Tobacco Control Implementation Program Webinar Series

Public monitoring and reporting violations

Kathy Wright, Sr Program Manager, The Union

6th July 2022
Stakeholders in law enforcement

High compliance with tobacco control laws requires a range of stakeholders who have the capacity and commitment to implement and enforce them effectively. These include:

- Policy makers and political leaders
- Government officers and leaders
- Enforcement agents and police
- Business owners and managers
- Media
- Civil society organizations
- General public
- Researchers
- Other stakeholders named in the law
The role of civil society

- Monitor compliance with the law
- Report violations
- Monitor and respond to tobacco industry tactics
- Hold political leaders to account and advocate for stronger enforcement and better policies
- Take action against violations (if permitted under the legislation) e.g.
  - removal of tobacco advertising from points-of-sale
  - legal action against employers not complying with smokefree workplaces
- Raise awareness of the harms of tobacco and the benefits of the law in their communities
- Encourage businesses to comply and provide guidance
- Promote cessation and signpost to local services
The role of technology

Innovations in technology are allowing governments and civil society to work together on implementing and enforcing laws of all kinds, not just tobacco control.

Smartphones, apps and social media have changed how the public can be engaged in many of those roles, for example:

- Monitoring and measuring compliance with the law
- Reporting violations
- Monitoring and countering tobacco industry tactics

Civil police in Depok, Indonesia responding to a complaint via the city’s app
Benefits

There are many benefits to utilizing technology to engage civil society, including:

- Real-time data for policy makers and government agencies
- GPS locations and mapping of hotspots
- Inclusivity across different geographical locations
- Cost effectiveness
- Increased awareness and engagement of the public and the media
- Mobilization of volunteers
- Educational resources for the public and businesses
Challenges

There are many challenges to effectively utilizing technology to engage civil society, including

• Development and maintenance costs
• Difficulty building a large, sustainable user base
• Ensuring reports are real and accurate
• Capacity to utilize the data effectively
• Connecting to enforcement mechanisms and responding in a timely manner
Some questions to ask

- Do existing platforms already exist?
- Is there sufficient budget and capacity to develop and manage a new app or account?
- Is there capacity to respond to complaints?
- Can the data be utilized to improve planning, interventions and compliance?
- Are all relevant stakeholders engaged and on board?
Case Studies

1. China Beijing Smoke Free App: ZHANG Jianshu – President, Beijing Tobacco Control Association

2. TERM: Dr Nandita MURUKUTLA – Vice President of Global Policy and Research, Vital Strategies

3. WHO Tobacco Spotter App: Dr Bolormaa SUKHBAAATAR – Technical Officer, WHO

4. Tobacco Monitoring App: Cyril ALEXANDER – Executive Director, Mary Anne Charity Trust

Showcase of useful tools – The Union’s Tobacco Control Implementation Hub

Questions and Answers will follow the presentations.
“VIP” approach for joint social governance on tobacco control in Beijing

Zhang Jianshu
Beijing Tobacco Control Association
“VIP” approach for joint social governance on tobacco control

- **V**olunteer are the most active and reliable force in social governance on tobacco control
- **I**nternet is an effective tool to connect the city’s 30 million smart phones into a tobacco control and supervision network
- **P**ress conference has effectively spread information on tobacco control and law enforcement effects
I. Volunteer: tobacco control volunteers

- The population of Beijing is 21.88 million and 4 million of them are daily smokers. Nearly 9 million people are exposed daily to secondhand smoke.

- The Tobacco Control Volunteer Team was formed in August 2015. As of Dec 2019, there were 13000 registered tobacco control volunteers.
Priorities and contents of the work of tobacco control volunteers

- 4,000 tobacco control volunteers patrol the streets, deal with complaints and lead campaign to the community
- Weekly activities, standard vests
- Volunteers do not smoke, take the lead in discouraging smoking and encouraging smoking cessation
- 9,000 guides of civilized behavior work at the bus stops every morning and evening to promote smoke-free law enforcement
Priorities and contents of the work of tobacco control volunteers

Guides of civilized behavior were highlights of Beijing

- On Wednesday they were in full action in their standard vests at bus stops and in the subway.
- Educational posters were set up in many stops and stations; volunteers broadcasted tobacco control information developed by the Association and on the official account of Smoke Free Beijing through their portable speakers.
- They dissuaded people from smoking in queues at bus stops.
Volunteers visited the facilities that were reported for violating the Regulation
In August 2015, volunteers were recruited openly with the support of The Beijing Municipal Patriotic Health Campaign Committee. The first ever “tobacco control volunteer team” was established in Beijing.
Volunteers on real-time tobacco control monitoring map
II. Internet: mobile phone + Internet + tobacco control on one map

• In the era of mobile and internet, the consumers have greater initiative and voice while negative information can also spread wider and faster. Cell phones can also provide a new environment and means for tobacco control enforcement.

• Given the fact that there were 30 million cell phones in Beijing, the Association proposed the innovative idea that "everyone was a tobacco control supervisor" and "monitor cameras everywhere" and proposed to the Municipal Science and Technology Committee to set up a cell phone based platform for tobacco control.

• This proposal was quickly included in the Beijing Science and Technology Development Plan by the Science and Technology Committee. After a year of development and trial operation, the "Tobacco Control Map" was officially launched in Beijing.
In the era of mobile and internet, the consumers have greater initiative and voice while negative information can also spread wider and faster. Cell phones can also provide a new environment and means for tobacco control enforcement.

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II. Internet: mobile phone + Internet + tobacco control on one map
Tencent Platform Complaint Process

Open WeChat on a smart phone → Me → Service → City Services → Tobacco Control Complaint
Snapshots of illegal smoking easily uploaded via a smart phone

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<td>创建人</td>
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Top 5 organizations where were repeatedly reported complaints

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<th>Organizations</th>
<th>No. of reported complaints</th>
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<td>BJ Youth Politics College</td>
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</table>
Top 5 facilities where were reported complaints

- Restaurants: 28,509
- Office bldgs: 19,509
- Workplaces: 13,725
- Other (residential bldg): 7,693
- Shopping malls: 3,488
Three steps in complaint quantity on WeChat
III. Press conferences

Media supervision to support social joint governance

The ranking list of reported facilities was regularly publicized on media for public supervision.
Mobilizing the poor performers to take part in the joint social governance
Mobilizing the poor performers to take part in the joint social governance
Mobilizing the poor performers to take part in the joint social governance

After media exposure, the home court of Guo An Team in Beijing Division attached great importance to tobacco control. Under the guidance of Chaoyang District Health Commission and Health Inspection Institute and Beijing Tobacco Control Association, comprehensive measures were taken including:

• Enhancing tobacco control educational campaign;
• flammables were forbidden to take in at security check;
• tobacco control posters and cartoon videos displayed;
• tobacco control volunteers and guides of civilized behavior had inspection tours with security personnel;
• smokefree voice reminders and outdoor smoking areas were set up.
Citizens participate in the joint social governance as supervisors

The tobacco control map makes it easy for the citizens to be part of the tobacco control campaign

➢ As of 15 June 2022, 84,461 complaints were reported via the “Map” over the past 6 years;
➢ 42.82% of the complaints were effectively handled by tobacco control volunteers;
➢ The WeChat reporting line is now an important complaint channel for the citizens, comparable to the 12345 hotline.
“VIP” form a triangle of mutual support

Public

Internet (a map of tobacco control)

Illegal smokers & facilities

Volunteer

Enforcement Agencies

Press conference

Government
The “Map” is showcased internationally

➢ The experiences of “Beijing Tobacco Control Map” to use social media for tobacco control were presented in Jan 2018 at the workshop “Using cell phone to monitor tobacco control” organized by WHO and in March 2018 at the 17th World Tobacco or Health Conference.
The Association was given the 2020 World No Tobacco Day Award
Thank you
Nandita Murukutla, PhD
Vice President - Global Policy and Research
Policy Advocacy and Communication
Together, we can reimagine public health.

VITAL STRATEGIES commits to building a future where public health is viewed as central to our daily lives and where health is produced and protected for everyone and by everyone across all facets of our lives, in our families and communities and countries.
Our experts have provided technical assistance to governments and civil society in 105 countries.
Online tobacco marketing is increasingly being recognized as a key driver behind people starting to use tobacco.

The tobacco industry is taking advantage of the digital world being more difficult to oversee, to circumvent TAPS bans and social media platform policies.
The internet is a leading source of exposure to tobacco marketing

**TERM Focus Countries**

**Indonesia**
In Indonesia, 51% of people ages 13 to 15 have seen tobacco marketing online.¹

**India**
In India, 26% of 18- to 35-year-olds noticed e-cigarette marketing on social media, despite it being banned.²

**Mexico**
In Mexico City, the internet is the second leading source, after stores, of exposure to tobacco marketing.³

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² Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids et al. Press release. E-cigarettes are being advertised through Instagram despite ban, reveals survey. 2022 March 2.
Young people are particularly susceptible to online tobacco marketing

- In emerging low- and middle-income countries, youth represent a significant share of the population, and most are online.

The majority of youth (18-24) are using social media platforms where they are at risk of being exposed to tobacco marketing.

Tobacco companies are reaching youth through major social media platforms, which must be stopped. Anti-tobacco messages must be broadcast in these same channels.

Source: WHO-Volkmer 2021
The tobacco industry is exerting its influence to shape the environment, and to deflect the responsibility of regulation onto the individual and “lifestyle choices.”

Marketing is a key channel by which the industry does this.

Figure: Dynamics that constitute the commercial determinants of health
Monitoring is crucial to strengthening civil society and government response, however there is a lack of data on the extent and type of online tobacco marketing in most countries. This data is needed to:

- Make the case for digital TAPS bans.
- Support the monitoring of existing bans.
- Highlight the need for counter-marketing efforts and provide input into the type of messaging needed.
TERM: A Real-Time Digital Media Monitoring System

What is TERM?

• A real-time digital monitoring system that catches and reports thousands of examples of online tobacco marketing that may otherwise slip under the radar.

How is TERM data collected?

• TERM tracks online tobacco marketing through the collection and analysis of publicly accessible social media posts, news media articles and crowdsourced inputs.

TERM is a living, two-way movement and a partnership: It’s a data intelligence platform that makes systematic analysis routinely available to advocates, and a partnership with civil society organizations and public institutions in the countries where it operates.
Tracking online activities: crowdsourced + systematic.

Content analysis

Reporting

Partner input

Access our complete methodology at: https://termcommunity.com/about
Partnerships with strong local and global health institutions are key to TERM’s success. Our partners include:

- **The World Health Organization**
- **Indonesia**: The Ministry of Health, Indonesian Consumers Association (YLKI) and Southeast Asia Freedom of Expression Network (SAFEnet)
- **Mexico**: The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union) and The National Institute of Public Health of Mexico (INSP)
- **India**: WHO India, The Union and PGI Chandigarh-Resource Centre for Tobacco Control
In each country, we release situation reports that provide real-time information on the scale and extent of tobacco marketing.

TERM also offers periodic issue briefs on specific aspects of tobacco marketing tactics that warrant deeper analysis, such as bidi marketing in India or e-cigarette marketing in Indonesia.
TERM was launched in Mexico in May 2022.
The Mexican government recently passed new TAPS laws; TERM situation reports can be used to monitor progress.

In our first report, we observed:
- More than 4x more marketing for e-cigarettes than other products.
- E-cigarettes were often positioned as “lifesaving” tobacco cessation products. The use of the hashtag #elvapeosalvavida (vaping saves lives) was prominent.
An issue brief spotlighted interference by the bidi industry in India

• Very little is known about how the powerful bidi industry operates in India, especially in terms of its marketing.
• We published an issue brief investigating the industry's marketing online

We found:
• Bidis are being directly marketed with clear product pictures to facilitate sales.
• Almost all (98%) of the marketing instances we observed was on Facebook; this included 30 distinct Facebook pages for bidi companies.
An issue brief investigated e-cigarette marketing in Indonesia

- In Indonesia, which lacks strong TAPS laws and has a nascent but fast-growing e-cigarette market, there was little known about how the e-cigarette industry markets to Indonesians.
- We published an issue brief to address this evidence gap.

We found:
- E-cigarette brands are actively marketing on social media in Indonesia, with messaging clearly targeted toward young people.
- E-cigarettes are being framed as must-have high-tech gadgets that can be used for party tricks ("vape tricks") and entertainment, and as glamorous.

Examples like these capture the type of messaging being used in posts and give us an idea of who the industry is targeting.
All reports and other materials are housed on our website

Visit our website:
www.termcommunity.org
In Indonesia, TERM is being used to coalition-build for policy action

• “Vape Tricks” issue brief was developed and launched in partnership with the Indonesian Consumers Association (YLKI) and other partners.

• This coalition brought partners together from diverse issue angles including tobacco control, consumer protection and digital safety.

• The report is being used by the Ministry of Health to add evidence/momentum to efforts to address digital tobacco and e-cigarette marketing.

Vital Strategies’ Enrico Aditjondro and YLKI’s Tulus Abadi sign a poster at the launch of the “Vape Tricks” issue brief.
Our issue brief on bidi marketing generated 100 media mentions within days, including prominent features in The Telegraph, Times of India and the Economic Times.

In India, TERM is shaping public discourse
Across countries, we are helping to identify industry interference

• While all marketing is a form of industry interference, we are also capturing examples of the ways in which companies directly promote corporate social responsibility activities to generate goodwill among the public and policymakers.

HM Sampoerna promoting their support of COVID-19 vaccination programs at the district level in Indonesia.
TERM is catching the attention of policymakers

The Mayor of Bogor, Indonesia Bima Arya, reads the TERM “Vape Tricks” brief on e-cigarettes in Indonesia.
How you can be involved with TERM

• Read our reports
• Share our reports
• Use TERM data in advocacy material and to create campaigns.
Get involved with TERM

Interested in partnering with us?
term@vitalstrategies.org

Visit our website:
www.termcommunity.org

Any questions or comments?
nmurukutla@vitalstrategies.org
Mongolia’s experience on participating in the Pilot project on measuring compliance with tobacco control legislation

Bolormaa Sukhbaatar, Technical officer for NCD, WHO Country Office in Mongolia
PURPOSE

- To assess compliance with smoke-free legislation and tobacco advertisement, promotion and sponsorship bans according to the Tobacco control law in Mongolia
OBJECTIVES:

➢ To conduct a conventional survey to monitor compliance with national smoke free legislation and tobacco advertisement, promotion and sponsorship (TAPS) bans in Mongolia;
➢ To conduct a community-based crowdsourcing survey to monitor compliance with national smoke free legislation and TAPS bans; and
➢ To compare two methodologies to monitor compliance with national smoke free legislation and TAPS bans in Mongolia.
METHODOLOGY

- Study design: Descriptive study
- Data collection: 2-staged random sampling technique:

1\textsuperscript{st} stage: A total of 75 randomly selected primary sampling unit (PSU)s: 39 soums/subprovinces (out of 330 soums of 21 provinces), and 34 khorooos/subdistricts (out of 152 khorooos of Ulaanbaatar city). Covered over 2,500 units by filling 3 groups of surveys to observe 8 types of places, points of sale and media by using a mobilephone application with special access and entry code.

2\textsuperscript{nd} stage: About 2,800 out of 12,677 organizations (of 8 types) located in the territory of 75 PSUs (soums/khorooos) were randomly selected. The field researchers conducted an observational study on assessing levels of compliance with smoke-free laws and TAPS bans.

Timeframe: Sep 2018- Apr 2019
INSTRUMENT OF THE SURVEY-
TOBACCO SPOTTER – MOBILE APPLICATION
PREPARATION OF THE SURVEY

- Translated all materials of the survey into Mongolian
- Translated tobacco spotter application into Mongolian
- Formed a researchers’ team for the survey
- Trainings organized for 65 researchers (15 researchers of the NCMH and 40 field researchers of aimags) in Ulaanbaatar city and Arkhangai province, by Dr. Kerstin Schotte, team leader, Dr. Clem Carlos and Ms. Lizzie Tecson, technical officers at WHO HQ, Mr. Titus Karanja, Consultant, Ms. Mina Kashiwabara, Technical officer, TFI, WPRO, Dr. J Naranchimeg, SSA/NCD WHO CO and core research team members
SOCIAL MARKETING PLAN FOR THE TOBACCO SPOTTER APP
Overall management of the communication campaign

- Management team (Marketing company, National Center for Mental Health, local consultant)

- Overall marketing plan and local intensification plan (focal points at 21 aimags)

- Weekly email, phone communications with the focal points (3 management team members assist 21 aimags’ level activities: 1 member is responsible for 7 aimags)

- Weekly technical meetings (WHO/HQ; WHO/WPRO; WHO/CO; NCMH, Marketing company, local consultant)
Components of the communication strategy

- **Use of social media:**
  - National level: Tovch News and Mongoldoo webpages (each of them has over 20K followers)
  - Local facebook groups (DoH, Governor’s office, Family health center group;)
  - Aimag ads, Soum Health Center, Public health workers, University etc.)
  - National and local TV interviews
  - Story sharing (best experience, activity posting)

- **Lottery:**
  - 17 Factory: sneakers online shop (March 2019)
  - App modification (April 2019)
  - Facebook Lives
  - Translation of all promotional materials
  - Link with other local initiatives (Tobacco Free Revolution; Healthy city)
  - Promotional outreach activities (training/workshop at various settings, dissemination of flyers,...)
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**TOOLKIT**

Strategy A: Posting via Facebook pages

3 TV spot/videos poster and brochures (Facebook: Tovch News and Mongoldoo.mn; 17 Factory)

Strategy B: Media (TV interview and Live video)

6 Mar: MNB
12 Mar: Live

Strategy C: Boosting

Boost 1

Strategy D: Outreach activities in UB (brief introduction/training)

11 Mar: NCMH
13 Mar: ULI
26 Mar: MOH

**SUPPLEMENTARY**

Strategy E: Lottery via 17 Factory online sneakers-shopping site

5-18 Mar

Strategy F: Local campaign at 21 aimags (delivery of promotional materials and campaign activities)

15 Mar-25 April

Strategy L: Share progress and local experiences via Tovch News

19 Mar-25 April
Regular posting of set of materials via Tovch News and mongoldoo.mn pages
5 set of promotional materials disseminated via Facebook pages: 18 posters, 2 infographics, 3 stickers, 1 guideline, and 3 promotional videos
Interview at the Mongolian National Broadcasting TV Channel
Translation of the app promotional video, development of app instruction

https://www.facebook.com/TovchMN/videos/435983513816279/
Progress sharing with the focal points and local experiences

Use Dashboard data for weekly progress

Aimag focal points post activities

Introduction of Tobacco spotter during launching of the “Tobacco free Choir city” campaign
Sample of progress sharing to focal points

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First lottery via Factory17Store
Some of the best local experiences

Dr. B. Oyuntungalag, Focal point.
Head of the Division of Public Health,
DOH, Khovd aimag

“…We tried all possible ways to reach as many people as possible.
✓ We advertised the instruction of application through Facebook groups on Khovd aimag, DOH, FHCs, University of Khovd; and Soum Health Centers’ of Munkh-khairkhan, Dorgon and Darvi soums;
✓ Distributed guideline on Tobacco Spotter to all public organizations such as FHC, Governor’s Office, Specialized Inspection Agency, Education and Culture Agency, etc.; Interview on local TV;
✓ Organized training among soum and FHC doctors and PH workers and encouraged their participation;
✓ Organized advocacy works and promotional event (small token) together with FHC’s public health workers among preschool teachers and workers; and university lecturers and students;
✓ Provided small incentives to PH workers to reach at least 10-20 persons and fill the survey; and
✓ Combined promotional talks with monitoring visits to SHC and assisted submission of the survey

“…Our aimag has largest numbers of soums and we used this advantage. At first, Department of Health sent an official request of collaboration to all Public Health Officers at 27 soums. An instruction for using Tobacco spotter app was shared to facebook group on Soum Public Health workers. Depending on size of the population, we asked to submit 15-25 surveys from each soum. We also sent request to all 39 organizations that work at aimag center asking to encourage at least 5 person to submit the survey. In addition, we started to share posters and videos via local TV and webpages of Department of Health, aimag’s facebook page on advertisement. As of the date, over 275 people submitted the survey from our aimag and I am sure that the number will continue to increase as all soums are still submitting … “
Promotional outreach activities at aimag level

Introducing the app to the state inspectors in Tuv aimag

Post in local group pages; and seminar among health workers

Visit to the University of Khovd aimag
According to the dashboard monitoring, a total of 3,513 venues were observed and data entered. By the three groupings, a total of 2,663 observations at 810 hospitals, secondary schools, universities, public offices, private offices, restaurants, café/bars, public transport was registered.
Crowdsourcing or community induced data collection on compliance with tobacco law had continued from February to April 2019. A total of 1,147 people submitted 3,953 surveys, which was an unexpected success for the team. On average, one user submitted 3-4 surveys.
Geographical coverage of Conventional vs Crowdsourcing, Mongolia
Submitted surveys (both Conventional and Crowdsourcing)

By the 3 groupings, 76% of the submitted surveys were on monitoring smoke-free environments; and 8% was on observing the point of sale-tobacco advertising and 16% was on observing tobacco advertising on media.

<table>
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<th>Crowdsourcing (1147 citizens)</th>
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<td>Media- tobacco advertising survey</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3514</td>
<td>3953</td>
<td>7467</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Challenges and Lessons learned

- The team successfully implemented the pilot survey using both conventional and crowdsourcing methods.
- Researcher-led survey is costly, accuracy and quality of the data collection depend on the researcher's level of understanding the issue of study. The approach allowed us to get relevant data at a definite period of time.
- The crowdsourcing needs sufficient time and budget for the community based motivational campaign that needs a longer duration. Local coordinators need skills and experience in developing a marketing plan and monitoring. Incentivization brought significant increase in the number of responses and the number of active users using the app.
THANK YOU
FOR YOUR ATTENTION!
Case study of Tobacco Monitor Application

- S. CYRIL ALEXANDER
Tobacco Monitor…

- A platform for:
  - Reporting tobacco control violations
  - Receiving latest updates on tobacco control

Core Features

- Facilitates reporting of 28 kinds of violations
- Ensuring user anonymity and confidentiality
- Access to view the complaint status
Scope of the Application

- Volunteering and campaigns
- Provides cessation services
- Assists organizations in formulating tobacco control policies
Tobacco Monitor for Tobacco Control

- Readily accessible to people; encourage people participation
- Addresses unnoticed violations
- Ensures inter-departmental coordination and monitoring
Registering Complaints through Tobacco Monitor
Bringing up change through Tobacco Monitor

Selected case studies
I. Limiting tobacco industry interference in educational institutions

- Case 1: Spell Bee Competition
- Case 2: Olympiad
Spell Bee competition of ITC involving students and educational institutions; Violation of 242 order

Based on the complaint, a letter was sent by Tobacco Monitor to Deputy Secretary, Education Dept.
Letter from Education Dept. to Director of School Education requesting to take action against the violation.
CASE 2: CLASSMATE HANDWRITING OLYMPIAD
TN School Education Department through banning the participation of TN schools in the Classmate Handwriting Olympiad 2017

> Circular from the PHPM Dept. of MP

News piece published in Hindu and Deccan Chronicle

Title sponsor changed from Classmate by ITC to Nutrela
II. Limiting tobacco violations in movies/social media

Selected case studies of:
- Telugu movie ‘World Famous Lover’
- Tamil movie ‘Maanadu’
- Tamil movie ‘Sarkar’
- Tamil movie ‘Naane Varuven’
Telugu movie ‘World Famous Lover’

- Violation identified in the poster of the movie

- Apology letter from the production agency assuring to avoid such posters in their future promotions
Tamil movie ‘Maanadu’

Letter sent by the Regional Director of the Film Certification Board to the production agency of the movie based on the complaint from Tobacco Monitor to replace the disclaimer as per the norms.
Tamil movie ‘Sarkar’

Sarkar team gets notice from TN health department for promoting smoking

The Tamil Nadu health department has issued a notice to actor Vijay over his ongoing movie Sarkar. The health department has taken objection to the actor posing with a cigarette in his mouth in the first-look poster of his upcoming film.

Apart from the actor, notice has been issued to director AR Murugudoss and producer Kalanithi Maaran as well. The notice states that no promotional material of the movie shall endorse smoking.

Sources in the health department said legal action will be initiated if the poster is not removed from the promotional material of the movie.

Following the notice, the official Twitter handle of Sun Pictures (who is bankrolling this film), removed the first look poster from their account.

Actor Vijay, director get notices

The Madras High Court on Monday ordered notices returnable by July 16 to actor Vijay, film director A.R. Murugudoss and production house Sun Pictures on a public interest litigation (PIL) petition, which wanted them to pay ₹10 crore each as damages to Government Cancer Hospital at Royapettah here for having shown the actor smoking a cigarette in the first look poster of his upcoming movie Sarkar.

First Division Bench of Chief Justice Indira Banerjee and Justice P.T. Asha directed the High Court Registry to issue notices to the Centre and the State government as well. S. Cyril Alexander, convenor of the Tamil Nadu People’s Forum for Tobacco Control (TNPFTC), a private organisation based at Kodambakkam here, filed the PIL petition accusing the film crew of having thrown the law on the subject to the winds.

Sarkar poster with shot of Vijay smoking removed

Before the intervention of Tobacco Monitor

After the intervention of Tobacco Monitor
கேரூர்: பிழையார் என்ற தலைமையில் வெளியிடப்பட்டுள்ள விளையாட்டுத் திரைப்படத்தின் பாதுகாப்பு வீதிகள் வெளியிடப்பட்டுள்ளது. விளையாட்டிற்கு தகுந்த செயல்பாடுகள் மற்றும் கையலைகள் வெளியிடப்பட்டுள்ளது. பாதுகாப்பு வீதிகள் வெளியிடப்பட்டுள்ளது.
Tamil movie ‘Naane Varuven’

Violation complaint sent from Tobacco Monitor

Response to the complaint from the Production agency

Letter forwarding the complaint to national level

Order from STCC insisting to remove the violated poster
Response from Renowned Dailies

Response from Times Internet

Dear Sir,

1. We, Mo, Times Internet Limited, (hereinafter referred to as the “Company”) have received an email dated 11.04.2022 (“Your email”) seeking clarification to the response letter sent by V Creations for the movie “Naane Varuvan” (“V Creations’ Response”).

2. The issue at hand is regarding the poster of the movie Naane Varuvan where the actor Dhansh can be seen wearing "Star in Question" which is in contravention with the Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products Act, 2003 (“COTPA”).

3. Your email states that since V Creations has denied the ownership of the poster, thus it has been assumed that the sole responsibility of the poster lies with the Times of India and the same cannot be under the violation of COTPA.

4. First and foremost, we would like to state that the Company is a law abiding corporate entity and meticulously follows all norms, regulations and provisions of the law that are applicable to it.

5. Having said that, kindly note that the poster in Question had been posted and shared by the actor, Dhansh and director, Selvaraghavan on their official twitter handles. The links of the same are reproduced herein below for your perusal:

Tweet by Actor:
https://twitter.com/DeeruYathasha/status/1507348969930653126
Tweet by Director:
https://twitter.com/selvaraghavan/status/1507339969930653126

https://twitter.com/selvaraghavan/status/1449198395667599936

Response from Hindu Tamil

Reference to the email dated 11.04.2022 seeking clarification to the response letter sent by V Creations for the movie “Naane Varuvan”. Ref: Response of V Creations dated 07.04.2022 for the movie “Naane Varuvan”.

Dear Sir,

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https://twitter.com/selvaraghavan/status/1449198395667599936
III. OTT violations and the Digital Publisher Content Grievance Council (DPCGC)

- Case 1: Tamil movie ‘Pandigai’
Tamil movie ‘Pandigai’

Violation reported under Sec 77 of the JJ Act by Tobacco Monitor where smoking scene of a minor is displayed.

The appeal before the DPCGC got rejected stating the editorial justification for the scene and mentioning the fake prop used which looks like a cigarette.
The case has been taken up by the NCPCR and has released a draft regulatory guidelines on child participation in the entertainment industry or any commercial entertainment activity. It is being kept for public hearing and has been uploaded in the NCPCR website for comments.
Grievance Redressal Body (GRB) members of the DPCGC
IV. Limiting tobacco consumption in public spaces

- Driver of a public transport involved in smoking while driving; violation of Section 4 of COTPA 2003
- Location: Dindigul district, Tamil Nadu
Letter sent by Tobacco Monitor to the Principle Secretary of Transport requesting to pass an order against the violation

Letter from Under Secretary to the State Transport officials insisting to take action against the violation
V. Influencing Governance

- Adoption of State Level Monitoring Committee under Section 5, COTPA 2003
Series of violations identified and reported by Tobacco Monitor against the Tamil movie ‘VeIlayilla Pattathari’

Court proceedings that lasted over several months resulted in the implementation of State-level Monitoring Committee on 17th of Dec 2021 for Tamil Nadu to deal exclusively with cases that violates Section 5 of the COTPA
Circulation note sent on Jan 2022 to the STCC, to Section 5 Committee Chairman to take action against the violations reported and to approve and authorize the member secretary to take action against the violations reported.
Impact created by Tobacco Monitor by intervening in numerous violations

Remove Smoking Room from Big Boss house

Designated smoking area for Hotels, Restaurants and Airports not for Big Boss house

#StopEncouragingSmoking

Big Boss reality show

Before

Rowdy Boys movie

After
Allu Arjun turns down tobacco commercial despite being offered hefty salary. This is why

According to ETimes, the actor was offered a hefty sum for endorsement of a tobacco company, however, the actor rejected it without a second thought. The actor does not personally consume tobacco himself and would not want his fans to start consuming the product. The actor is well-aware of his influence and would not want his fans to smoke tobacco just which which would harm their health and could also lead to addiction.
Key Challenges

- Delay from the officials in responding to the violation letters sent
- Lack of proper anti-tobacco guidelines for the digital platforms
- Continuous rejection of appeals presented in front of the Grievance Redressal Body (GRB) of the DPCGC
Download the Tobacco Monitor application from the Play Store/App Store and join hands with us to eradicate Tobacco!