



Tobacco Industry Interference (TII) Monitoring Report

August 2023

Report Prepared
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August 2023, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Prepared by: WBB trust

Supported by: The Union

Summary:

A total 07 industry interferences were reported in August, 2023. Notable among these we identified that, Battle of Minds, the flagship business case competition platform of Bangladesh to foster the development of next-generation business leaders, has concluded its 20th iteration on August 24, 2023. The coveted championship title was secured by 'Team Khichuri' from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Dhaka University.

With the technical assistance of the Union, WBB Trust has collected all the information and prepared a brief report about the interferences done by the tobacco companies.

Date	News and source	Evidence
TII on CSR		
06 August 2023	<p>A workshop titled 'Workshop with Health Professionals on the Present Situation of Tobacco Cessation: Challenges and Way Forward' was held at Meghna Hall of the BIAM Foundation in the capital. Bangladesh Blind Mission (BBM), an NGO working on health, education, and disability issues, organized the event as part of involving physicians in an anti-tobacco campaign aimed at making the country tobacco-free by 2040. About 23 doctors from across the country took part in the workshop.</p> <p>Link</p>	<p>আমাদের মুক্ত দেশে ট্যাকো-বিনামূল্যে স্বাস্থ্যকর্মীদের অংশগ্রহণের মাধ্যমে</p> <p>06-08-2023 02:03 pm</p> <p>বাংলা</p> 
24 August 2023	<p>Battle of Minds, the flagship business case competition platform of Bangladesh to foster the development of next-generation business leaders, has concluded its 20th iteration on August 24, 2023. The coveted championship title was secured by 'Team Khichuri' from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Dhaka University. BAT Bangladesh's 'Battle of Minds' stands as a revered platform that empowers participants to explore their capabilities, transcend limitations, and embrace challenges with</p>	



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TII on Misliding		
07 August 2023	<p>Several private development organizations (NGOs) are demanding to have vaping banned by law in the country. A recent amendment to the Smoking and Tobacco Use (Control) Act 2005 (as amended in 2013) included a ban on vaping. Concerned say this will expand the illegal vaping market, causing the government to lose revenue. But a recent study by the UK Health Security Agency revealed that vaping is 95 percent less harmful than conventional cigarettes. Working on this research, the UK and New Zealand have been able to reduce smoking. Hence, there have been allegations that the demand to ban vaping has been raised with "fabricated" information without specific research. At the same time, doctors are also giving their opinions in favor of vaping. They say, "Addicted people cannot suddenly give up the habit." It is healthy to quit addiction with "quitting tools." Tobacco is not present in vaping. Vaping does not contain tar, as it is not burned at the same time. Due to this, it is less harmful than conventional cigarettes.</p> <p>Link Link</p>	
09 August 2023	<p>The Tholos Foundation, a research and policy organization, recommends the use of tobacco harm reduction products, including vaping, to reduce tobacco-related deaths. In April, the Tholos Foundation released a report titled 'Vaping and Tobacco Harm Reduction: Ways to Save Millions of Lives' to dispel misconceptions about vaping, a relatively safe alternative, and provide a clearer picture of tobacco harm reduction. This information guide can be of great help to public health experts and policymakers in Bangladesh.</p> <p>Link</p>	

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<p>18 August 2023</p>	<p>The National Board of Revenue (NBR) reported robust 15.68 percent year-on-year (YOY) growth in value-added tax (VAT) collections, despite persistent pressures on key economic indicators such as inflation. The fiscal year closed with near double-digit inflation rates at 9.95 percent. Cigarette manufacturers topped product contributions, injecting Tk. 328.18 billion into the national exchequer, a substantial increase from the previous fiscal year. Mobile network operators followed with a Tk. 94.38 billion contribution, marking an 11 percent YoY growth.</p> <p>Link</p>	
<p>TII on Others</p>		
<p>04 August 2023</p>	<p>In Chattogram, several tobacco companies, including Abul Khair Group, have been accused of disobeying the Smoking and Tobacco Control Act and promoting tobacco products through leaflets, handbills, posters, printed papers, billboards, and signboards. To increase sales, temporary shops are being set up in various populated areas, including markets and even near schools and colleges. Due to the advertising of tobacco products in these shops, minors are also getting addicted to smoking. Among these tobacco companies are British American Tobacco Company (BATC) and Abul Khair Group. Most of the shops have also displayed leaflets advertising tempting offers along with the campaign through dummy showcases. Which is against Section 5(g) of the Tobacco Control Act.</p> <p>Link</p>	 <p>চট্টগ্রামে কৌশলে চলছে সিগারেটের প্রচার ও প্রকাশ্যে বিক্রি!</p>
<p>05 August 2023</p>	<p>The Large Taxpayer Unit (LTU-VAT) has waived the claim of British America Tobacco (BAT) to the tune of 2054 crores of Tk. Such a huge revenue waiver has never happened before. The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has already set up a high-powered inquiry committee to review whether the supplementary duty and VAT (value added tax) waivers of BAT have been waived in due legal process.</p>	

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