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Nicotine pouches non-tobacco products: Health Ministry



ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination told the National Assembly that the Velo nicotine pouches are non-tobacco products and do not fall under its regulatory mandate.

During the question hour, the ministry clarified that it had not issued any license to any cigarette company to manufacture or sale of Velo nicotine pouches.

This information was shared in response to a question from MNA Zartaj Gul regarding the grounds and conditions on which the license was issued to the cigarette companies for selling Velo pouches and steps taken by the government to prevent the sale and purchase of Velo pouches to youth under the age of 18 years. She also wanted to know whether the instructions have been written on each packet of cigarettes by the ministry to prevent the selling and purchase to youth under the age of 18 years.

However, the ministry's reply added that the Drug Regulatory

Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) has conducted the analysis of nicotine pouches and has not recommended the use of this product as nicotine is a highly addictive substance. "The ministry is constituting a working group of relevant experts from health product regulation and tobacco control to frame recommendations for control or regulation."

The reply said instructions have been written on each packet of cigarettes by the ministry under SRO 863 (1)/2010 of the Prohibition of Smoking and Protection of Non-Smoker's Health Ordinance 2002. It says, "Every cigarette manufacturer and importer ensure that the following statement (in clear Urdu font) is legibly printed in black color on one of the side panels of every cigarette packet manufactured or imported for consumption in Pakistan."

A product of BAT, the sale of Velo in Pakistan in 2022 reached a monthly volume of over 40 million pouches.

Benefits of quitting

Every time you smoke a cigarette, your body is flooded with thousands of chemicals, many of which are poisonous. The day you stop, your body starts clearing itself of all those nasty toxins and the repair process begins.

You'll notice some benefits within days or weeks:

Your senses of taste and smell improve

You start to breathe more easily

You have more energy

Other benefits will follow, including:

Better blood circulation to your heart and muscles, which will make physical activity easier

Improved lung function, leading to reductions in any cough, wheezing or other breathing problems.

Did you know?

You'll look better as more oxygen will be getting to your skin, making it brighter, and your teeth will no longer be getting stained with tar.

Reduced risks of smoking-related diseases

Your longer-term risks of cancer, lung disease, heart disease and stroke will be significantly reduced, and:

- after 1 year, risk of heart attack halves compared to a smoker's
- after 10 years, risk of death from lung cancer falls to half that of a smoker
- after 15 years, risk of heart attack falls to the same as someone who has never smoked

You will also be less likely to develop type 2 diabetes, bone disease including osteoporosis, eye disease and dementia.

Better mental health

You may think that smoking supports your mental wellbeing, and helps you to relax, deal with stress and anxiety, and cope with life's difficulties.

In fact, the opposite is true. Stopping smoking boosts mental health and wellbeing.

Evidence shows that after the withdrawal stage of quitting, people have reduced anxiety, depression and stress.

People who have quit also have increased positive mood compared with people who continue to smoke.

Did you know?

It can take as little as 6 weeks to start feeling the mental health benefits of stopping smoking.

Better for your family and friends

For some people, a big reason for stopping smoking is to be there for their family and friends.

If you have stopped smoking and are physically and mentally healthy, you're more likely to be able to support your loved ones – and be a part of their life in the future.

Also, becoming a smoke-free role model means your children are much less likely to take up smoking.

Protect others from secondhand smoke

Quitting also means you'll protect your loved ones from the potential health harms of secondhand smoke (sometimes called passive smoking).

Secondhand smoke is dangerous for anyone exposed to it, especially for children.

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/benefits-of-quitting-smoking/>

Global Action to End Smoking moves U.S. Supreme Court for public health standard

Global Action to End Smoking, an authority in the fight to end the smoking epidemic, filed an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of Food and Drug Administration v. Wages and White Lion Investments, LLC. Global Action respectfully submitted this brief in the interest of public health in support of neither party to provide critical objective scientific information to the court. It seeks to make clear that the FDA must properly implement the requirements of the Family Smoking and Tobacco Prevention Act in its regulation of e-cigarettes to ensure adult smokers have access to scientifically proven tools that can lower their risk and cigarette dependence.

"The FDA's current all-or-nothing regulatory approach to e-cigarettes and other reduced-risk products is impeding desperately needed progress in accelerating the end of the smoking epidemic, which causes the premature deaths of one out of two long-term users and nearly one of every five deaths each year in the United States.

"There is now significant scientific evidence that e-cigarettes are often more effective than nicotine replacement medicines at enabling adult smokers to stop lethal combustible tobacco use and reduce their risk. We want to ensure our nation's high court understands the highly restrictive approach taken by the FDA to new reduced-harm products violates the public health intent of Congress. We must do everything we can to protect youth from exposure to nicotine, while making reduced-risk options available to adult smokers. The FDA is failing millions of adults who continue to suffer from cigarette addiction and cannot or will not stop smoking by other means."

Global Action CEO Cliff Douglas

Douglas is an attorney who has spent his 36-year career dedicated to eradicating death and disease related to smoking by promoting science-based policies and education and seeking accountability for tobacco industry misconduct in courts of law. In addition to serving as counsel in several landmark lawsuits against the cigarette industry, he has served as an advisor to the U.S. Surgeon General and U.S. Assistant Secretary for Health and as the national vice president for tobacco control for the American Cancer Society. Over the course of his career, he has also led numerous efforts to protect children against predatory industry practices. The Global Action's amicus brief, which was submitted in furtherance of Global Action's charitable mission and part of its Cessation Education initiative, aimed at improving understanding of nicotine and the relative risk of different tobacco and nicotine products among members of the public, health professionals, and other stakeholders.

Global Action, an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to ending combustible tobacco use, is represented by Carter G. Phillips, one of the most experienced Supreme Court and appellate lawyers in the country, and his team at the firm Sidley Austin LLP.

"We are proud to present the Court with Global Action's expert analysis on these critical life-and-death questions. It is clear that the FDA should exercise its regulatory authority to account for the serious real-world consequences for millions of smokers who depend on the agency for accurate guidance and support."

Taken from globalactiontoendsmoking.org

Cigarette smoking rate in U.S. ties 80-year low

Cigarette smoking in the U.S. is at a low point, according to eight decades of Gallup trends. Currently, 11% of U.S. adults say they have smoked cigarettes in the past week, matching the historical low measured in 2022 (and nearly matched at 12% in 2023). When Gallup first asked about cigarette smoking in 1944, 41% of U.S. adults said they smoked. The current smoking rate is about half as large as it was a decade ago and one-third as large as it was in the late 1980s.

The latest results are based on Gallup's annual Consumption Habits poll, conducted July 1-21. Between the initial measurement of smoking in 1944 and 1974, at least four in 10 adults said they smoked cigarettes. Now, barely one in 10 do.

A major reason for the decline is that cigarette smoking has plummeted among young adults, who typically had been the most likely age group to smoke. Over the past three years, an average of 6% of adults under age 30 say they have smoked cigarettes in the past week, compared with 35% of young adults in 2001 through 2003 surveys.

Young adults are now less likely than other age groups to smoke cigarettes, as 13% of those between the ages of 30 and 49, 18% of those aged 50 to 64 and 9% of those 65 and older say they smoke.

Smoking continues to show a relationship to educational attainment, as 5% of college graduates and 15% of those without a college degree say they have smoked cigarettes, based on combined 2022-2024 data. The rates for both groups are significantly lower than in the past -- between 2001 and 2003, an average of 14% of college graduates and 30% of college nongraduates reported smoking.

Younger adults more likely to smoke e-cigarettes

Vaping is less common than cigarette smoking, with 7% of U.S. adults saying they have smoked electronic cigarettes or "vaped" in the past week. The percentage of vapers has been steady between 6% and 8% of U.S. adults in Gallup polls since

2019.

While young adults are now the age group least likely to smoke cigarettes, they are the group most likely to smoke e-cigarettes, according to combined 2022-2024 data. Eighteen percent of adults aged 18 to 29 vape, with the percentage declining among older age groups, down to 1% of those 65 and older.

There are small educational differences in vaping, with 5% of college graduates versus 9% of college nongraduates using e-cigarettes.

Most Americans view cigarettes, e-cigarettes as very harmful

The generally low rates of cigarette and e-cigarette usage may stem from the perception that these products can cause harm. Seventy-nine percent of U.S. adults say cigarettes are "very harmful" to people who use them; 57% say the same about e-cigarettes.

A majority of U.S. adults also consider chewing tobacco to be "very harmful" to its users, though fewer say this about cigars, pipes or nicotine pouches. Still, majorities of at least seven in 10 Americans believe all of these substances are at least "somewhat harmful."

Americans who smoke are less inclined than nonsmokers to consider the substance they use as harmful. While 58% of cigarette smokers think cigarettes are very harmful, 80% of those who do not smoke cigarettes hold this view. And 63% of vapers think e-cigarettes are very harmful, compared with 79% of nonvapers.

There are not notable differences in perceived harm of cigarettes or e-cigarettes by age or educational attainment.

https://news.gallup.com/poll/648521/cigarette-smoking-rate-ties-year-low.aspx?fbclid=IwY2xjawFPinNleHRuA2FibQlxMQABHRrOE0EpPzDOj4YDbn6p-79alw5eT1aq-7Wekv-pXJTnfpUPQw7Eb-6bjQ_aem_0iBiSCDoCxiEYRA4I-HOew

Naswar contains toxic, carcinogenic substances, study finds

In Peshawar, 60% of tobacco users consume naswar. At one point, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Minister of Agriculture, Major (Retd.) Sajjad Khattak argued that imposing a tax on naswar is unjustified because it is the common people's preferred form of intoxication, and it is not prohibited by Sharia law. Recent research on naswar has revealed that it contains harmful substances that can cause cancer.

A recent study on naswar found that it contains harmful substances such as nicotine, invisible metals, and aflatoxin components, which can lead to cancer. According to a report by Business Recorder, researchers have emphasized the urgent need to develop and implement smokeless tobacco control policies in Pakistan to curb tobacco use.

This research was conducted in collaboration with the Office of Research, Innovation, and Commercialization (ORIC), Khyber Medical University (KMU), and the Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR).

According to Dr. Shehzad, the study's supervisor, the research was carried out across all seven divisions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Peshawar, Mardan, Hazara, Kohat, D.I. Khan, Bannu and Malakand.

Fourteen major brands of naswar were selected, and two samples were collected from each division. He further added

that the study aimed to investigate the ingredients of the most widely used brands.

The use of smokeless tobacco is a growing public health concern, with an estimated 360

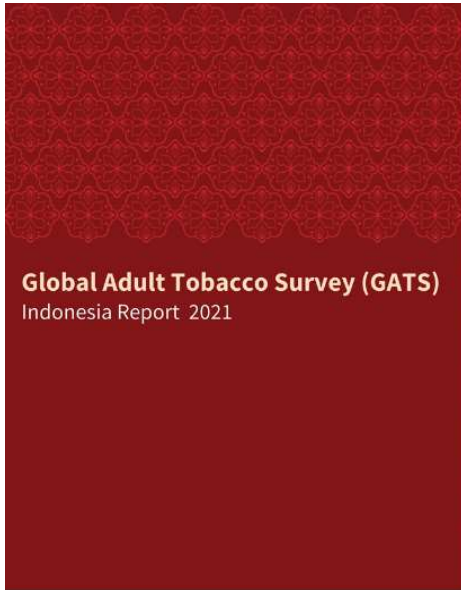
million users worldwide, more than 90% of whom reside in South Asia. In Pakistan, an estimated 8% of the population uses various smokeless tobacco products, including paan, gutka, and naswar. However, naswar use is most common among the ethnic Pashtun population in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province, where approximately 15% of the general population consumes it.

A study found that 60% of tobacco users in Peshawar consume naswar. Researchers identified 85 different chemical compounds in naswar samples using GC-MS analysis, with nicotine being the most common component present in all samples.

<https://propakistani.pk/2024/08/26/research-on-naswar-reveals-shocking-side-effects/>



70.2 million people use tobacco in Indonesia, GATS study finds



Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS)
Indonesia Report 2021



The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Indonesian government have released the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) 2021 report, providing information on tobacco use and key tobacco control indicators across the country, using globally standardized protocols and methodologies. The report found that 34.5% of adults – 70.2 million people – used

tobacco. The percentage of tobacco use among men was 65.5% and among women was 3.3%. Use of electronic cigarettes increased by 10 times in the last 10 years, from

0.3% in 2011 – when the last GATS was conducted – to 3% in 2021.

The report found that exposure to secondhand smoke in public places continued to be high. A total of 74.2% of adults were exposed to secondhand smoke in restaurants and 44.8% in workplaces. Almost 78% of current smokers noticed health warnings on cigarette package labels. More smokers wanted to quit compared to 10 years ago; however, the number of users given advice by health care providers to quit tobacco use improved by just over 4 percentage points, from 34.6% to 38.9%.

Across Indonesia, WHO will continue to advocate for implementation of strong tobacco control measures. This includes increased taxation of tobacco products, expansion of substantial bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, and stronger, more effective implementation and enforcement of smoke-free policies.

WHO encourages policy makers and public health researchers in Indonesia and globally to access and utilize the GATS Indonesia Report 2021, to better control tobacco and achieve a healthier, more sustainable future for all.

<https://www.who.int/indonesia/news/detail/22-08-2024-ministry-of-health-and-who-release-global-adult-tobacco-survey-indonesia-report-2021>

Number of UK adults who vape reaches record level, report finds

The proportion of adults who vape in the UK is at its highest level, with the number who both smoke and vape doubling over the past three years, according to analysis.

The number of smokers who use both cigarettes and vapes has increased from 17% in 2021 to 32% in 2024 – the equivalent of 2.2 million people.

The analysis, which was conducted by Action on Smoking and Health (Ash) and was based on data collected by YouGov, found 5.6 million adults in Britain vape, about 11% of the adult population.

According to the research, more than half (53%) of those who vape are former smokers, which is the equivalent of 3 million people.

Among all former smokers – including those who still vape or no longer vape – the median length of time spent using e-cigarettes is two years.

However, in the last three years, Ash found more than half of vapers who were former smokers had been vaping for more than three years. This compared with 18% in 2017 when the question was first asked as part of the analysis.

Labour said it would revive the former Tory government's tobacco and vapes bill, which would ban anyone born after January 2009 from buying cigarettes, with the aim to eventually phase out cigarette smoking. It could also lead to restric-



tions on the flavours, packaging and display of vapes. Hazel Cheeseman, the deputy chief executive of Ash, said: "Smoking is still the country's biggest preventable killer and vaping is one of many tools needed to help smokers quit if we are to create a smoke-free country for current as well as future generations.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/article/2024/aug/12/number-of-uk-adults-who-vape-reaches-record-level-report-finds>

Established in 2018, ARI is an initiative aimed at filling gaps in research and advocacy on ending combustible smoking in a generation. Supported by the Global Action on Ending Smoking (GA), ARI established the Pakistan Alliance for Nicotine and Tobacco Harm Reduction (PANTHR) in 2019 to promote innovative solutions for smoking cessation.

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