



Ministry of Education observes World No Tobacco Day, felicitates winners of "Towards a Tobacco Free Generation: School Challenge 2025"

Posted On: 01 JUN 2026 2:32PM by PIB Delhi

The Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education, organized a National Meet of officials, School Heads, teacher representatives from States/UTs, and officials from NCERT, NVS and KVS on 29 May 2026 in New Delhi on the eve of World No Tobacco Day. The event was held to commemorate the winning schools of the MyGov Innovate Campaign, “Towards a Tobacco-Free Generation: School Challenge 2025”.

Shri Sanjay Kumar, Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), graced the occasion and presented awards to the winning schools, lauding their proactive efforts in cultivating healthy, substance-free educational environments.

The event was attended by Ms. A. Srija, Economic Advisor, DoSE&L; Shri Ram Singh, Joint Director, DoSE&L; Prof. Dinesh Prasad Saklani, Director, NCERT; and senior officials from the Ministry of Education.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Sanjay Kumar congratulated the award-winning schools and appreciated the participation of over 17,000 schools from across the country. He urged all educational institutions to strive towards becoming tobacco-free. Highlighting the importance of sustained tobacco control efforts, he emphasised the need to strengthen demand reduction through continued awareness, sensitisation, and behavioural change initiatives, particularly among children and adolescents.

Shri Kumar further underscored the pivotal role of teachers in identifying early behavioural changes among students and safeguarding their mental and emotional well-being. He highlighted the important role of schools in promoting healthy behaviours, fostering well-being, and supporting early preventive interventions.

Emphasising the transformative reach of the school education system, he highlighted that schools connect with nearly 24.69 crore children and can influence 15–20 crore households, enabling the tobacco-free movement to evolve into a nationwide social campaign. He also called for strengthening tobacco-free environments around educational institutions and encouraged schools and families to actively support the campaign's long-term action plan, which aligns with the vision of building a healthier and more developed India.

The event also witnessed the launch of DoSEL's Three-Year Action Plan (2026–2029) under the Nasha Mukta Bharat initiative, as well as the Nasha Mukta Vidyalaya (NMV) Portal (<https://tofei.education.gov.in/>). The portal will serve as a key platform for monitoring and documenting the progress of educational institutions in implementing the Nasha Mukta Vidyalaya Abhiyan.

A total of 12 schools were felicitated across four categories: Foundational, Preparatory, Middle, and Secondary, with three schools selected from each category. The winning schools received trophies along with cash awards of ₹50,000 for the first position, ₹25,000 for the second position, and ₹15,000 for the third position. Additionally, 41 schools were presented with appreciation prizes in recognition of their commendable efforts towards the initiative.

The Three Year Action Plan is built around four key interventions: (i) the Nasha Mukht Vidyalaya Portal for school self-declaration, monitoring, and compliance tracking through UDISE+; (ii) enforcement of a 500-metre drug-free zone around educational institutions; (iii) integration of age-appropriate substance abuse prevention and health education into NCERT, CBSE, and State Board curricula; and (iv) development of standardised multilingual IEC materials for awareness generation for teacher, students and parents. The initiative also focuses on teacher capacity building through pre-service and in-service training, early identification and referral of at-risk students, mental health support through Manodarpan (national helpline 844 844 0632), and a robust monitoring framework from school to national level to ensure effective implementation and accountability.

Ms. A. Srija, Economic Advisor, DoSEL, in her welcome address, highlighted the Government's sustained policy and institutional efforts to control tobacco consumption. She recalled the legislative and fiscal measures adopted by the Government of India to curb tobacco consumption, including the enactment of the COTPA Act in 2003, the prohibition of electronic cigarettes in 2019, and the imposition of the highest GST rates and cesses on tobacco products.

She reiterated the Government's commitment to advancing tobacco control and public awareness efforts. Referring to the WHO Global Youth Tobacco Survey, she emphasised the need for early awareness and prevention initiatives among children and adolescents. She stressed the importance of creating awareness and sensitising students in schools about the harmful effects of tobacco and substance abuse, noting that early intervention can have a lifelong impact.

Ms. Srija also informed the gathering that DoSEL developed the Manual for Implementation of TOFEI Guidelines in Schools in 2024 to support schools and States in strengthening awareness, compliance, and enforcement efforts.

The programme also featured expert panel discussions on tobacco and substance abuse prevention, mental well-being, behavioural change, and the importance of collaborative action by schools, families, communities, and government institutions in building a Nasha Mukht Bharat.

AK

(Release ID: 2267467) Visitor Counter : 1265

Read this release in: Urdu , Marathi , हिन्दी , Punjabi , Gujarati , Tamil , Telugu , Malayalam