

ENVIRONMENTAL BURDEN DUE TO TOBACCO PRODUCT WASTE

Objectives

The study was carried out to assess the environment burden in terms of plastic, paper, foil and filter waste, posed by various smoked and smokeless tobacco products at National and State levels.

Methodology

A cross-sectional survey was conducted in 33 districts of 17 states and UTs across the country. After exclusion of duplicates, 200 unique tobacco products including 70 cigarette brands, 94 bidi brands and 58 smokeless tobacco brands were procured from across the country to ensure representation and generalizability from all the geographic regions of the country. Gross weight and segregated weights of the plastic, paper, foil and filter content were taken from the procured samples and were correlated with the data from GATS-2 survey to arrive at the final results.

Prevalence of Tobacco Use

Current tobacco users in India - 28.6%
Current Cigarette smokers in India - 4.0%
Current Bidi smokers in India - 7.7%
Current SLT users in India - 21.4%

*Source: Global Adult Tobacco Survey II: India 2016-17 Report



Plastic waste produced by tobacco use is equivalent to 77 million standard plastic buckets

2.2 million trees are cut annually to be used for Paper packaging, with waste equivalent to the weight of 119 million notebooks



Key Findings

Total Annual Plastic Waste

- Cigarettes - 2,038.42 tonnes
- Bidis - 7,418.81 tonnes
- Smokeless Tobacco - 64,043.43 tonnes.
- Total annual plastic waste - **73,500.66 tonnes.**

Total Annual Paper Waste

- Cigarettes - 31,419.10 tonnes.
- Bidis - 6,311.63 tonnes.
- Smokeless Tobacco - 51,671.40 tonnes.
- Total annual paper waste - **89,402.13 tonnes.**

Total Annual Foil Waste

- Total annual foil waste (Cigarettes) - **6,073.47 tonnes**

Total Annual Filter Waste

- Cigarettes - 1,315.16 tonnes.
- Bidis - 39.07 tonnes.
- Total annual filter waste - **1,354.23 tonnes**

Total annual waste by all tobacco products in the country

Cigarettes - 40,846 tonnes
Bidi - 13,770 tonnes
Smokeless Tobacco - 115,715 tonnes
Total - 1,70,331 tonnes



Filter waste produced is equivalent to 9 million standard adult sized t-Shirts

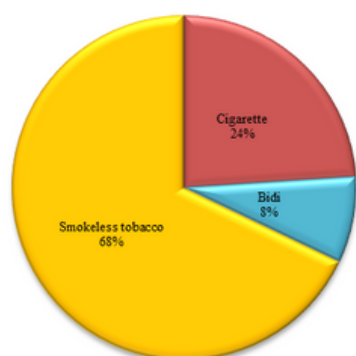
33 Boeing 747 aircrafts can be made of the aluminium waste produced annually



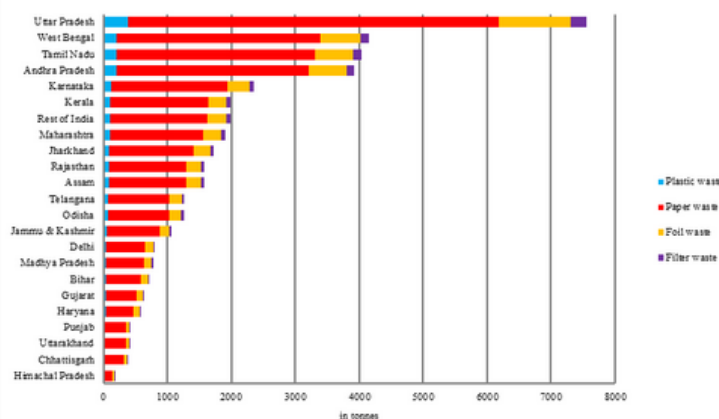
Total waste produced from tobacco use is equal to the weight of **100 Statues of Unity**



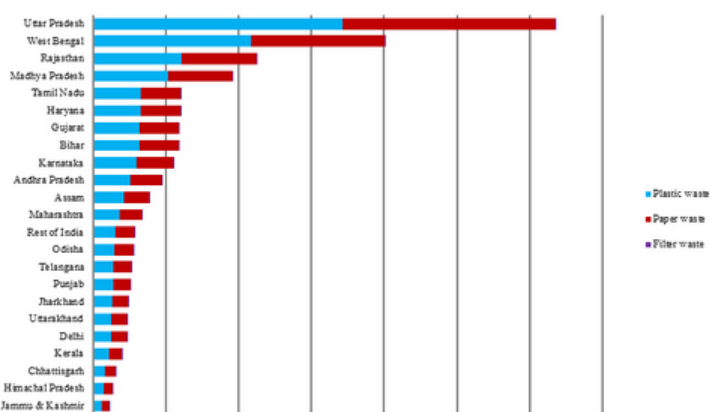
Contribution of different tobacco types to the overall tobacco waste (in %)



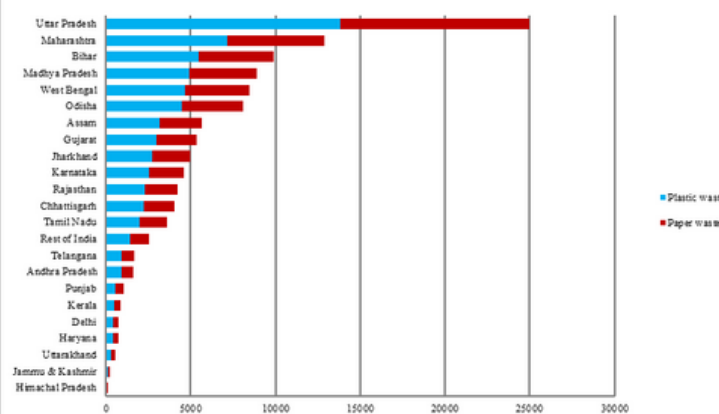
Distribution of annual waste by different components of cigarette (in tonnes)



Distribution of annual waste by different components of bidi (in tonnes)



Distribution of annual waste by different components of smokeless tobacco (in tonnes)



Recommendations

- Tobacco product wastes are diverse in nature. A comprehensive policy deterrent and a financial levy is needed, that is borne by the manufacturers.
- Given the enormous cost incurred for cleaning of the tobacco product wastes (TPWs), greater sensitization of stakeholders for effective implementation of existing regulations and adopting stronger norms to reduce its environmental impact is need of the hour.
- No tobacco product fully complies with environmental laws. Tobacco companies and their shareholders must take full responsibility to reduce the environmental burden of their products.
- The violations of the existing environmental laws and policies related to solid wastes/packaging should be strictly monitored, reported and regulated to ensure compliance therewith
- Given the irreversible impact of plastics on the environment and the human body, the unnecessary plastic waste generated from the tobacco products, is needs stronger and urgent policy shift for its effective elimination.