

# Govt sets up three tobacco testing labs

Kalyan Ray, DH News Services, New Delhi, Sep 5, 2019 | New Delhi

The Union Health Ministry on Thursday announced setting up of three tobacco testing laboratories in accordance with the world's only public health treaty.

The laboratories to check the nicotine and tar content of cigarettes among other things will be established in Mumbai, Noida and Guwahati. Currently, India has almost 267 million tobacco users.

Among adults, 28.6% of the population smokes (men 42.4%; women 14.2%) while 21.4% of adults use smokeless tobacco (men 29.6%; women 12.8%). Among youth (aged 13–15), nearly 15% use tobacco in some form or the other.



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*DH File Photo*

While the Anti-Tobacco Act<sup>1</sup> helped in reducing the habit to some extent, the numbers are still too large necessitating greater and more effective implementation of the law.

Establishing tobacco testing units is one of the commitments under the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, that India is part of.

While they were operational in a limited way, the Union health ministry in a notification recognized them as national laboratories under the anti-tobacco act.

India now becomes the only country in Southeast Asia and one of the few countries in the world to have such labs.

The Mumbai unit will be housed inside the Central Drug Testing Laboratory whereas the National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research— one of the ICMR laboratories— will house the Noida unit.

The laboratory in Assam will be located at the Regional Drug Testing Laboratory, Guwahati.

**Source:** <https://www.deccanherald.com/national/govt-sets-up-three-tobacco-testing-labs-759313.html>