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*Committed to Dental Excellence*

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019

To,  
Shri Narendra Modi ji  
Honourable Prime Minister of India  
New Delhi

cc – Shri JP Nadda ji, Honorable Health Minister of India, New Delhi

**Subject: Ban of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Devices (ENDS) in India**

Respected Sir,

We are deeply respectful of your government's commitment to universal healthcare for citizens of India and the many bold steps you have taken. One of these was the Advisory (F. No. P-16012/19/2017-TC dated 28<sup>th</sup> August 2018) issued by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) to the States and Union Territories to "*.. prevent the initiation of ENDS by non-smokers and youth with special attention to vulnerable groups, to ensure that any Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) including e-Cigarettes, Heat-Not-Burn devices, Vape, e-Sheesha, e-Nicotine Flavoured Hookah and the like devices that enable nicotine delivery are not sold (including online sale), manufactured, distributed, traded, imported and advertised in their jurisdictions, except for the purpose and in the manner and to the extent, as may be approved under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules made there under*". This was an excellent move showing great foresight as ENDS products have been gaining alarming popularity globally and among the youth in India.

We are thus distressed to note that more than 30 organizations<sup>1</sup> and industry bodies, including FICCI, CII and Cellular Operators Associations of India and others have written to the Electronics and IT Ministry opposing the proposed ban of online content related to the ENDS. These are respectable trade and industry bodies, however, this is a matter of public health and the Government should be viewing this issue only through the prism of public health.

The **Indian Dental Association (IDA)** is the largest recognized body of dental professionals in India. Its goal is to attain optimal oral health for the people in the country. Tobacco use, in whatever form, has been a major obstacle to attainment of its goal. Hence, IDA has been campaigning for a total ban on tobacco use in whatever form to improve the national health index and quality of life.

It has also come to our notice that the ENDS makers are strongly lobbying to over-turn the MoHFW Advisory and various forum are being used for this – media, legal action and even Parliament. We would like to emphatically refute the claims ENDS makers are making, as follows:

- **ENDS are a harm-reduction strategy:** There has been no evidence to show that these are less harmful and terminologies such as 'harm reduction', 'less harmful' are ways of marketing and advertising the products purely for profit business.
  - The US Surgeon General's 2016 report<sup>2</sup> on E-cigarette (ENDS) clearly shows that these possess dangers to youth, pregnant women and fetuses. Use of products containing nicotine in any form among youth, including e-cigs is **unsafe**. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) also clearly states that e-cigarettes is unsafe for kids, teens and young adults.