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# KASHMIR TIMES

## Banning e-cigarettes could harm public health: CHRA

KT NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, Aug 22: Council for Harm Reduced Alternatives (CHRA), a national tobacco harm reduction organisation that works towards reducing the tobacco health burden through safer alternatives, and Association of Vapers India (AVI), an advocacy group that represents e-cigarette users across the country, have warned central and states governments against the consequences of banning e-cigarettes, saying it would deprive millions of smokers of safer choices and cause damage to public health.

CHRA said it is unfortunate the government is mulling banning e-cigarettes, which are 95% less harmful compared to tobacco cigarettes, even as it promotes harm reduction programmes in interventions on addiction and communicable diseases.

Toxic chemicals and tar produced from the burning of cigarettes are the main culprits for tobacco-related deaths across the world, not the nicotine. E-cigarettes have nicotine but not the tar as there is no combustion, pointed out the vapers' body. Banning e-cigarettes would deny the country's 120 million smokers a lower-risk means of nicotine intake and cessation, stated AVI.

"Harm reduction is a concept we apply in our everyday lives by opting for safer products, be it refined oil or less-polluting cars. In tobacco use too, the lives of users can be positively impacted with harm-reduced alternatives.