

## **Press Brief**

*Launch of Bidi campaign  
28<sup>th</sup> July, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Committee Room*

Tobacco is the foremost preventable cause of death and disease in the world today. Tobacco is a risk factor for 6 out of the 8 leading causes of death. Globally approx. 6 million people die each year as result of diseases resulting from tobacco consumption and if urgent actions are not taken, the death toll could rise to more than eight million by 2030. Worldwide, every day approximately one million people smoke or chew tobacco because of their addiction to nicotine and about 15000 die from tobacco related disease. As per the estimates in India nearly 8-9 lakhs people die every year due to diseases related to tobacco use and 5500 youth start tobacco use every day.

As per ICMR nearly 50% of cancers among males, 25% among females about 80% - 90% of all the oral cancers are associated with tobacco use. Available evidence suggests that 40% of all TB deaths are directly attributable to tobacco use. The majority of the cardio vascular diseases and lung disorders are also directly attributable to tobacco consumption. Tobacco has also been identified as a risk factor for Non-communicable disease and it accounts for one in six deaths resulting from NCD's.

As per the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS-India ) 2010 the prevalence of tobacco use among adults (15 years and above) is 35%. The highlights of the GATS are

- Current tobacco use in any form: 34.6% of Adults; 47.9% of males and 20.3% females.
- Current tobacco smokers: 14% of adults; 10.3% of males and 0.8% females.
- **Current bidi smokers: 9.2% of adults; 16.0% of males and 1.9% females**
- Nearly two in five (38%) adults in rural areas and one in four (25%) adults in urban areas use tobacco in some form.

Bidi is the second most highly consumed tobacco product in India. As per GATS male bidi smoking (16%) is higher than cigarette smokers (10.3%) and female bidi smoking population is higher (1.9%) than cigarettes smoking (0.8%) population. Further, the prevalence of bidi smoking ranges from 21.9% in Arunachal Pradesh followed by Tripura( 21.5%), Uttarakhand (19.2%) Meghalaya (18.7%), Rajasthan (16%), West Bengal (15.7%) to 1.5% in Goa.

The harmful effects of smoking bidi on health are similar to cigarettes, and it is in no way less harmful. Bidi smoke contains higher concentration of hydrogen cyanide , carbon monoxide and ammonia as well as nicotine, compared to cigarette smoke. Bidi smoke delivers three times the amount of carbon monoxide and nicotine and five times the amount of tar as compared to cigarette smoke. Bidi smoke also contains carcinogenic chemicals such

as tobacco specific nitrosamines (TSNA's). Bidi smoking has been shown to increase the risk of chronic bronchitis, tuberculosis and respiratory diseases. Tobacco use has been identified as a major risk factor for cardiovascular diseases and leads to high burdens of early death and disability. In India, 27% of total annual deaths in 2002 were related to CVD and this is projected to rise to 42% by 2030. During the period 2000 -2030 about 35% of all CVD deaths in India are projected to occur in the 35-64 age groups. Tobacco smoking , particularly bidi smoking which contains higher concentration of nicotine and carbon monoxide plays a vital role in the increased risk of cardiovascular effects. There is still a large research gap in the field of bidi smoking and its effects on humans including effect of second hand smoke of bidi.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare under the National Tobacco Control Programme is launching a mass media campaign on bidi smoking and its association with CVD. This will be first government sponsored mass media campaign anywhere in the world that links bidi smoking to CVD.

The campaign has been developed with technical support from World Lung Foundation, and the spot has been field tested in different settings. The main message of the campaign is – 'Quitting smoking is hard, but the consequence of not quitting is harder'.

The campaign ad comprises two Public Service Announcements (PSA's) – 'Heartbreak' and 'Surgeon'. While heart break has 15, 30 and 45 seconds versions, the surgeon PSA has only a 15 seconder. These PSA's will also be supported by radio.

This nation wide campaign will be aired in all major TV and radio/FM during August. It has been dubbed in 14 regional languages for pan India coverage.