

## WHO, Vital Strategies launch anti-tobacco campaign

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**'When you Quit' media campaign highlights multiple benefits of quitting tobacco and brings to fore the heightened risk of COVID-19 for tobacco users**



Global health organisation Vital Strategies and the World Health Organization (WHO) has launched a national mass media campaign to encourage tobacco users to quit. The campaign, 'When You Quit' explains how smoking cigarettes or bidi can cause heart attack and may also increase the risk of severe COVID-19. The public service announcement (PSA) also depicts the health benefits tobacco users experience when they quit. The PSA aligns with this year's World No Tobacco Day theme 'Commit to Quit' and urges people to quit tobacco using the National Tobacco Quitline (1800-11-2356) for resources and help.

WHO is supporting the "When You Quit" campaign developed in multiple Indian languages and to be aired across 15 states covering 169 districts with a high burden of tobacco use through All India Radio, MY FM & Radio City. Additionally, Vital Strategies will augment the amplification of the message through major online streaming platforms - Facebook, Hotstar, Voot, Zee5, SonyLiv and MX Player.

Dr Roderico H Ofrin, WHO Representative to India said, "This year's theme for WNTD 'Commit to Quit' aims to support 100 million people worldwide in their attempts to give up tobacco through various initiatives. We all must help create healthier environments that are conducive to quitting tobacco use."

Vaishakhi Mallik, Associate Director, Vital Strategies said, "We're proud to collaborate with the WHO in scaling up the fight against the tobacco epidemic with the Government of India through the launch of this campaign. "When You Quit" comes at a pivotal moment of the pandemic in India as cases continue to surge across the country and people with underlying health conditions remain at an increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19."