

Training of Law Enforcers on Tobacco Control

Shillong, November 6, 2019: The training of Law Enforcers on Tobacco Control cum Sensitization Workshop for different stakeholders was held today at Hotel Poinisuk, Laitumkhrah, Shillong. The training was attended by officials of National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP), NEIGRIHMS and Police personnel. The training was organised by National Tobacco Control Programme, Meghalaya in collaboration with Department of Community Medicine, NEIGRIHMS.

The main objective of the training is to promote Smoke-free Shillong campaign and to strictly implement the provisions of Tobacco Control Laws (Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products Act, 2003) (COTPA) within Shillong city.

Dr. Lana E Lyngdoh Nongbri, State Nodal Officer, NTCP gave an introduction of NTCP, Epidemiology of Tobacco Use & Achievements of Tobacco Control Implementation and enforcement drives made by NTCP Meghalaya and also an overview on the role of various government departments and other stakeholders in Tobacco Control and strategies on effective implementation of Tobacco Control Programme and COTPA, 2003 in the State.

Dr. Lyngdoh Nongbri said that the main thrust areas for the NTCP are to train health and social workers, NGOs, school teachers, and enforcement officers, IEC activities, organising school programmes, monitoring of tobacco control laws, coordination with local Dorbar Shnongs for village level activities and setting-up and strengthening of cessation facilities at district level. She informed that East Khasi Hills, West Jaintia Hills, Ri Bhoi and West Garo Hills have been chosen as NTCP Districts for the financial year 2019-20 for implementation of various sections of COTPA.

Spelling out the achievements and action taken plans of the NTCP, Dr. Lyngdoh Nongbri said that the way forward towards effective implementation of the programme is to ensure strict enforcement of Tobacco Control Laws which is in compliance to Section 4 (Prohibition of smoking in public places) of which she called upon the Police Department to start enforcement in Police Bazaar as pilot project. Further, she said that all tobacco selling shops must display signage “No sale of tobacco products to minor” and that no minor should be allowed to buy or sell tobacco products. She also said that educational institutions should display signage (100 yards) and to self-declare their institutions as “tobacco free”.

She called for more coordination with other departments like police, food safety, education and Municipal board to keep a check on sale and use of tobacco products and cross border trade of illicit tobacco products especially in West Khasi Hills and West Garo Hills

District and strict enforcement and incorporation of COTPA laws with Motor Vehicle Act and compliance to Ordinance on Prohibition of e-cigarettes.

COTPA Section 4 & 6, COTPA Section 5 & 7, Role of Law Enforcers vis-a-vis Police Personnel in enforcing the COTPA, review of other laws related to tobacco control, MPOWER & FCTC Article 5.3 ENDS were presentation by resource persons in the workshop.