

Tobacco-Free Generation

A policy to permanently end tobacco sales for younger generations, protecting every child born after 2010 from legally purchasing tobacco products.

WHAT IS TOBACCO-FREE GENERATION?

Tobacco-Free Generation (TFG) is a public health initiative and social movement aiming to phase out tobacco sales to people born after a specified date, such as 1 January 2010, thereby protecting younger generations from tobacco across the life-course. TFG will permanently phase out tobacco by raising the legal smoking age by one year, every year, so that people born after a designated cut-off date can never legally purchase tobacco products. Unlike a simple age restriction, TFG grows with the population. The protected group expands every year until, decades later, it covers everyone.

SRI LANKA'S PROPOSAL

In 2025, the Sri Lanka Medical Association (SLMA) formally proposed to the Minister of Health, to introduce the TFG policy in our country. The proposal would ban the sale of all tobacco products to anyone born in or after 2010. This means children turning 21 in 2031 or younger would never legally be able to purchase tobacco.

The wording of the National Authority on Tobacco and Alcohol Act (2006) supports the objectives of this concept, and it is consistent with international human rights frameworks, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognises the right to health and life.

WHY IS THIS NEEDED?

15,000+

Sri Lankans die from tobacco each year

Rs. 560M

spent on cigarettes daily in Sri Lanka

40–50

deaths per day from tobacco-related illness

- Tobacco is the only product that kills up to half its users. The people who die are our fathers, brothers, and the productive youth of this country.
- Healthcare costs from tobacco run into billions of rupees annually. Preventing new smokers will significantly reduce this burden over time.
- The tobacco industry deliberately targets children as "replacement smokers", viewing them as a loyal starting demographic. TFG would put a significant barrier to this predatory practice.
- Smokers tend to take more sick days and may experience decreased productivity while at work due to health issues related to smoking. TFG will create healthier workers who take fewer sick days and are more productive, benefiting families, businesses, and the national economy.
- Research shows that money that would have been spent on tobacco, if spent on other products or services stimulate economies. This reallocation of spending creates new jobs in different sectors countering any job losses in the tobacco industry.
- Tobacco and nicotine products limit people's happiness and freedom. TFG policy will help create a future where more people can live happily, without limits to their freedoms.

GLOBAL EXAMPLES

Maldives

The first country ever to implement the policy. Persons born on or after 1 January 2007 are prohibited from purchasing, using, or being sold any tobacco product.

United Kingdom

Recently signed the 'Tobacco and Vapes Bill', which brings in the Tobacco-Free Generation policy, ending the sale of tobacco — cigarettes, cigars, loose tobacco, chew, and heated tobacco, to anyone born after 2008.

HOW IT WORKS OVER TIME

Present Day

Authorities and civil society formally proposes TFG policy to the Government.

Policy enacted

Tobacco sales permanently banned for all born in 2010 or later.

2031 onwards

Children turning 21 that year, and every year after, will never legally buy tobacco. The protected generation grows annually.

Decades later

The policy covers the entire population. Sri Lanka reaches the tobacco endgame!

What you can do

Raise Awareness | Actively Advocate | Expose Industry Interference



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