



World No Tobacco Day -31st May 2019

World Health Organization (WHO) has declared every year 31st of May as the World No Tobacco Day (WNTD). The main aim of this campaign is to raise awareness on the harmful and deadly effects of tobacco use and second-hand smoke exposure. This year the theme of the WNTD is "tobacco and lung health", highlighting the:

- the negative impact that tobacco has on people's lung health, from cancer to chronic respiratory disease, and
- the fundamental role lungs play for the health and well-being of all people.

Cigarette smoking harms nearly every organ of the body, causing many diseases. It affects the respiratory system, circulatory system, reproductive system, skin, eyes and also increases the risk of many different cancers. In the same way there is no risk free level of second hand smoking. Secondhand smoke cause health problems specially in infants and children, including more frequent asthma attacks and respiratory infections.

Tobacco Industry is well known to interfere with policies and control actions that would prevent people from smoking. The ultimate goal of the tobacco industry is to expand their profits and the production by increasing tobacco consumption, affecting lungs of Millions of populations worldwide. Publicizing false facts and discrediting proven science through industry funded research reports, Influencing the government officials of the Health sector by giving sponsorships, Manipulating public opinions through marketing strategies and promotions, Building their image through Corporate Social Investments, Interferences in tobacco cultivation, Involvement in Illicit Tobacco Trade, Publicizing false Tobacco Tax and Pricing Related Issues are some of such interferences used locally by the tobacco industry. Details about such interference can be found through the www.tobaccounmasked.lk, the information portal of the Centre for Combating Tobacco (CCT), Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, the tobacco industry monitoring observatory established under the Article 5.3 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), in Sri Lanka. The aim of CCT is to monitor the tobacco industry activities related to implementation of FCTC Article 5.3, which recommends to protect public health policies from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry.

If you get to know any such interferences you can inform CCT via the *TobaccoUnmasked HotSpots* mobile App which is freely available from the phone app stores, tobaccounmasked@gmail.com email address or anonymously through the www.cct.lk website. Data you are sending will be kept confidential.

As Sri Lankans, it is our collective duty to support to build a tobacco free country freeing our lungs from tobacco smoke.


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Dr. Mahesh Rajasuriya

Director

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