

Indian vaping group co-hosts launch of report on Asia tobacco control measures



Maharashtra, Mumbai, Apr 17, 2021 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - The Association of Vapers India (AVI) is co-hosting the launch of a pan-Asia tobacco control report on Sunday, April 18, that will address the unresolved smoking epidemic in Asia and the Far East which results in 4 million premature deaths annually and highlight the opportunity to prevent these deaths through the harm reduction strategy.

AVI has partnered with the public health agency Knowledge Action Change (KAC) to organise the launch of the regional report, 'Tobacco Harm Reduction: A Burning Issue for Asia and the Far East.

Jagannath Sarangapani, a consumer advocate and a member of the board of AVI, will serve as moderator of the event, which will also get country perspectives from experts in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and New Zealand.

Written by British author and journalist Harry Shapiro, the report notes that 60 percent of the world's smokers live in Asia, along with 90 percent of consumers of smokeless tobacco products, resulting in millions of preventable deaths every year as the majority of those who want to quit smoking have no access to support services.

"Many of these deaths are preventable if only tobacco users had access to safer nicotine products that are affordable, accessible, appropriate and acceptable," Shapiro said.

Samrat Chowdhery, director of AVI and president of International Network of Nicotine Consumer Organizations (INNCO), a global consumer advocacy group comprising 40 national and regional bodies, said the region has nearly 750 million smokers and just 19 million vapers.

"The report makes a strong case for tobacco harm reduction strategies in the ongoing battle to reduce tobacco-related mortality and morbidity," Chowdhery said, adding, "I hope there are government and industry efforts to make low-risk alternatives affordable to users in low-income groups."

Noting that a barrage of misinformation and anti-THR propaganda is getting in the way of public health progress in Asia, Shapiro said, "There are big challenges but also opportunities for tobacco harm reduction in the region and the report aims to assist policymakers in navigating through them."



Pratik Gupta, Director - Association of Vapers India

pratikg@vapeindia.org

+91 86555 55553

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