

## Ban gutka, health min urges states

Union health minister Harsh Vardhan has urged all states and Union Territories to ban the sale of non-smoking tobacco products and spitting in public places to prevent the spread of Covid-19 infection. **P9**

# 'Ban spitting in public, smokeless tobacco sale'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Health Minister Harsh Vardhan has urged all states and Union Territories to ban sale of non-smoking tobacco products and spitting in public places to prevent the spread of coronavirus infection.

Raising concerns about potential risk of spreading coronavirus through users of tobacco products, Vardhan said smokeless tobacco users have a tendency to spit in public places, which increases health risks especially spreading contagious diseases like

Covid-19, tuberculosis, swine flu, encephalitis and others.

"Use of smokeless tobacco also creates an unhygienic environment which further spreads the diseases. Large gathering at the retail outlets where smokeless tobacco products are sold, also pose the risk of spread of Covid-19,"

he said in a letter to states.

Chewing tobacco products and areca nut increases production of saliva followed by a very strong urge to spit. Spitting in public places could enhance the spread of the Covid-19, Vardhan said.

