के प्रकाशन के साथ सार्वजनिक प्रदर्शन के लिए उपयुक्त है कि 12 वर्ष से कम आयु के किसी बालक को फिल्म देखने की अनुज्ञा दी जाए या नहीं, इस प्रश्न पर उस बालक के माता पिता या संरक्षक द्वारा विचार किया जाना चाहिए।
After examination of the film by the members of the Examining Committee mentioned below and on the recommendation of the said Examining Committee, the Board hereby certifies that the film is fit for public exhibition with an endorsement of caution that the question as to whether any child below the age of 12 years may be allowed to see the film should be considered by the parents or guardian of such child, and also subject to excision and modification listed in part II on the reverse:

- 1 AMI MITINKUMAR SHAH
- 2 KASTURI DHAWALE
- 3 SARITA SINGH
- 4 TULSIPRASAD LAKHAN YADAV
- 5 TUSHAR KARMARKAR (E.O.)

यह और प्रमाणित किया जाता है कि उपरोक्त बोर्ड द्वारा अधिरोपित काट-छांट और उपान्तरो को वास्तव में कार्यान्वित किया गया है।
Further certified that the excisions and modifications imposed by the Board have actually been carried out.

आवेदक का नाम
Name of Applicant EXCEL ENTERTAINMENT PVT LTD- MUMBAI

निर्माता का नाम
Name of Producer EXCEL ENTERTAINMENT PVT LTD - MUMBAI

अध्यक्ष
For Chairman

मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी
Chief Executive Officer

(ANURAG SRIVASTAVA)
CBFC, MUMBAI

Mukesh and Sunita mass media campaigns in India and betel nut campaign in Myanmar. • 30 second documentary, referred to as 'Surgeon' in 2009. • Followed up by 'Mukesh' the story of a 24 year old SLT user in 2011. • Another campaign featuring Sunita, suffering from mouth cancer in 2014. • Betel Nut ill effect in Myanmar in 2017.

Family Welfare, all content streamed on OTT platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+ Hotstar that depicts tobacco use must include a 30-second anti-tobacco health spot at the beginning and middle of the program, prominent static health warnings during scenes showing tobacco use, and an audio-visual disclaimer on the ill effects of tobacco.

In 2023, the Government of India extended anti-tobacco regulations to Over-The-Top (OTT) streaming platforms under the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA). As per the updated rules issued by the Ministry of Health and

These measures aim to bring digital media in line with cinema and television regulations, addressing the growing influence of web content on young audiences and ensuring consistent public health messaging across all media formats.



Media advocacy by NGOs and grassroots organizations has also helped bring attention to tobacco policy gaps and catalyze government action.

Case Study: Media Success in Tobacco Control – “Tobacco Kills” Campaign (India)

One of India's most impactful campaigns was the “Tobacco Kills” series featuring real-life testimonies from cancer survivors and affected families. These emotionally resonant ads aired across cinemas and television, contributing significantly to public awareness and increased calls to quitlines. Evaluations showed a rise in quit attempts and public support for tobacco control laws following the campaign's launch.



Surgeon – Tata Memorial Hospital



Testimony: Mukesh Harane



Testimony: Sunita Tomar



The **NEWS** Minute beta
-because every minute counts-

Politics Sports News Entertainment South Tech

Tamil Nadu says no to Spell Bee

The Tamil Nadu government has directed all educational institutions not to send their students to the event.

Article: [tamil-nadu-bans-educational-institutions-from-participating-classmate-spell-bee-contest/15895606.shtml](#)

2015

Submit: Phe

inews

INDIA SPORTS BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY ENTERTAINMENT LIFESTYLE REVIEWS INTERVIEWS LOCAL

Tamil Nadu bans educational institutions from participating in 'Classmate Spell Bee' contest

07 March, 2014

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Twitter Share Comment

Education Department of Tamil Nadu has banned all Educational Institutions in Tamil Nadu from participating in "Classmate Spell Bee" competition for which the Title Partner is ITC as a response to the complaint preferred by The State Convener of Tamil Nadu People's Forum for Tobacco Control (TNPFTC).

Government Order clearly states that "No educational institution is permitted to participate in students or its families in the events/ sponsorship/ gift/ prizes/ scholarship or any other that promote any tobacco company either through the use of (tobacco) company or brand name, trademark, logo, or trade insignia or any other distinctive features connected with its tobacco products or services in such a way that the tobacco products and the non-

18:20 147.6 50% 81%

Facebook newindianexpress.com

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

NATION WORLD STATES OPINIONS CITE

Chennai

Why should schoolchildren inhale cigarette smoke daily?

Public smoking rampant near 20 schools checked randomly by TNIE

Image used for representational purpose (Photo | Ashwin Prasath, EPS)

AP

Updated on: 30 Jan 2023, 5:58 am · 3 min read

Follow Us

CHENNAI: Schoolchildren in Chennai are passively inhaling cigarette smoke on a daily basis. A reality check by TNIE near 20 schools selected randomly found men smoking

தமிழ்நாடு அரசே...

கொலை, கொள்ளை, பெண்கள் மீதான வன்முறை மற்றும் பிற சமூக குற்றங்களுக்கு காரணமாக இருக்கும் குட்கா, பான்பராக் உள்ளிட்ட போதை பொருட்களை உடனே தடை செய்து...

கவன ஈர்ப்பு ஆர்ப்பாட்டம்

BAN GUTKA AND PAN PARAG IN TAMILNADU

நாள்: 11, பிப்ரவரி 2023, மாலை 3.00 மணி இடம்: எழும்பூர் ராஜரத்தினம் ஸ்டேடியம் அருகில்

புகையிலை கட்டுப்பாட்டிற்கான தமிழ்நாடு மக்கள் அமைப்பு

Tamilnadu People's Forum for Tobacco Control (TNPFTC)

தமிழ்நாட்டு சொந்தங்களே

வாங்க.. கரம் கோர்ப்போம் நம் தேசம் காப்போம்

கொலை, கொள்ளை, பெண்கள் மீதான வன்முறை மற்றும் பிற சமூக குற்றங்களுக்கு காரணமாக இருக்கும்

குட்கா, பான்பராக் உள்ளிட்ட போதை பொருட்களை உடனே தடை செய்து தமிழ் சமூகத்தை, இளைஞர்களை போதை பேரழிவில் இருந்து காத்திட கோரி

கவன ஈர்ப்பு ஆர்ப்பாட்டம்

Ban Gutka and Pan Parag in TamilNadu

11 பிப்ரவரி 2023, மாலை 3 மணி எழும்பூர் ராஜரத்தினம் ஸ்டேடியம் அருகில்

புகையிலை கட்டுப்பாட்டிற்கான தமிழ்நாடு மக்கள் அமைப்பு

Tamil Nadu People's Forum for Tobacco Control (TNPFTC)



Way Forward

To harness the full power of media for tobacco control:

- Invest in sustained, multilingual public health campaigns, especially in regional languages.
- Collaborate with influencers, filmmakers, and journalists to embed anti-tobacco narratives.
- Strengthen digital engagement by leveraging trends and youth-oriented platforms.
- Monitor and counter pro-tobacco content, particularly on OTT and social media.
- Support community media and local storytelling, ensuring grassroots participation.

Media is not just a messenger—it is a partner in the fight against tobacco. As technology evolves, so must our strategies to inform, protect, and inspire tobacco-free futures.

Recommendations for Strengthening Tobacco Control through Media

1. Strategic Media Engagement

- Build sustained, trust-based relationships with journalists and media houses.
- Maintain regular engagement with health and social issue reporters, rather than approaching them only during events.
- Treat journalists as long-term partners and allies in advocacy, not just coverage providers.
- Establish one-on-one relationships with editors and sub-editors who decide final content.
- Develop issue-centric media stories rather than VIP- or event-centric narratives.
- Collaborate with both traditional (print, TV, radio) and digital (social media, OTT) media platforms to maximize reach.

2. Media Content Development and Writing

- Provide clear, concise, and structured press materials tailored to media needs.
- Use top-heavy writing formats—place the most critical information in the beginning.
- Incorporate emotionally compelling human-interest stories supported by data.
- Avoid technical jargon—translate complex public health findings into reader-friendly language.
- Offer pre-packaged content: headlines, quotes, infographics, and visuals to ease journalistic work.
- Use thematic days (e.g., World No Tobacco Day, World Cancer Day) as hooks for relevant stories.

3. Training and Capacity Building

- Organize regular journalist sensitization workshops and boot camps at national and district levels.
- Train researchers and public health professionals in media communication and op-ed writing.
- Build the capacity of PROs and NGOs to frame media-ready narratives and pitch them effectively.
- Promote “media literacy” among tobacco control

advocates to understand media priorities and processes.

4. Policy and Institutional Support

- Advocate for increased and sustained funding from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) for mass media campaigns, particularly for tobacco cessation and awareness.
- Mandate collaboration between the MoHFW and Ministry of Information & Broadcasting to eliminate regulatory conflicts and curb surrogate advertising.
- Institutionalize tobacco control communications in NTCP by allocating dedicated funds for media activities and district-level journalist engagement.
- Develop national guidelines for effective media engagement under the tobacco control framework.

5. Advocacy and Law Enforcement through Media

- Use media coverage to amplify tobacco law enforcement actions, such as smoke-free zone implementation, fines, and compliance drives.
- Highlight violations (e.g., missing signage, illegal ads) to build public pressure and prompt administrative responses.
- Frame law enforcement stories as education tools to generate public and political support.
- Showcase successful case studies of smoke-free cities, districts, and panchayats to inspire replication.

6. Countering Tobacco Industry Tactics

- Expose indirect advertising strategies (e.g., CSR branding, school competitions) through investigative reporting and public campaigns.
- Advocate for stronger enforcement of bans on surrogate advertising across all media platforms, including OTT and social media.
- Promote government orders restricting tobacco industry engagement with educational institutions and youth programs.

7. Use of Digital and Social Media

- Leverage social media platforms (X, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube) for low-cost, high-reach advocacy.
- Align digital media efforts with traditional media campaigns to reinforce messaging.
- Regularly post myth-busting content, real-life testimonies, and expert interviews to keep audiences engaged.
- Monitor and evaluate digital campaign performance and adapt messaging based on audience feedback.

8. Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation

- Integrate research tools and evaluation frameworks to measure the impact of media campaigns.
- Use public opinion polls and community-level data to inform media content and policy advocacy.
- Document and disseminate successful media-driven case studies for institutional learning.



A UN treaty that addresses the global tobacco epidemic has saved millions of lives over the past two decades, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Tuesday. - 25 February 2025 Health

The agency is this week celebrating the 20th anniversary of the entry into force of its Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) – one of the most widely embraced UN treaties in history.

The Convention provides a legal framework and a comprehensive package of evidence-based tobacco control measures which include large pictorial health warnings on cigarette packages, smoke free laws and increased taxes on tobacco products.

Up to 5.6 billion people are now covered by at least one tobacco control policy in line with the treaty and studies have shown a decline in global smoking rates.

Source: UN News, Global perspective Human stories (<https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/02/1160481>)



Views sought on more tobacco and nicotine controls



People have been asked for their views on plans to tighten restrictions on tobacco and nicotine products, including the introduction of a generational ban.

Last summer, Michelle Haywood MHK asked for permission to introduce a private member's bill, but politicians instead backed the appointment of a committee to review the proposals. The measures outlined include banning the sale of products containing tobacco and nicotine to those born from 2008 onwards.

The committee has now issued a consultation on the matter, which will run until 26 March.

Source: BBC (<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cr7e7lvrl3ko>)

More than 9,000 illegal cigarettes seized



More than 9,000 illegal cigarettes have been seized as part of a national initiative to tackle their sale. Oxfordshire County Council's Trading Standards carried out raids at off-licences, convenience stores, food retailers and barbers in Banbury, Kidlington and Oxford. Specialist tobacco detection dogs - which were used to sniff out contraband in concealments within till points or hidden in storerooms - assisted the operation. Alongside the cigarettes, teams also seized counterfeit hand-rolling tobacco, nicotine pouches and vapes.

Source: BBC News (<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cj02pr93e83o>)

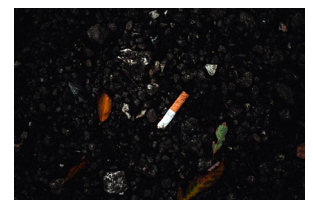
Haul of fake cigarettes is largest in county so far

More than 90,000 illicit cigarettes and 300 vapes have been seized from seven shops in Lincolnshire as part of a police and trading standards crackdown. Lincolnshire Police described it as "the biggest retail haul" in the county to date, with more than 40,000 of the cigarettes found at one of the premises. The goods were seized from shops in Boston, Spalding and Holbeach on Tuesday and Wednesday. The haul included "super vapes", each of which contained nicotine equivalent to 375 average king size cigarettes, the force said.

Source: BBC News (<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c62z58gjqe6o>)

Cigarette butts combat heavy metals

Environmentally hazardous cigarette butts may ironically hold the answer to cleansing Australia's waterways of major metal contaminants, according to a new James Cook University-led study.



JCU Lecturer in Mechanical Engineering Dr Elsa Antunes and her team found that char created from thermally decomposing cigarette butts in an oxygen-free chamber removed some about 53 per cent of copper and 95 per cent of nickel during lab trials with simulated wastewater.

The butts were provided by anti-cigarette waste charity No More Butts. "Heavy metals are still a problem in our waterways and the consequences of heavy metals for humans and other living organisms are also very high," Dr Antunes said.

"At the moment, you can use activated carbon, which is produced from coal, to remove heavy metal from our waterways, which is not an environmentally friendly product.

"But if we can create this circular economy where we can collect these cigarette butts, transform them into char and then use that to mitigate pollution, then that is much more sustainable."

Source: James Cook University, Australia (<https://www.jcu.edu.au/news/releases/2025/february/cigarette-butts-combat-heavy-metals>)



Why India may raise GST on cigarettes and other tobacco products?



India may explore increasing the goods and service tax (GST) on tobacco products, including cigarettes, after it stops levying the compensation cess on them.

Tobacco products, including cigarettes and pan masala, contribute

substantially to government tax collections, with revenue reaching ₹72,788 crore during 2022-23.

Currently, tobacco products are subject to 28% GST along with cess and additional levies, amounting to 53% total indirect tax. A proposal under consideration involves elevating GST to 40%, the maximum allowable rate, plus an additional excise duty, according to an ET report. The objective is to maintain tax revenue from these products after the compensation cess ends on March 31, 2026. Officials indicate that introducing another cess to replace the compensation cess is not preferred.

Source: TIMESOFINDIA http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/118407346.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

Surrogate tobacco ads are contributing to India's cancer burden, zero-tolerance approach needed: experts

In India, where tobacco consumption poses a significant health burden, companies bypass ad bans by using surrogate advertising, targeting youth, say experts

Despite India having strict laws prohibiting both direct and indirect advertising of tobacco products, the tobacco industry continues to find ways to keep its brands visible: a 2021 report by the World Health Organization (WHO) found that one-third of countries worldwide, including India, still struggle with comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship.

The law in India is clear: under Section 5 of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003 (COTPA), the advertisement and promotion of cigarettes and other tobacco products, including displaying, causing to display, or permitting/authorising the display of such advertisements is prohibited.

Source: The Hindu (<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/surrogate-tobacco-ads-are-contributing-to-indias-cancer-burden-zero-tolerance-approach-needed-experts/article69353628.ece>)

BCCI Apex Council to discuss government directive on tobacco ads before IPL opener

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Apex Council will meet on Saturday, March 22, in Kolkata, just hours before the opening match of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 between Kolkata Knight Riders and Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Several key issues will be discussed, including the Health Ministry's advice on discouraging advertisements for tobacco and alcohol products during cricket matches.

Source: India Today (<https://www.indiatoday.in/amp/sports/cricket/story/ipl-2025-bcci-apex-council-meeting-agenda-top-points-2695309-2025-03-18>)



Assam Rifles seizes smuggled foreign cigarettes worth Rs1.95 cr in Tripura's Khowai



In a major crackdown on smuggling in the Northeast, Assam Rifles seized 195 cartons of smuggled foreign cigarettes worth approximately Rs 1.95 crore in Tripura's Khowai district, officials

said on Friday. According to a release, the contraband, valued at approximately Rs 1.95 crore in the international market, was confiscated during a joint operation. The seized goods have been formally handed over to the Customs Department for further investigation and legal proceedings.

Source: (<https://aninews.in/news/national/general-news/assam-rifles-seizes-smuggled-foreign-cigarettes-worth-rs195-cr-in-tripuras-khowai20250315034334/>)

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