

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1725

ANSWERED ON:23.03.2012

BAN ON GUTKHA AND PAN MASALA

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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has assessed the consumption of Gutkha and Pan Masala and their adverse effects on people's health in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to minimise the consumption of these products;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to ban the production and marketing of Gutkha, Pan Masala and other such products in view of their adverse health effects; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABIAZAD)

(a) & (b): Ministry of Health and Family welfare undertook the Global Adult Tobacco Survey, India (GATS) during 2009-10. GATS India estimated the number of tobacco users in India to be 274.9 million, out of which 206 million are users of smokeless tobacco products and 111.2 million are tobacco smokers.

As per Report on Tobacco Control in India, 2004, the tobacco use is responsible for causing 8-9 lakh deaths annually in the country. As per ICMR, almost 50% of cancers among men and 25% of cancers among women are related to tobacco use in India. As per available evidence, use of chewing tobacco is associated with oral cancer and India shares the maximum burden of oral cancer in the world.

As per the direction of Hon'ble Supreme Court, in the matter of Ankur Gutkha Vs. Indian Asthma Society, National Institute of Public Health had undertaken a comprehensive analysis and study of the contents of gutkha, tobacco, pan masala and similar articles manufactured in the country and harmful effects of consumption of such articles. The report was submitted to Hon'ble court. The matter relating thereto is subjudice before the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

(c) Government of India has enacted "The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003" (COTPA) to protect citizens, with special attention to risk groups such as pregnant women and children, from involuntary exposure to tobacco smoke, and to discourage consumption of cigarettes and other tobacco products including Pan Masala and Gutkha by imposing various regulatory measures as given under:-

- i. Ban on smoking in public places.
- ii. Ban on direct/indirect advertisement, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco products.
- iii. Ban on sale of tobacco products to children below 18 year and ban on sale of tobacco products within 100 yards of an educational institution.
- iv. Specified health warnings on tobacco products.

In order to effectively implement COTPA, 2003 and the Rules made thereunder, the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) has been launched in 42 Districts of 21 States. The programme broadly envisages-

- I. Public awareness/mass media campaigns for awareness building & for behavioral change.
- II. Establishment of tobacco product testing laboratories, to build regulatory capacity, as required under COTPA, 2003.
- III. Monitoring and Evaluation including surveillance e.g. Adult Tobacco Survey.

IV. Dedicated tobacco control cells for effective implementation and monitoring of Anti Tobacco Initiatives.

V. Training of health and social workers, NGOs, school teachers etc.

VI. Setting up tobacco cessation centres

Further, the safety standards of Pan Masala have been prescribed under the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulation, 2011.

(d)&(e) the Government is committed to enforce compliance with the Food Safety and Standards Regulations, 2011 dated 01-08-2011 which provides that tobacco and nicotine shall not be used as ingredient in any food product.