

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3414
ANSWERED ON:01.08.2014
TOBACCO TESTING FACILITIES
Mani Shri Jose K.

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

- (a) the provisions laid down in the Tobacco Control Act, 2003 for depiction of tobacco/nicotine contents and other ingredients on packages of cigarettes and other tobacco products being marketed in the country;
- (b) whether the Government has notified the above provisions of the Act, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the existing infrastructure to test tobacco products are adequate, if so, the details thereof and if not, the corrective measures being taken by the Government in this regard, State/UT-wise; and
- (d) the steps taken/proposed by the Government to make it compulsory for manufacturers of tobacco products to depict the contents/ingredients on packages of cigarettes and other tobacco products?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. HARSH VARDHAN)

(a): The legislative framework for depiction of tobacco nicotine contents in tobacco products is laid down in the Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003 (COTPA). Section 7 (5) of COTPA lays down as under:

"No person shall, directly or indirectly, produce, supply or distribute cigarettes or any other tobacco products unless every package of cigarettes or any other tobacco products produced, supplied or distributed by him indicates thereon, or on its label, the nicotine and tar contents on each cigarette or as the case may be on other tobacco products along with the maximum permissible limits thereof"

(b) to (d): The said section has not been notified due to following reasons:

1. At present, only limited testing facilities are available with the existing Food and Drug laboratories.
2. The extant provisions with respect to display of only nicotine and tar on tobacco product packages are self-limiting, as in addition to nicotine and tar, there are a large number of chemicals and additives/intoxicants in tobacco as well as in second hand smoke (SHS) that are harmful to health.
3. There are no internationally accepted standards on any minimum (safe) or maximum permissible limits for tar and nicotine contents in tobacco products. Tar and nicotine, ab initio, are harmful in any quantity in the smoking or the smokeless forms of tobacco.

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) is creating the requisite institutional capacity for testing tobacco products in the country by identifying existing laboratories whose capacities would be augmented to test tobacco products. For this purpose, five laboratories - one apex and four regional - have been identified.