

At British-American Tobacco's annual general meeting in London earlier this summer a group of young people demonstrate about a range of issues including about tobacco marketing aimed at youngsters and the use of child labour in tobacco fields.

In much of the rich world smoking is on the wane in the face of rising taxes on cigarettes, bans on promotion and lawsuits against tobacco companies. Less than 21% of British people and 24% of Americans now smoke, the lowest rates on record.

But elsewhere smoking is exploding. Tobacco companies produce more than 5 trillion cigarettes a year, enough for 830 fags for every person on earth. In India 195 million people smoke or chew tobacco and there are nearly a million tobacco-related deaths a year. And in China more than 300 million people smoke, that's equivalent to the entire population of the US, and one third of the world's smokers.

The World Health Organisation predicts that tobacco will kill more than 8 million people worldwide each year by 2030, with 80% of these premature deaths in low- and middle-income countries.

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