

'Introduce uniform taxation on smokeless tobacco products'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 17 DECEMBER

Shram, a self-help a group with large number of doctors and professionals, working in the field of health and education to build awareness campaigns against tobacco and alcohol has appealed to Harsh Vardhan, Health Minister and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to introduce uniform taxation on smokeless and other non-virginia tobacco products.

Shram also demands for bringing in proper regulation on sale of these smokeless other non-virginia tobacco products as this is manufactured by industry which is highly unorganized, evade taxes and forms more than 90 per cent

of total tobacco consumption in India. The measures will not only help bring in revenue to the government in excess of Rs 40,000 crore but also help in reducing health burden of tobacco on youth and vulnerable citizens of our country.

According to a study published in BMC Medicine, India accounts for 70 per cent of the deaths globally caused due to chewing of smokeless tobacco which is widely available in the form of chewing tobacco, gutka, pan masala variants and zarda.

These products are consumed by the poorer section in India due to their affordability and accessibility in the absence of any regulations and taxation.