

Maldives prohibits smoking for younger generations

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: The Maldives has introduced a smoking ban for people born on or after January 1, 2007, making it the first country with a generational tobacco prohibition.

The law, effective from November 1, prohibits those under the age limit from buying or selling tobacco products in the Indian Ocean nation.

The country's health ministry hailed the move as a "historic milestone" in its efforts to protect public health.

The new law aims to create a tobacco-free generation, with violators facing fines of 50,000 rufiyaa (£2,465) for selling tobacco to minors and 5,000 rufiyaa (£246) for using vape devices. Retailers are also required to verify the age of customers before making a sale.

The ban applies to both locals and visitors to the Maldives, a popular tourist destination. Ahmed Afaal, vice chair of the Maldives' tobacco

control board, stated that the ban would not harm tourism, noting that visitors come for the beaches, sea, and fresh air, not to smoke.

The new regulation follows the country's 2024 ban on the import and sale of e-cigarettes and vaping products. The move aligns with global efforts to address the tobacco epidemic, according to the World Health Organization.

A similar ban in New Zealand was reversed in 2023 after a change in government.

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