

Liquor-free India is on top of Medha Patkar's agenda

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Activist Medha Patkar, who became a persona non-grata in Gujarat for spearheading the Narmada Bachao Andolan against the state's ambitious Sardar Sarovar Project over resettlement of project affected families, was once again in Gandhinagar on Monday after a long

hiatus. This time she has decided to take up the cause of making India a liquor-free country and what better way to start her campaign from Gujarat.

Interacting with 150 students of the IIT, Gandhinagar, she stressed on stronger implementation of current prohibition laws and the need to subdue the bootlegging mafia in Gujarat. Patkar and her team were in the city as part of their march which aims to draw attention to the bane of liquor-related

ANJELA JAMINDAR



Medha Patkar at IIT Gn

social injustices.

Patkar said the root cause of societal problems such as domestic violence and criminal activities was linked to some kind of addiction and it is only by completely banning alcohol that the youth of the country could be saved.

Speaking of liquor tax fuelling the economies of states, she urged, "Stop running governments with sin money." She further went on to say that when states took taxes from production and consumption

of alcohol, they lost the moral right to chastise addicts.

Invoking Mahatma Gandhi and Dr B R Ambedkar, she said these men were strongly against addiction and vehemently spoke on these subjects. Speaking of Alpesh Thakor, the OBC leader fighting against bootlegging and spurious liquor trade, she said had liquor prohibition solved the problems in the state, Thakor would have felt no need to start his movement.