

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1401

ANSWERED ON:18.07.2014

CONSUMPTION OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS

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

- (a) whether smoking and consumption of tobacco products, particularly among women are on the rise in the country, and, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether the Government has assessed the impact of various anti-tobacco law/measures aimed at deterring the people from smoking and consumption of tobacco products in the country;
- (c) if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to introduce plain cigarette packaging and bring holistic tobacco taxation policy in the country, and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the other measures being taken by the Government to curb smoking and tobacco consumption in the country?

**Answer**

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

(a): As per the Global Adult Tobacco Survey, India (GATS) conducted by Ministry of Health and Family welfare (2010) in the age group of 15 years and above the total number of tobacco users in India is 27.49 crores out of which 7.8 crore are females. The other key findings include:

# 20.3% of females use tobacco in any form

# 2.9% of females use smoking forms of tobacco.

# 18.4 % of females use smokeless forms of tobacco.

# 25.8% of females starting tobacco use before the age of 15.

(b) & (c): The Ministry of Health and Family welfare conducted the Global Adult Tobacco Survey, India (GATS) (2010) to monitor adult tobacco use and track key tobacco control indicators. Some of the important indicators monitored and for which the estimates are available are as under:

1. Exposure to Second Hand Smoke (SHS) :

# 30% of adults are exposed to SHS at workplace

# 52% of adults are exposed to SHS at Home,

# 17.5 of adults are exposed to SHS in Public Transport.

2. Anti-tobacco information in any Media:

# 52% of the adults noticed anti-cigarette information: 61% of the adults noticed anti-bidi information:

# 66% of the adults noticed anti-smokeless tobacco information

3. Noticing Health Warnings on Various Tobacco Products and thinking of quitting:

# 70.8% of cigarette smokers noticed health warnings on cigarette package and 38% thought of quitting because of warning label.

# 62% of bidi smokers noticed health warnings on bidi package and 29% thought of quitting because of warning label.

# 62% of users of smokeless tobacco noticed health warnings on smokeless tobacco product package and 34% thought of quitting

because of warning label.

#### 4. Knowledge, Attitude and Perceptions:

# 90% of the Adults believe that smoking causes serious illness

# 85% of the Adults believe that smoking causes lung cancer

# 63.9% of the Adults believe that smoking causes Heart Attack.

(d): Currently there is no such proposal to introduce the plain packaging. As per the Act and the Rules framed thereunder the pictorial health warnings shall occupy 40% of the Principal display areas and on the front panel of the tobacco product packages with an option of rotation every 2 years or earlier.

The Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare has written to all the Chief Ministers to consider adopting a 'Comprehensive Taxation Policy' for all tobacco products so that they are taxed at similar rates and incentive to shift to relatively cheaper tobacco products is minimised. It is also important that under the policy, the tax rate should be linked to both inflation and changes in household income, so that any tax increase leads to an effective and 'real increase' in the price of tobacco products, making them less affordable over time and thereby reducing consumption & prevalence. While developing such policy the studies on price and elasticity of demand also need to be kept in view. Further, Secretary, Department of Health & Family Welfare has vide letter dated 26th June, 2014 written to Secretary (Revenue) to adopt a 'Comprehensive Tax Policy' for tobacco products in the broader public health interest and with a view to protecting youth and children from getting addicted to tobacco use.

(e): A number of steps have been taken by the Government in this regard, which include the following:

1. The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibitions of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act," (COTPA), was enacted in 2003 to regulate consumption, production, supply and distribution of tobacco products, by imposing restrictions on advertisement, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco products; prohibiting smoking in public places; prohibiting sale to and by minors, prohibiting sale within a radius of 100 yards of educational institutions and through mandatory depiction of specified pictorial health warnings on all tobacco product packs.

2. Government of India launched the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) in the year 2007-08, with the aim to

(i) create awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco consumption,

(ii) reduce the production and supply of tobacco products,

(iii) ensure effective implementation of the provisions under "The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003" (COTPA) and

(iv) help the people quit tobacco use through Tobacco Cessation Centres.

The coverage of National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) has been up-scaled from existing 42 districts of 21 states to 53 districts of 29 states in 2013-2014 under the umbrella of National Health Mission.

3. National Level Public Awareness campaign is a key activity under National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) which is aimed at educating people about the adverse health effects of tobacco use. A variety of media like electronic (Government and private Channels and FM/radio), outdoor billboards, bus panels, exterior train wrap-up, news- paper advertisement etc. have been used to reach a wide set of audience.

4. Health spots relating to harmful effects of tobacco use are also displayed by films and TV Programmes displaying tobacco products or their use, as per the Rules notified under COTPA, 2003.

5. Gutkha and other similar food products containing nicotine and tobacco have been prohibited under the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2011 dated 1st August 2011, issued under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.