

# CSR TODAY

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## TIPPING POINTS

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# WHO launches bold push to raise health taxes and save millions of lives



**Rajesh Tiwari**  
Publisher  
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**The World Health Organization (WHO) is leading the 3 by 35 Initiative, a bold global effort to increase the real prices of any or all of three unhealthy products – tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks by at least 50% by 2035 through tax increases, while taking into account each country's unique context. This effort is expected to reduce consumption of harmful products while mobilizing an additional US\$ 1 trillion in public revenue globally over the next decade.**

**T**he World Health Organization (WHO) today has launched a major new initiative urging countries to raise real prices on tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks by at least 50% by 2035 through health taxes in a move designed to curb chronic diseases and generate critical public revenue.

The “3 by 35” Initiative comes at a time when health systems are under enormous strain from rising noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), shrinking development aid and growing public debt.

The consumption of tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks are fueling the NCD epidemic. NCDs, including heart disease, cancer, and diabetes, account for over 75% of all deaths worldwide. A recent report shows that a one-time 50% price increase on these products could prevent 50 million premature deaths over the next 50 years.

“Health taxes are one of the most efficient tools we have,” said Dr Jeremy Farrar, Assistant Director-General, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention and Control, WHO. “They cut the consumption of harmful products and create revenue governments can reinvest in health care, education, and social protection. It’s time to act.”

The Initiative has an ambitious but achievable goal of raising US\$1 trillion over the next 10 years. Between 2012 and 2022, nearly 140 countries raised tobacco taxes, which resulted in an increase of real prices by over 50% on average, showing that large-scale change is possible.

From Colombia to South Africa, governments that have introduced health taxes have seen reduced consumption and increased revenue. Yet many countries continue to provide tax incentives to unhealthy industries, including tobacco. Moreover, long-term investment agreements with industry that restrict tobacco tax increases can further undermine national health goals. WHO

encourages governments to review and avoid such exemptions to support effective tobacco control and protect public health.

Strong collaboration is at the heart of the “3 by 35” Initiative’s success. Led by WHO, the Initiative brings together a powerful group of global partners to help countries put health taxes into action. These organizations offer a mix of technical know-how, policy advice, and real-world experience. By working together, they aim to raise awareness about the benefits of health taxes and support efforts at the national level.

Many countries have expressed interest in transitioning toward more self-reliant, domestically funded health systems and are turning to WHO for guidance.

The “3 by 35” Initiative introduces key action areas to help countries, pairing proven health policies with best practices on implementation. These include direct support for country-led reforms with the following goals in mind:

## **1. Cutting harmful consumption by reducing affordability;**

Increase or introduce excise taxes on tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks to raise prices and reduce consumption, cutting future health costs and preventable deaths.

## **2. Raising revenue to fund health and development;**

Mobilize domestic public resources to fund essential health and development programmes, including universal health coverage.

## **3. Building broad political support across ministries, civil society, and academia;**

Strengthen multisectoral alliances by engaging ministries of finance and health, parliamentarians, civil society, and researchers to design and implement effective policies. 

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# CSR NEWS

## Masala King Dhananjay Datar gifts oxygen kits to patients of pulmonary diseases in Mumbai

The fatal COVID pandemic taught unforgettable lessons to the human race. Nowadays, it has become imperative to monitor a person's body temperature, blood pressure, blood sugar, heartbeat and more importantly the O<sub>2</sub> (Oxygen) level to check their health regularly. Timely supply of oxygen to patients suffering from pulmonary diseases is becoming vital. Thus, the world is realising the value of one breath.

Pratibha Prabhakar Pulmonary Rehabilitation Centre recently arranged an event in Goregaon to highlight the importance of healthy lifestyle and pure air for the patients of pulmonary diseases. Masala King Dhananjay Datar, a philanthropist and an ardent supporter of social welfare projects, attended the program and donated oxygen kits to 6 such patients who regularly need oxygen but can't afford the expenses. Each kit included an oxygen concentrator of 5 to 10 kg capacity to supply oxygen at home, a portable oxygen machine to supply oxygen for a few hours in travel or outside home and a Pulse Oximeter to check the oxygen saturation level in blood. Dhananjay Datar had given 8 such kits last year also.

Dhananjay Datar said, "My mother, in her last days, suffered from a pulmonary ailment and couldn't draw breath properly. I couldn't bear her pain and struggle. Even today, I feel restless when I see such patients who are in dire



**Masala King Dhananjay Datar, a philanthropist and an ardent supporter of social welfare projects, donated oxygen kits to needy patients at Pratibha Prabhakar Pulmonary Rehabilitation Centre at Goregaon on 19th July 2025. Seen here alongwith Dr. Prahlad Prabhudesai and his wife Mrs. Vaishali Prabhudesai, the founders of the centre.**

need of oxygen, but can't afford an oxygen supply instrument. During the COVID pandemic, many patients died without timely oxygen provision and some could not even reach the hospital in time due to unavailability of ambulance. We, therefore, financially supported a unique drive called 'Rickshaw Ambulance' where an auto-rickshaw can be equipped with an oxygen cylinder and can be utilised as an ambulance. Last year's donation was a small token of our help and this year, we continued it. We will endeavour to help many more such patients in future."

The program was co-ordinated by Dr. Poorvi Devani, who has a prolonged experience in treatment

and rehabilitation of patients of pulmonary diseases. She said that the patients of pulmonary diseases could live a normal and healthy life with positive thinking, correct treatment, discipline and regular exercise, along with counselling and rehabilitation.

Dr. Prahlad Prabhudesai and his wife Mrs. Vaishali Prabhudesai, the founders of Pratibha Prabhakar Pulmonary Rehabilitation Centre, acquainted the audience with the activities and social work of the centre. Dr. Prabhudesai said, "It is important to live a healthy life and for that everyone should understand the necessity of maintaining health, adopting right lifestyle and realising the value of a breath."



## Nagaland University launches new programme on Rural Development and Management

**N**agaland University, the only Central University in the north-eastern state of Nagaland, is launching a new Post Graduate (MA) program in Rural Development and Management aimed at building a cadre of professionals. They will be equipped to address the pressing challenges and opportunities in rural areas, especially in Nagaland and the North Eastern Region.

Graduates of this program will have strong career pathways in government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), academia, and entrepreneurship besides related sectors.

With over 70% of Nagaland's population residing in rural areas, the importance of planned rural transformation has never been more critical. These new programmes will offer students an in-depth understanding

of rural economy, governance, social dynamics, natural resource management, and the planning and execution of development schemes.

Being launched under the Department of Rural Development and Planning, the programme was approved in the 40th Academic Council meeting under the Chairmanship of Prof. Jagadish K Patnaik, Vice-Chancellor, Nagaland University. It will have a student intake of 20 students.

The applications will be open till 20th July 2025. The Entrance Test (PG) will be held on 28th July 2025 for non-CUET Candidates. Interested candidates can obtain further information from - [www.nagalanduniversity.ac.in](http://www.nagalanduniversity.ac.in)

Elaborating on the need for such programs for the development of the State, Prof. Jagadish K Patnaik, Vice-Chancellor, Nagaland University,

said, "This program is a significant step toward our commitment to fostering academic excellence and addressing the critical developmental needs of rural and tribal communities. By integrating theory with practical engagement, the course is designed to build a dedicated cadre of professionals and changemakers who can contribute meaningfully to rural development, governance, and sustainable livelihood initiatives in Nagaland and beyond."

Prof. Jagadish K Patnaik added, "I extend my best wishes to the faculty, students, and all stakeholders associated with this new initiative. Let this program become a cornerstone in shaping future leaders rooted in grassroots realities."

Further, Prof. Jayanta Choudhury, Head, Department of Rural Development and Planning, Nagaland University, said, "This

## IIT Guwahati Converts Local Bamboo into High-performance Automotive Materials

*Given its cost-effective and eco-friendly nature, the developed composite has potential applications in automobiles, furniture, electronics, and packaging industries*

The Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati have developed an eco-friendly composite material made of 'Bambusa tulda', a fast-growing bamboo species in NorthEast India, combined with biodegradable polymers.

Due to its properties such as, high strength, thermal stability, low moisture absorption and cost effectiveness, the developed composite is a suitable replacement of conventional plastics used in automotive interiors.

Led by Dr. Poonam Kumari, Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, the research not only addresses the problem of plastic waste, but also provides a solution to the growing global demand for greener materials, particularly in automotive manufacturing industries.

The findings of this research have been published in the prestigious journal, Environment, Development and Sustainability (Springer Nature), in a paper co-authored by Prof. Poonam Kumari, along with her research scholars Mr. Abir Saha and Mr. Nikhil Dilip Kulkarni from IIT Guwahati.

IIT Guwahati researchers tested four bamboo-based composite formulations consisting of Bambusa tulda

fibers reinforced with bio-based or petroleum-based epoxies. By treating the bamboo fibers with alkali, the team improved its compatibility with the base polymer resulting in enhanced durability for real-world



**Prof. Poonam Kumari**

use. The developed formulations were then evaluated on 17 different parameters to test their tensile strength, thermal resistance, impact durability, water absorption and cost per kilogram, among others.

While these formulations had distinct strength, none of them had all the properties to provide a balanced

and high performing option. To identify the same, the team used Multi-Criteria Decision-Making (MCDM), a structured evaluation method. The results observed bamboo composite made with bio-based epoxy FormuLite as the best performing option with low moisture absorption, significant thermal stability, and mechanical strength. The cost-effective nature of the composite, priced at Rs. 4300 per kilogram, makes it an eco-friendly solution for automotive parts, such as, vehicle dashboards, door panels and seat backs, among others.

Kumari said, "Developed composite can be used for designing components/parts in consumer electronics, automobiles, aerospace, sustainable building materials etc. The product will replace wood/iron/plastic components and will have similar cost and lead to fulfil SGD goals (7,8 and 9). This development is in line with Make in India policy under Green Tech Revolution."

The team is currently conducting a full life cycle assessment of the developed composite to measure its environmental impact from production to disposal. As the next step, the research team is planning to apply industrial techniques such as compression modelling and resin transfer to scale up the production.

# TIPPING POINTS

WINDOW TO AVOID IRREVERSIBLE CLIMATE IMPACTS IS RAPIDLY CLOSING

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In the midst of a record-breaking heatwave in Europe, the UK city of Exeter recently played host to the second international conference on “tipping points”.

Carbon Brief team **Cecilia Keating, Robert McSweeney** and **Ayesha Tandon** analyse the issue.

Scientists warn time is running out to prevent climate tipping points – but say social ‘positive tipping points’ could still shift the world onto a safer path.

*Image: UN Women Asia & the Pacific, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Flickr.*

he event was billed as a “call to action” to the “research community, policymakers and business to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of tipping points and to accelerate the required action”. As human activity drives global temperatures to record highs, multiple parts of the Earth system are at risk of being pushed beyond thresholds that would see them shift irreversibly into a new state.

The conference also focused heavily on “positive tipping points”, where large-scale, self-propelling social change can reduce the impact of humans on the climate.

Hosted jointly by the Global Systems Institute at the University of Exeter, the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and the Max Planck Institute of Geoanthropology, the conference was the second event dedicated to global tipping points, following the first in 2022.

A statement issued by conference convenors – and endorsed by hundreds of delegates – warned that the window for preventing tipping points is “rapidly closing”. It called for “immediate, unprecedented action from policymakers worldwide and especially from leaders” at the forthcoming COP30 climate talks in Brazil.

The meeting was part of a week-long Exeter Climate Forum, which also included a separate Climate Conference and a series of community and business-focused events.

In this article, Carbon Brief draws together some of the key talking points, new research and ideas that emerged from the four-day event.

### CLIMATE TIPPING POINTS

As he opened the conference, Prof Tim Lenton – director of the University of Exeter’s Global Systems Institute and one of three convenors of the event – introduced tipping points and set out the direction of the upcoming four days of talks.

He explained that tipping points are caused by “amplifying feedbacks” in a system becoming “self-

propelling”. He said these systems are “very hard to reverse and it could be quite abrupt”.

Lenton warned that since the last tipping points conference in 2022, global temperatures have risen, bringing many Earth system tipping points closer. However, he told the conference that not all tipping points are harmful, distinguishing between a “bad tipping point in the climate or a positive one in societies and technologies”.

Lenton told the conference that “there is a compelling case that we could accelerate out of trouble”, adding that we could “lift [many people] out of harm” by focusing on positive tipping points.

Prof Johan Rockström, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) and joint convenor of the conference, talked about the importance of considering planetary boundaries in tipping-point research. This framework sets out nine interlinked thresholds that would ensure a “safe operating space for humanity”.

Rockström told the conference that using this “whole Earth approach”



**If we can't get the governance to work right now, we have to think about other types of governance frameworks at the local level, community level, that start to create the feedback loop all the way back up to the international level.**

**–SANDRINE DIXSON-DECLÈVE**  
Co-president, Club of Rome



Cool Skills, Bright Future  
Batch, Guwahati

# ELANPRO LAUNCHES CSR PILOT PROGRAM TO TRAIN 100 SERVICE TECHNICIANS ACROSS INDIA

**S**triving to support social development and workforce empowerment, Elanpro, India's technology-oriented commercial refrigeration company,

announced the launch of the pilot phase of its CSR initiative – “Cool Skills, Bright Future”. Aligned with World Youth Skills Day 2025, the program aims to train 100 aspiring commercial refrigeration service

technicians, marking the company's first step toward building a stronger, more inclusive technical workforce.

The skill development program is designed to bridge the talent gap in the sector by offering a



Scientists warn that if current trends in sea level rise continue, more than 45 per cent of the Delta could be submerged within decades, displacing millions and jeopardising Vietnam's food security. Image: Asian Development Bank, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Flickr.

# THE MEKONG DELTA'S CLIMATE DEFENCES ARE FAILING

Infrastructure projects to keep out seawater in southern Vietnam have been plagued by failures. Experts say the country must shift from hard fixes to nature-based solutions, writes **Nhung Nguyen**, Dialogue Earth



Hot and dry weather is currently threatening wheat crops in parts of China, the world's largest wheat producer. Image: ICARDA - Science for Resilient Livelihoods in Dry, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Flickr.

# GLOBAL WHEAT YIELDS WOULD BE 10 PER CENT HIGHER WITHOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

Global yields of wheat are around 10 per cent lower now than they would have been without the influence of climate change, according to a new study. **Orla Dwyer**, Carbon Brief, elaborates on the report.



A key planetary boundary has been crossed as rising CO<sub>2</sub> drives ocean acidification past safe levels, imperilling marine species.

*Image: Kristin Hoel, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Unsplash.*

# OCEAN ACIDIFICATION HAS EXCEEDED SAFE PLANETARY LIMITS, STUDY FINDS

Researchers warn that four major ocean basins have crossed the acidification threshold, shrinking critical habitats for marine life, writes **Bobby Bascomb**



Small island states are especially susceptible to climate impacts such as flooding. They are also driving legal battles to force action against climate change. Image: ILO Asia-Pacific, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Flickr.

# ONE YEAR ON: IMPACTS OF A LANDMARK LEGAL OPINION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

An international court's opinion that greenhouse gases are an ocean pollutant is already being used in the fight against climate change, writes **Isabella Kaminski**