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Khaini could be next on ban wagon [Shuchismita Chakraborty](#) Jun 08, 2018

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Patna: If all goes well, the Bihar government might ban *khaini*, another major step by the government after it went for complete prohibition around two years ago (on April 5 , 2016).

The state government is soon going to send a letter to the Centre, urging it to notify *khaini* as a food product. If this happens, *khaini* would automatically be banned in the state and even nationwide.

"According to Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) Act, any food product which has presence of tobacco and nicotine in it, has to be banned but *khaini* is not a food product, as per the food products list of the FSSAI. We are soon going to write to the Centre, urging it to notify *khaini* as a food product so that it can be banned in the state," principal secretary, health, Sanjay Kumar, told **The Telegraph** on Thursday.

Health experts have time and again raised their voices for banning *khaini*, which is basically processed tobacco because of its ill impact on one's health and society. Health

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experts have been demanding a ban on khaini even more after the government banned consumption of liquor.

According to Global Adults Tobacco (GATS-2) Survey, of 25.9 per cent tobacco users in the state, 23.5 per cent is related to smokeless tobacco and of this 20.4 per cent are *khaini* consumers alone.

Sources said that though there has been an overall dip in tobacco consumption in the state, from 53.5 per cent to 25.9 per cent, in the past seven years, the number of *khaini* consumers continues to be worrying for health experts.

The Telegraph had highlighted expert's demand for a ban on *khaini* in a report published on April 19, 2016.

Sources said that the health department's move to initiate steps towards banning *khaini* comes after the non-government organisation Socio Economic and Educational Development Society (SEEDS), which is working with the state government in its tobacco control programme, gave a letter to the health department to take action for banning khaini in the state as it had taken a toll on people's health in the state.

SEEDS executive director Deepak Mishra said that: "Chewing gum is already notified as a food product as per FSSAI list. *Khaini*, or processed tobacco, which has worse impact than bubble-gum, too, should be banned. In Bihar, among all types of cancer, 40 per cent cancer cases are linked to tobacco consumption while 80 per cent of cancer cases are oral cases. Bihar has literally become the oral cancer capital of India. Khaini consumption is one of the reasons behind oral cancer cases as many are addicted to it," Mishra said.

He said Bihar government's intention to ban *khaini* might become a reality soon. "Today, the Union health ministry held the first meeting of its nasha-mukti abhiyan (tobacco control campaign) in which I pitched for including khaini in the food list. If this happens, it would be a great achievement," Mishra said.

Just last month, the food safety wing of the health department issued a notification banning manufacture, sale, storage, distribution and display of *gutkha* and pan masala (with tobacco and nicotine) for one year, effective from May 21.