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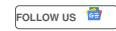
**THIS STORY IS FROM FEBRUARY 14, 2013**

## Want to smoke in public? 'FINE by us': Collectorates

TNN / Feb 14, 2013, 02:17 IST



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Want to smoke in public? 'FINE by us': Collectorates



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PANAJI: In a bid to curb smoking-related violations, the North Goa collectorate is set to undertake an anti-tobacco drive soon through newly formed enforcement squads. This was announced by [North Goa collector](#) Mihir Vardhan at a training programme for the enforcement squads for tobacco control from both districts of the state. The programme conducted on Wednesday in the secretariat was organized by the North and South collectorates and the voluntary health association of Goa ([VHAG](#)) in collaboration with the international union against [tuberculosis](#) and lung disease. Dr Ravinder Kumar, technical officer at the Union, conducted a detailed training session for around 80 members of the enforcement squads. The enforcement squads were formed in January and consist of a joint mamlatdar, a PSI, a sanitation inspector and a NGO representative. There is one team for each taluka in the state.

So far, the South Goa collectorate, which began the drive in its district last month, booked 70-odd cases against those [smoking](#) in public, establishments not having signboards indicating the ban on tobacco, etc. The enforcement of the smoking ban in public places such as institutions and establishments will now be done under the law, with fines of 200 being imposed for each offence. Raj Vaidya, president of the VHAG, gave a presentation on anti-smoking activities which were undertaken in Goa in the last year. Salim Veljee, director, FDA, felt that with the enforcement squads in place, the mechanism is now geared up to make Goa smoking-free in a short time.

The members of the enforcement squads were trained in the various aspects of the law, the problems they may face while conducting their drives, the challan process, and what should be done in case people resist or attempt to escape a fine. Shekhar Salkar of the national organization for tobacco eradication (Note), Dr Cynthia Pinto, executive director of VHAG, Dr Doreen Dias and Roland Martins of Goacan also provided their insights at the programme.

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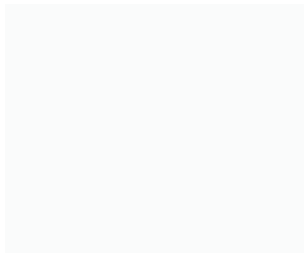
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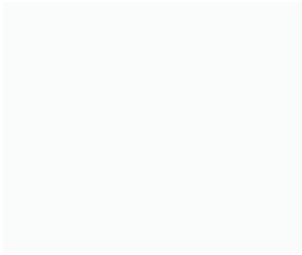
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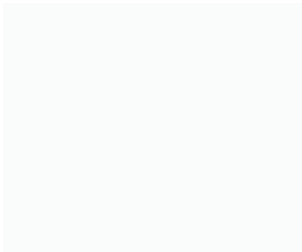
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