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# THESE DAYS

## Vapers' association warns against banning e-cigarettes

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**NEW DELHI, AUG 10** : Council for Harm Reduced Alternatives (CHRA) and Association of Vapers India (AVI) have warned central and state governments in India against the consequences of banning e-cigarettes, saying it would deprive millions of smokers of safer choices and cause damage to public health.

Instead, these associations, which work towards reducing the tobacco health burden through safer alternatives across the country, have called for a legislation to regulate the domain of alternatives to smoking including e-cigarettes.

Samarat Chowdhury, Director of CHRA said, "We request the government and health authorities to seriously consider the role of tobacco harm reduction in combating the tobacco epidemic which is killing



Director of CHRA, Samrat Chowdhury explains ban of e-cigarettes in New Delhi.

a million people in our country every year."

"Lower risk alternatives are also available for smokeless tobacco in the form of Swedish snus, which like e-cigarettes, has been found to reduce harm by over 99%," he added.

He said that banning e-cigarettes would deny the country's 120 million smokers a lower-risk means of nicotine intake and cessation.

Chowdhury stated that an attempt to ban e-cigarettes is regressive given that the government's policy is to

provide wider choices to consumers for all products and services and not restrict them.

"Banning a safer alternative like e-cigarettes is a wrong direction," said Pratik Gupta, director AVI.

He said that multiple peer-reviewed scientific studies in the UK have convinced health experts and governments to encourage smokers to switch to vaping.

"Most of the vapers in India, are ex-smokers. We strongly oppose and by underage and non-smokers."