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## COTPA enforcement in Mysuru district not up to the mark?

January 07, 2015 12:00 am | Updated 05:49 am IST - Mysuru:

SHANKAR BENNUR

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Sale of tobacco products is prohibited in and around educational institutions.— File Photo

**Glaring violations of the anti-tobacco law around educational institutions in Mysuru do not seem to have alerted officials of the Department of Public Instruction.**

The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003, isn't being enforced within the 100-yard radius of educational institutions, much to the resentment of anti-tobacco activists.

When *The Hindu* contacted Deputy Director of Public Instruction H.R. Basappa, he said he had not received complaints of violation but later said he would ask Block Education Officers (BEOs) to inspect the surroundings of schools and take action to prevent the sale of tobacco products, if found.

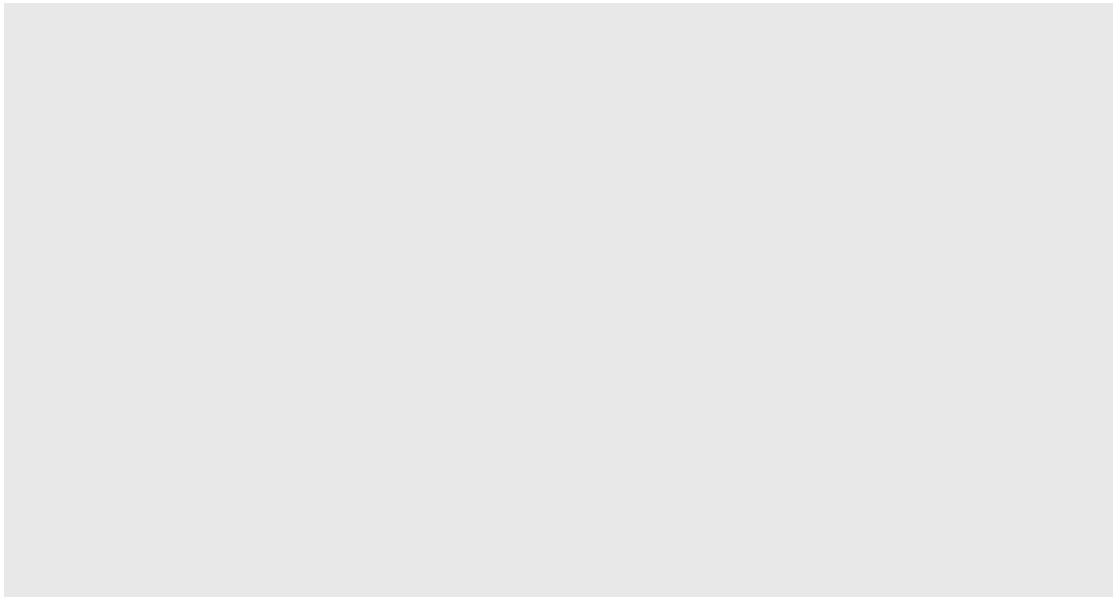
Contradicting the claims of the department, Anti-Tobacco Forum convener Vasanthkumar Mysoremath argued that the Act was not being enforced appropriately by school authorities.

"A headmaster or principal of an institution is empowered to confiscate tobacco products if they are being sold within 100 yards. But, they are not exercising this authority," he said.

Mr. Mysoremath expressed fear that young minds would be influenced if tobacco products were accessible in the schools' vicinity.

The school heads must come out of their chambers and inspect the surroundings regularly to ensure compliance with Section 6 of the Act and the guidelines issued by the Union government, he said.

Government schools in Mysuru district have declared to be tobacco-free and have displayed 'No smoking area' signboards on their campuses.



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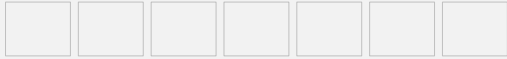
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