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Karnataka police lauded for tobacco-control measures

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The State Police Department, which collected Rs. 63.3 lakh in penalty in 2013 from violators of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of advertisement, regulation of trade and commerce, production, supply and distribution) Act, 2003 (COTPA), has received appreciation from the Union Health Ministry.

In a letter to the Karnataka police recently, Director-General of Health Services Jagdish Prasad appreciated the seriousness shown by the State police in realising the motto of the National Tobacco Control Programme.

The letter, addressed to the Karnataka Additional Director-General of Police (Crime and Technical Services) N.S. Megharikh, has placed on record the Police Department's efforts in effectively implementing the Act.

"Implementation of the COTPA can only happen with the involvement and cooperation of the police force. This has been exhibited best by your organisation," Dr. Prasad said.

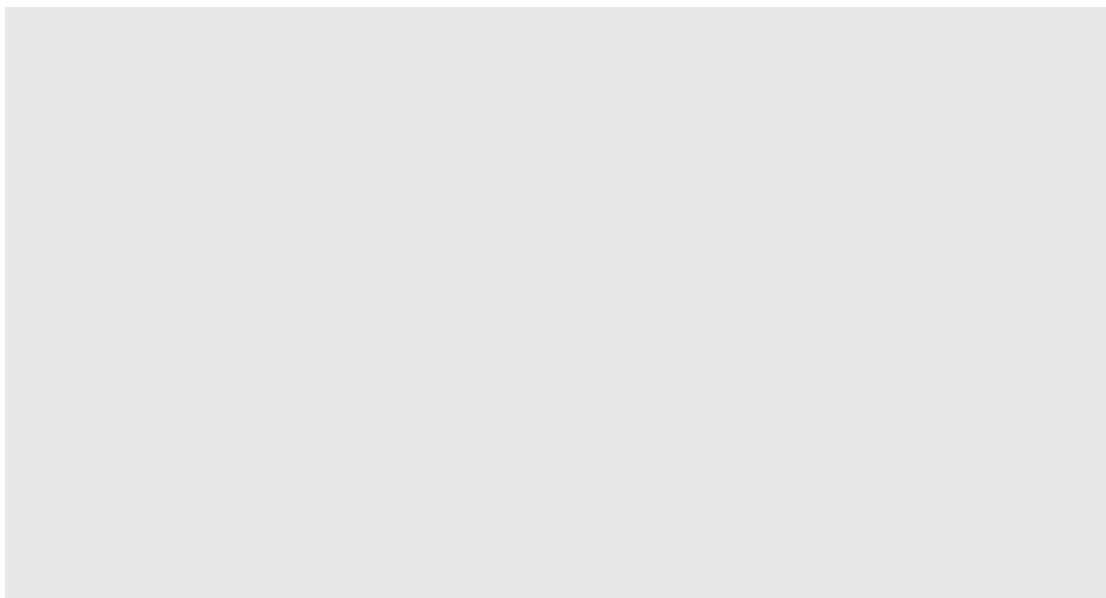
Gadag SP congratulated

In the letter, Dr. Prasad has made a special mention of the Gadag district police for their efforts in better implementation of the Act. "My congratulations to the Superintendent Police of Gadag for taking up excellent measures which translate into saving many lives," he said.

Vishal Rao, senior oncologist and director of the Tobacco Control Project at the Institute of Public Health, which is coordinating with the State government in implementing the COTPA, said the authorities in Gadag took additional steps to check violations of all the sections of the Act. "The Superintendent of Police in Gadag, S.D. Sharanappa, in coordination with the district officials, took up a campaign to make people aware about the Act and harmful effects of smoking. This is a good example to show that if the government, NGOs, people and other stakeholders come together to put an end to the problem, there is no need of a legal provision," he said. In the last one year, Rs. 5.5 lakh was collected as fine from violators in Gadag district. This is second to the Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike limits where Rs. 8.63 lakh fine was collected.

Apart from this, Rs 1.1 lakh was collected as fine in Bangalore district.

Dr. Rao said the COTPA “covers all forms of tobacco products and caters to various issues such as protection of the health of non-smokers in public places and minimising access of tobacco products to children”.



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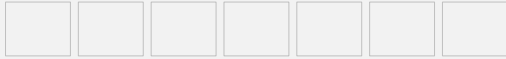
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