

Advancing tobacco control in Nepal: An interaction with MPs, Govt. Officials, Media & Civil Society and Law Makers.



The Program **Advancing tobacco control in Nepal: An interaction with MPs, Govt. Officials, Media & Civil Society and Law Makers** was successfully held on 17th Nov 2018 at Kathmandu. The program was organized and managed by Action Nepal in collaboration with Ministry of health and Health Journalist Forum, Nepal. MPs, Government authorities, law makers, media & civil society, health professionals participated in the program. The objective of the program was to have a constructive interaction with concerned authorities (stakeholders) in order to pressurize tobacco manufacturers and industries to comply with laws and regulation of implementation of 90% pictorial health warnings in packaging of all tobacco products and call for the higher taxes on tobacco products.



Former Chief Justice Kalyan Shrestha appealed that government should responsible to promote public health by discouraging tobacco industries and should not delay in making them comply with the laws of implementing 90 percent health warning. He opined that the provision made by the laws had been challenged by tobacco industries and been under trial in the Supreme Court.

He said this was not logical to focus more on collecting maximum tax revenue from tobacco industries at the cost of health of public. He urged such policy would adversely affect the overall economy and produce unhealthy manpower /human resource for the nation.



Former health minister Khagaraj Adhikari said having awarded with Bloomberg Philanthropies Awards for Global Tobacco Control of Rs. 10 million won by Nepal

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for the commitment to reducing tobacco use had been matter of shame now due to delay in utilization of the fund in implementation of 90 percent pictorial health warning. He not only emphasized on 90 percent of implementation of health warning but also urged the need of formulation of laws and regulation going for plain packaging to significantly reduces the tobacco consumption.



Chief district officer of Kathmandu Mr. Ram Prasad Acharya and Superintendent of police Mr. Ashok Singh said they were committed to work against public smoking. They also mentioned that there was a need of good collaboration and coordination between Ministry of health and population, Ministry of industry, commerce and supplies and ministry of home affairs for the formulation and effective implementation of Acts, regulation and directives for tobacco control.



Honorable Ramnarayan Bidari, M.P., urged CDOs, to go for market inspection immediately and he would raise the same issue in the parliament. He also suggested the need of enacting strict policy to disqualify any person holding public position if s/he used tobacco products.



Mr. Mahendra Prasad Shrestha, emphasized the urgent need of cooperation between Government Authorities, NGOs, and other stakeholders for ensuring improved public health as consumption of tobacco products is highly prevalent in least developed countries like Nepal. He also highlighted that one out of six is suffering from cancer and major reason of cancer is consumption of tobacco products.



Dr. Bhakt Bahadur K.C., Chief of Tobacco Control and Health Promotion section NHEICC, Ministry of health and population said around five million Nepalese were tobacco users. He also mentioned that approximately 27,000 people die every year. This figure is approximately three times more than the death toll of devastating earthquake April 2015 in Nepal. In his presentation he outlined the tobacco situation in Nepal, laws and regulations related to tobacco control, provisions on laws and regulations and challenges in implementation of these laws and regulations.

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Mr. Anand Bahadur Chand, Chairman of Action Nepal pointed out that tobacco industry intentionally applying various tactics for delaying implantation of tobacco control law in Nepal. He said about 800 million adult men worldwide smoke cigarette (20% in high income and 80% in low income countries). Nearly 200 million adult women worldwide smoke cigarette and tobacco killed more than 7 million each year around, he said. He also urged the government to make the tobacco industry's abide by the laws and regulation. He said tobacco was the world's leading single agent of death and tobacco would kill twice as many people around 1 billion people by this century. It is our misfortune that government is not taking serious action against tobacco producers not complying the laws. Instead, awarding honor as a highest tax paying industry, he opined. He suggested ministry of health and population to work on monitoring 90 percent pictorial health warning implementation immediately in coordination with CDOs throughout the countries and sanction the non - compliance tobacco industry on the spot.



The program ended with the speech by chair-person of the program Dr. Sushil Pyakurel, acting secretary at health ministry, and he warned and opined the growing use of tobacco had also caused air pollution and result in adverse impact on environment.

The program had wide range of media coverage as most of the journalists from different health media houses were invited in the program. In addition, news was broadcasted by various televisions like Ap1 TV and news24.

List of news covered in different online and T.V. is as below:

See more at: <https://healthtvonline.com/thoughts/2018/11/5274/>

See more at: <http://www.nayapatrikadaily.com/2018/11/18/115313/>

See more at: <http://www.nepalihealth.com/2018/11/18/34366/>

See more at: <https://healthtvonline.com/health-news/2018/11/5257/>

See more at:

<http://www.gorkhapatraonline.com/news/62122?fbclid=IwAR2pXeAZ8ue3tMejLPI1VSILdf6myQEjVlPvZkgbx2uyJ2bhEcyYEOxecw>

See more at:

<https://www.kantipurdaily.com/news/2018/11/17/154245445186458846.html?fbclid=IwAR34rUlpNGyOnGiiRMD8DTxe0r2U5Ga3VVSDcKbswKbyiWJVYEsyVJnLUCc>

See more at: <http://swasthyakhabar.com/story/26102>

See more at: <http://www.nepalihealth.com/2018/11/17/34344/>