



## Transport department begins anti-tobacco campaign

Guwahati, Jun 27 (Agencies)

Published on 28 Jun. 2015 12:29 AM IST

To make the public transport system of the state tobacco-free, the commissioner of transport has instructed all district transport officers (DTOs) to strictly enforce anti-tobacco laws.

Transport commissioner J Balaji, through a letter on June 18, has requested all DTOs of the state to take steps to make public places like busstands, parking lots, public conveyances, halting places and transport offices, no-smoking areas. The letter from the transport commissioner has also asked the DTOs to make arrangements to declare such places 'no smoking areas' and to take action against violators of the Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003. The commissioner directed the DTOs to launch a campaign to create anti-tobacco awareness among drivers and vehicle operators.

Balaji has also directed the DTOs to submit an action-taken report to the commissioner's office on a regular basis.

The Voluntary Health Association of Assam (VHAA), a non-profit organization working in the field of tobacco-control in Assam for the last decade, initiated an advocacy campaign with the transport department in May to push for making the public transport system in the state tobacco-free.

Assam is a major victim of tobacco abuse with 39% adults in the state consuming some form of tobacco.