

**MINUTES OF THE 1st TOBACCO ALLIANCE MEETING FOR
TOBACCO – FREE HOWRAH ON 29th April, 2015
AT INDIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, HOWRAH BRANCH**

The first Tobacco Alliance Meeting for Howrah was held on 29th April, 2015 at the Indian Medical Association, Howrah Branch. The meeting was organized by MANT and was fully supported by Bloomberg Initiative, USA and the technical support was given by International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, South-East Asia Office, New Delhi. The main vision of the meeting was “Tobacco-Free Howrah”. Dignitaries from different fields of the civil society participated in this meeting.

Remark of the Dignitaries:

Prof. Dipankar Chatterjee (Former Professor & Singer) raised some important issues in this meeting those are as follows -

- 94% of oral cancer in India is caused due to hookah, gul, gutka, zarda. So we have to keep in our mind that awareness camp on chewing tobacco is highly essential as well as smoking tobacco.
- Put emphasis on recommendation of medicine or therapy to reduce the harm effects of tobacco.

Somnath Dey (Elocutionist)

- Somnath Dey admitted that through this programme, he had been aware about the harmful effects of tobacco, and he is geared up to spread the message among others and also mentioned that street dramas can play a vital role in context of such awareness.

Devdas Saha (Joint Secretary St. Jhonse Ambulance Association) shared his views regarding sensitization programme of tobacco control.

- He stated that we should introduce the sensitization program from schools with the active involvement of heads of the institutions. When the children become aware about the ill effects of tobacco from early days of their life, it will help greatly to stop initiation of tobacco consumption.

Alok Kumar Mukherjee (Former Justice of Sealdah Court)

- Alope Kumar Mukherjee pointed that consumption of tobacco is an age old practice but in current days smoking is becoming a symbol for youths to show themselves as modernized people. So we have to initiate our activities from schools for proper

enforcement of COTPA, 2003. That is the only way to prevent people from succumbing to tobacco use.

Prof. Bharati Mukherjee (Former Professor of Bijay Krishna Girls' College)

- According to Prof. Bharati Mukherjee, people get addicted to smoking as it has become a style statement for younger generation. Mental stability is the first step of quitting smoking and we are thankful to MANT for creating awareness on this very issue. We should make the grass root people aware about the bad effects of tobacco use, because they are one of the worse affected sections of the society due to that practice.

B. Kumar (Magician)

- B. Kumar made a clear acknowledgment, appreciating this noble effort of MANT. And he also assured to support MANT in awareness generation programme through his magic show.

Champak Baul (Ex-Member Secretary, Natya Academy-Govt. of West Bengal)

- He suggested that we should do awareness programmes in schools as children are the citizens of tomorrow and it will lead to reduce the rate of initiation among them. Talking Doll's Show and Street Theatres may be the means for creating the awareness among students.

Debabrata Bandopadhyay (Writer & Prof. of Tagore Research Institute)

- He suggested for awareness building campaigns in schools through cultural programmes which will make the programmes more effective and interesting.

Dilip Kumar Das (Ex Director, Mines and Minerals, Govt. of WB)

- Dilip Kumar Das remarked very positively that awareness generation is the most effective way to decrease the level of tobacco consumption because through strong mass awareness campaigns disease like polio has almost been eradicated from our society.
- He also assured that Rotary Club of Howrah will cooperate with MANT for the cause of Tobacco Control.

Mauli Dhara (Classical Dancer)

- She gave her gratitude to MANT for such gracious effort. And she also assured to give her best efforts to spread awareness on this issue.

Maya Rani Paul (Industrialist)

- She raised her voice for making an oath for not to use tobacco along with making people aware about its ill effects.
 - She also said that we have to take inventiveness in our own areas of work at first.
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