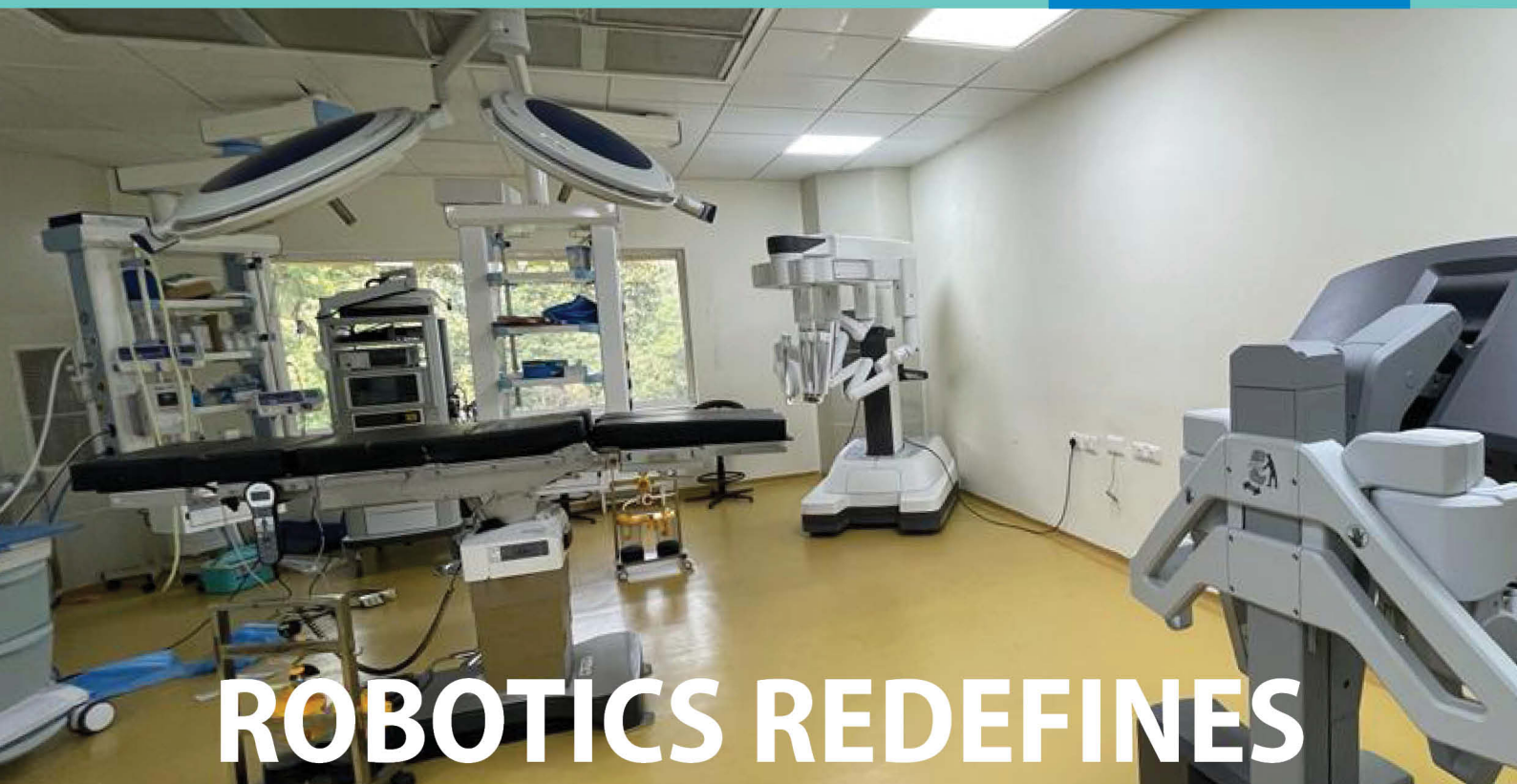




CANCER INSTITUTE(WIA)

July 2022
NEWSLETTER



ROBOTICS REDEFINES SURGICAL SERVICES



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

It is indeed a pleasure to welcome the first issue of the new-look E Newsletter, reflecting the state-of-the-art technologies we employ in pursuit of our unchanged mission. I am very excited that the transition from hard copy to electronic newsletter will improve the reach and speed of delivery to our Institute fraternity survivors, patients, donors, staff and students.

The first issue unravels the cutting edge technology of Robotics in surgical services. We are close to a milestone of 100 robotics-aided surgical interventions. I am sure that the future issues would be informative and reader friendly, covering important events, new equipment, newer techniques, academics and other significant departmental happenings at the Institute, even as telling human stories. I hope the correspondents network will be strengthened and trained.

I take this opportunity to reiterate that we are a non-profit voluntary charitable institution founded by Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy and nurtured by Dr. S. Krishnamurthi and Dr. V. Shanta. We have traversed 68 years - from a cottage hospital to a comprehensive cancer centre with over 550 beds, a research division, college of oncological sciences and preventive oncology division. We continue to follow the ethos enunciated by our founders, working in a Mission Mode, towards caring for our patients and being committed to making cancer treatment accessible and affordable to the under privileged.

I salute the tireless service of the medical fraternity at the Institute, who have been with us as pillars during the COVID 19 times.

Best Wishes to the Editorial Board



in presenting the many facets of the Institute as a pioneer in the ethical, contemporary, multi-modal treatment of cancer!

Dr G Selvaluxmy

Remembering Dr S Krishnamurthi



(12.9.1919 - 2.7.2010)

Cancer Institute (WIA) paid homage to the memory of Dr Krishnamurthi on 2nd July, 2022, his 12th death anniversary.

In an association lasting over 6 decades, he was Director of Cancer Institute (WIA) from 1959 and Scientific Advisor, Research & Planning from 1970 until 2010.

For his valuable contributions in Oncology, he was awarded Padmashri in 1970.

ROBOTICS REDEFINES SURGICAL SERVICES

Cancer Institute (WIA) is close to a milestone of 100 robotics-aided surgeries

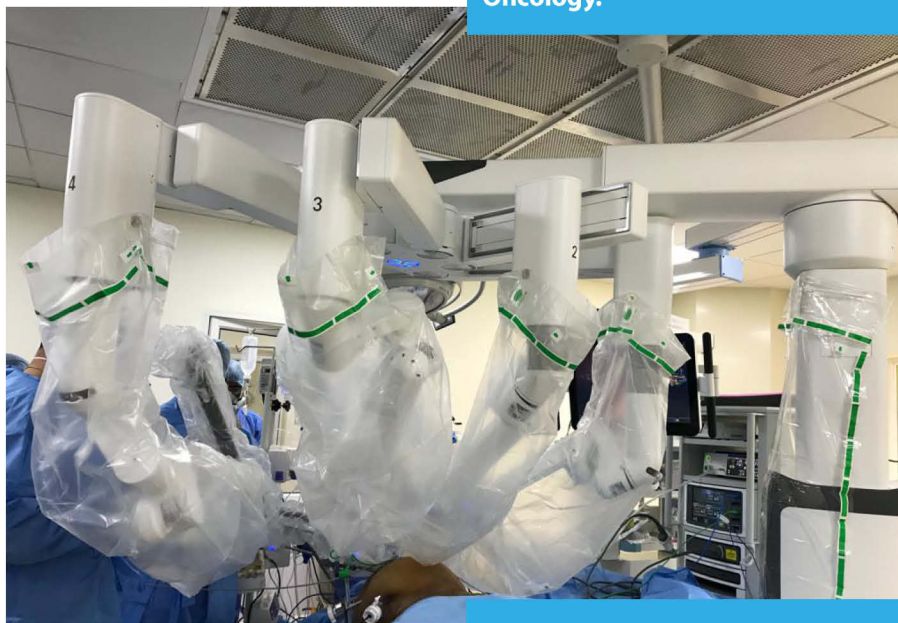
Since January 2021, the Cancer Institute (WIA) has been offering the cutting edge Robotic technology, giving the surgeon better control, flexibility and dexterity, even as it is benefiting its cancer patients in multiple ways.

Cancer Institute (WIA) has the fourth generation Da Vinci Xi Robotic Surgical System. The Robotic services cut across all the surgical oncology sub specialties including Urology, Gynaecology, Gastrointestinal, Thoracic as well as Head and Neck Oncology.

The Robotic Surgery is a form of minimally invasive surgery. It has been accepted as an alternative to the traditional approaches to cancer surgeries i.e., Open as well as Laparoscopic surgeries.

The present-day Robotic surgical systems are akin to enhanced tele manipulator systems, entirely driven by the cancer surgeon. The operating surgeon initially makes miniature incisions to insert the specially designed instruments and a high-definition camera targeting the diseased organ of interest within the body of the patient. The operating Surgeon then sits in an ergonomically designed console, with eyes and hands aligned with the camera and controls the movement of surgical instrument arms. The Robotic System in turn translates, in real time, the surgeon's

hand movements into precise movements of the instruments within the patient. It is noteworthy to mention that the operating surgeon controls every aspect of the surgical procedure, the robotic system cannot act or be programmed to act in any way without the surgeon's input.



The grant to procure the Robotic System came as a part of a Special Rs 120 Crore grant, with the Government of India bearing two-thirds of the share, and the State of Tamil Nadu one third.

The Robotic services cut across all the surgical oncology sub specialties including Urology, Gynaecology, Gastrointestinal, Thoracic as well as Head and Neck Oncology.

The Robotic System promises a better post-op recovery and improved functional outcomes: reduced pain, lesser infections, lesser blood loss (hence decreased need for blood transfusions), shorter hospital stay, less scarring and faster return to normal activities.

Faculty of the Department of Surgical Oncology



ANSWERS TO SOME COMMON QUESTIONS



Dr. ARVIND KRISHNAMURTHY,
MS (Gen Surg), MCh (Surg Onco)
DNB (Surg Onco),
Professor and Head, Surgical Oncology

Are Robotic Surgeries Safe?

Robotic systems have been designed to minimise the side-effects and not eliminate the side effects following surgery altogether. You are strongly encouraged to discuss with your treating cancer surgeon the likely side effects that you may experience.

Are Robotic Surgeries safe for Cancers?

The available evidence suggests that long term cancer outcomes following robotic surgery is as safe as with the traditional method of Open/Laparoscopic Surgery.

What are the potential advantages of the Robotic System to Cancer Patients?

The Robotic System offers the promise of a better post-op recovery and improved functional outcomes. This is largely due to reduced pain, lesser infections, lesser blood loss (hence decreased need for blood transfusions), shorter hospital stay, less scarring and faster return to normal activities. It is noteworthy to mention that better functional outcomes have been achieved without compromising the oncological principles.

What are the implications of the Robotic System to the Operating Surgeon?

The robotic system offers numerous benefits including a novel camera system that provides a stable 3D high definition operating field, wristed instruments offering enhanced dexterity, physiologic tremor filtering, motion scaling, improved ergonomics among others. As a result, surgeons are now able to perform many complex procedures across all oncological specialties with more flexibility and precision.

Is the Robotic Surgery right for you?

Although robotic surgery is currently being used to treat many cancers, not all cancer patients are eligible for robotic surgeries. Your treating cancer surgeon will be the best person to take the decision for or against robotic surgery after taking into consideration many aspects of the cancer and your general health.

Are Robotic Surgeries costlier than the Laparoscopic/Open Surgeries?

The short answer is YES, and this was a major deterrent for charitable not for profit organisations like the Cancer Institute (WIA) to procure this technology earlier. The Robotic platforms come at a considerably higher capital cost. Additionally, there are costs involved for maintenance and for the use of consumables in every robotic surgery.

The Cancer Institute(WIA) is seeking donations from all philanthropic individuals/organisations towards creating a "Robotic Corpus Fund", thereby ensuring that all deserving cancer patients get benefited by the robotic technology.

What is the future of Robotic Surgical Systems?

The robotic surgical systems are likely to continuously evolve with rapid refinements in both the technological hardware as well as the software. Many players are likely to consolidate their places in this fiercely competitive market to expand the boundaries of the existing technology with newer tools and integration of artificial intelligence.

Evolution of Robotic Surgery

The term "ROBOT" is believed to have originated in 1921 from the Czech word "Robota", meaning "labor". The science of robotic surgery was a mere fascinating concept close to 3 decades back, but with the rapid advances in the field of robotic technology, this scientific concept has over the years been clinically adapted in the performance of surgeries across various specialties including cancer surgeries.

The first generation of robots were

stereotactic robots, initially developed for obtaining brain biopsies.

The credit for pushing the frontiers of robotic surgery goes to the "Da Vinci" robotic system. In 2000, the da Vinci obtained FDA approval and became the first operative surgical robot for aiding in performing various surgeries including prostatectomies, cardiac valve repair and gynaecological surgeries.

In 2001, a major step in robotic surgery took place in what is popularly referred

to as Operation Lindberg, wherein Dr. Jacques Marescaux stationed in New York successfully performed a robotic cholecystectomy on a patient stationed in Strasbourg, France, aided by the ZEUS robot and a telecollaboration system SOCRATES.

Over the past 20 years, the Da Vinci Robotic system has four-generational platforms, the 4th-generation platform being the da Vinci X, Xi and SP Surgical Systems. The Da Vinci Robotic-assisted surgeries are currently used in all surgical disciplines.

Dr. V. Shanta 1st Memorial Oration

“The Razor’s Edge - a reflection on our times” -Dr Gopalkrishna Gandhi



Dr Gopalkrishna Gandhi, former West Bengal Governor, receiving a citation from R Seshasayee, Chairman and Dr Hemanthraj, Vice Chairman, Cancer Institute (WIA).

Former Governor of West Bengal, Dr Gopalkrishna Gandhi delivered the first Dr. V. Shanta Memorial Oration titled “The Razor’s Edge - a reflection on our times,” at the Institute on 11th March, 2022. “Razor’s edge”, the speaker explained, was translation of the Sanskrit phrase *kshurasya dhara* found in a Kathopanishad verse, which likened the path to salvation to a razor’s edge.

Dr Gandhi listed key issues the country and the society faced, which in his views were on the razor’s edge. These included global warming and the melting of Himalayan glaciers in particular, the possibility of threat from China and Pakistan in the light of the recent war in Ukraine, and the inability of the people to do self-evaluation.

He said the “razor’s edge of all razor’s edges” for India at present was intolerance and counter intolerance. Highlighting that majorities and minorities had always lived together and shared resources in India, he said the partition led to the presence of people and outfits that polarised

society.

While terrorism was an active form of war that ought to be fought by the State with swift action, intolerance was a passive form of civil war that had to be countered by the State and society.

Dr Shanta’s razor-sharp path

The real success of Dr. Shanta was in her striving, which, he said, was her razor-sharp path to her individual and professional salvation. “Making success a God, instead of striving has let us, as people and as individuals, to seek shortcuts,” he said.

Dr Gandhi said if cancer was an imperial power, as it was popularly described as the “emperor of all maladies,” then Dr. Shanta should be recognised as the empress of anti-imperialism. She raised and rallied human, technological, and financial resources to cancel cancer’s claim to tide over human’s destiny, he added.

Present were Governing body members, donors, well wishers, staff and students.

Dr V Shanta

(11 March 1927 – 19 January 2021)

Dr V Shanta devoted a lifetime in making quality cancer treatment accessible and affordable to patients in the country. Her single minded focus was visionary and comprehensive: study of the disease, research on its prevention and cure, spreading awareness about the disease including prevention, and nurturing specialists in various sub-specialties of oncology, even as making available the care for cancer to the maximum patients.

She was associated with Cancer Institute (WIA) since 1955, was Director of the Institute, between 1980 and 1997. From then till her end, she was Chairperson and its well known ambassador. She served as a member of several national and international committees on health and medicine, including the WHO’s Advisory Committee on Health.

Among the several awards she won are the Magsaysay Award, Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award given by the Government of India.

CANCER AWARENESS BUS FLAGGED OFF

Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma Subramanian flagged off cancer awareness bus at the Cancer Institute (WIA), in October 2021. The bus will travel to all districts and create awareness about cancer and dispel myths.

Speaking to the reporters after flagging off the bus in the presence of Health Secretary J Radhakrishnan and other officials, the Health Minister said, the bus will travel all over the State. Between April 15 and June 30, the bus toured Chengalpattu district where 62 programmes were conducted. The message reached more than 25,000 visitors comprising school/college students, hospital staff/patients, employees in offices/industries and other general public.

This bus with a message is making its foray into Kanchipuram district from August 1, 2022.



Dr Hemanthraj, Vice Chairman, Cancer Institute(WIA) explaining the exhibits to Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma Subramanian, Health Secretary J Radhakrishnan and other officials.

YOUTH HEALTH MELA-2021

The 6th Youth Health Mela 2021 was successfully conducted virtually in view of the COVID-19 restrictions. Cancer Institute (WIA) and HCL Foundation jointly organized 'Youth Health Mela 2021' to create awareness among school and college students about non-communicable diseases.

The programme consisted of various competitions including poetry writing, slogan writing, photography, short film, memes creation, piece it together (collage), poster designing, pencil shading, and pen it down. A total of 4,046 entries were received.

This event sought to offer students an insight into the importance of a healthy lifestyle and prevention of non-communicable diseases.

INTERNATIONAL NURSES' DAY

International Nurses Day is observed every year on May 12th, commemorating the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale "the Lady with the Lamp". World marks this day in recognition of the tireless and invaluable contribution of nurses to healthcare all across the globe.

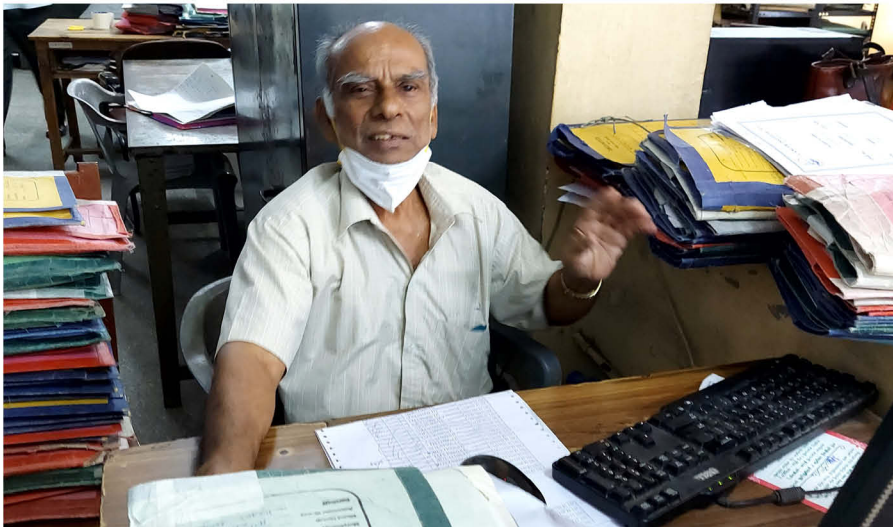
This year's Theme was, "Nurses: A

Voice to Lead – Invest in Nursing and respects rights to secure global health".

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of ensuring a sufficient number of the health workforce in building resilient health systems. At the Institute it was a celebration, with cultural programmes by our nurses.



Here not for a living, but for living



Imagine having a rich neighbour and fighting over small silly things! Imagine the police Jeep coming, being taken to the police station! How can one return to peaceful life after that? Ask S Kapilar and he would tell you!

Kapilar retired from Chennai Port Trust in 2001. He settled in his house at St Thomas Mount. But there was a problem: a quarrelsome neighbour. Things got so bad that one day a Police Jeep arrived and Kapilar was picked up. On the way, Kapilar's son got someone to intervene and get him released. His son came back with a form and told him, "Please fill this form and give me. Otherwise, I have no option but to move out of this house". That was a Volunteer application form from Cancer Institute(WIA).

At the interview, Dr Shanta, Chairman, asked him what skills he had? "Typing", he said. Dr Shanta directed him to Dr R Swaminathan, then head of Registry. The year was 2005. Since then, Kapilar has been an integral part of the case file storage and retrieval process. Initially, he used to type over 10 letters a day, to patients who failed to come on follow up and review visits. "Many were illiterate. So we will write to the nearby Police Station or Post Office, get them to pass on the message to the patients", he recalls.

Cancer Institute(WIA) has treated over 1,66,000 patients so far. The Registry

has over 15,000 active case files – larger than A4 size cardboard and calico

pouches. Between 9.30 am and 5.30 pm, when his son-in-law drops and picks him up, Kapilar manages to enter the receipt of some 300 incoming files every day. He is fast, and so focused on the task, he would barely look up for a photograph.

A quote on the importance/context of Kapilar's and the Dept's task

"Had I made money in my previous job, I would not have been as healthy as I am". But for his polio-affected right leg, he is hale and hearty. "I don't have any medicine, no tablet", he says. He has a Rs 25 K pension. "I am satisfied. I get good sleep every night", Kapilar continues in what sounds like a riddle: "I am here for living, not for a living". Then adds: "If you sit where Dr Shanta walked, you will not do any wrong, or trouble anyone"

"I have no worries. I feel fulfilled"



I landed 6 minutes before time. Yet, she was at the door, ready for a chat. Sr Janaki, part of Cancer Institute(WIA) for 61 years, until her retirement this January.

Though fully retired and under no obligation, Sr Janaki spends three hours starting 6 am looking at the Nurses' attendance, Covid compliance and the like. "As long as health permits, I want to be of help, says this active octogenarian with a sharp mind. Concur Sr Ruby, the Nurse in-charge."

Sr Janaki has always been hard working. Even now, she is so helpful".

Orphaned before she turned one, Janaki was taken care of by her elder brother who got her admitted in Avvai Home, Chennai. Mrs Muthulakshmi Reddy (founder of both Avvai Homes and Cancer Institute(WIA)) interviewed me, proudly recalls Sr Janaki. After her Std 8, she was shifted to Madras Seva Sadan and completed her SSLC. Then she joined Cancer Institute as a Nursing Assistant. That was in 1961, starting a

6 decade long career – a lifetime as an adult, serving in Cancer Institute. On the way she learned, got trained, climbed the ladders as Staff Nurse, Nursing Superintendent, Matron, and on her superannuation, as part-time Matron for a decade. “My seniors were affectionate to me. They guided me. They shaped my life”, says Sr Janaki self-effacingly.

The entire operations were at the Gandhinagar campus, untill, in 1986, the Dr Krishnamurthi campus came up close to IIT Madras. “We had two large huts with thatched roof, for around 30 patients. The general ward had 150 patients, including floor patients” (on the floor, between cots). Directors

rooms did not have AC. Former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister CN Annadurai was a resident patient, “a simple person”. PG courses were added in the 1970’s, producing many famous Doctors, in 14-strong batches every year.

Nurses came with low education, but were trained well. Staff nurses were few. Cycle was the main mode of transport. A few years back, BSc Nursing became minimum qualification for appointment. Today, lot of time is claimed by documentation. Lifestyles have changed. There is more variety in food, but those days, cooked for few, food was homely.

How is it living her entire life in the shadow of Cancer?, I ask her. Thanks to preventive oncology and better awareness, the fear factor is less, Sr Janaki points out. “Now we know that cancer can be cured even in stage 3”. Doctors also counsel patients. Then there is psycho oncology.

Doesn’t seeing suffering affect her?. “We learn to cope. When a patient says that she feels better, and no pain, that fills us with joy”, says Sr Janaki, her eyes wide.

If she gets another life, what would she wish for? Sr Janaki is clear: “I have no worries. I feel fulfilled. I want to live the same life. God and people have been good to me”.

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY 2022

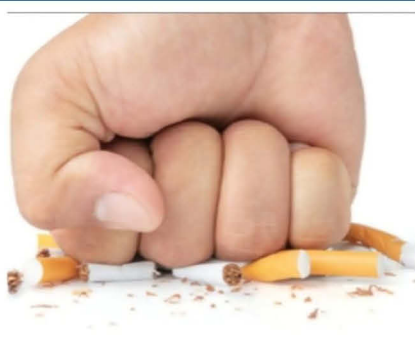
On 31st May, 2022, World No Tobacco Day, Cancer Institute(WIA) and HCL Foundation in association with the Department of Public Health& Preventive Medicines, Government of Tamil Nadu organized an E-Discussion on ‘Tobacco Free Tamil Nadu: Assisting Tobacco Quitters’. It was an virtual meet with over 200 participants comprising of members from Tobacco Free

Union Association, shop keepers, tobacco users, Head Community Organizers & Community Resource Persons (Self-help group women) and other NGO partners and volunteers.

“Tobacco: Threat to environment.”

The campaign aimed to raise awareness among the public about the negative environmental impacts of tobacco – from cultivation, production, distribution and waste.

World No Tobacco Day 2022



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