

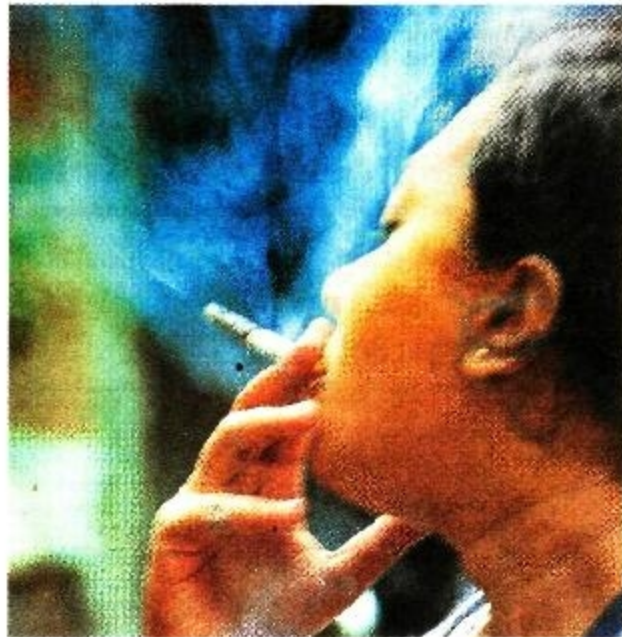
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Smokin' woes: one help clinic in city

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# SMOKIN' WOES: ONE HELP CLINIC IN CITY

Clinically, Mumbai is not conducive to those wanting to kick the butt but unable to do so



UNHOLY SMOKE: Today is World No Tobacco day. REPRESENTATION FC

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ON World No Tobacco Day today, the city is grappling with the lack of cessation clinics to help smokers wanting to kick the habit.

A smoking cessation clinic provides counselling and clinically-approved products that help people quit.

The city's only dedicated cessation clinic is at Tata Memorial Hospital, Parel.

"The staff at the clinic are certainly not overworked," said Dr P C Gupta, director of Healis-Sekhsana Institute for Public Health.

"Smokers need a place they can turn to, if they have tried but were not able to kick the butt," said Gupta.

"Another effective thing is to impart training to general practitioners who can reach out to patients needing help."

He added that more clinics were in the pipeline.

"Government hospitals do run de-addiction centres, but these are frequented more by alcoholics and charas addicts," said Dr Ravikant Singh of KEM Hospital, Parel, who also heads Doctors For You, an NGO.

## Survey findings

Meanwhile, surveys have

shown that corporate houses have been slow in including cessation programmes into their employee policies.

A recent survey of 1,500 city journalists conducted by Doctors For You revealed that not a single media house ran a cessation programme.

"There were doctors at only a third of the organisations but no advice was given to

## ONE AND ONLY

THE city's only cessation clinic at Tata Memorial Hospital was set up in 2002, as part of a joint venture between the WHO and the Ministry of Health. Mumbai's clinic is one among 13 opened across major cities in the country at the time.

## THE PUFF GIRLS

According to research conducted across Mumbai's call centres, 8 per cent of smokers comprise women. About 200 million of the world's 1 billion smokers are women.

smokers to give up the habit, or how it could affect their productivity in the long run," said Singh.

"Only one English electronic media house had earmarked a separate smoking zone on its premises," he added.