

Report on Assessment Study

How to best change tobacco control policies in Bangladesh

Report submitted to



Campaign for Tobacco Free-Kids

Submitted by



Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)

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Table of content

Executive Summery	4
Methodology	4
Overview	6
<i>Industry's strategy</i>	6
<i>CSR – way of accessing top people</i>	7
<i>Local tobacco companies' strategy</i>	7
<i>Weak anti-tobacco lobby, strong sentiment</i>	7
<i>Influencing administration</i>	8
<i>Dichotomy</i>	9
<i>Media</i>	9
<i>Different ministry stances</i>	10
<i>Budget impact</i>	10
<i>Smokescreen</i>	10
<i>Passivity of anti-tobacco axis</i>	11
<i>SWOT</i>	11
Communication strategy	12
Comments	13
Annex-1 Report on Coverage on Tobacco issues in Bangladesh News Media	14-19
Annex-2 Report on Interviewing Law Makers/member of the parliament	20-24
Annex-3 Report on the findings of the interviewing Anti Tobacco organizations	25-30
Annex-4 Report on the findings of the interviewing Citizens/ Mass people	31-34
Annex-5 Report on Interviewing Tobacco workers	35-37
Annex-6 Report on Interviewing Tobacco farmers	37-39
Annex-7 Report on Interviewing of representatives of tobacco producer	40-41
Annex-8 Report on Interviewing media Gatekeepers	42-45
Annex-9 Report on interviewing journalist/reporters	46-49
Annex-10 Specific mappings of member of the parliamentarians who submitted petition to NBR	50-55
Annex-11 Policy Makers/ Law Makers/influential versions taken from print media	56-60

Executive summary

Use of tobacco is proliferating in Bangladesh with virtually little check. Although it is widely believed by the policymakers and users that tobacco is injurious to health, yet hardly any effective policy measures are evident to control its use. On one hand, the tobacco lobby is strong with the industries having money power and thereby control over politicians in contrast with the anti-tobacco group. The tobacco lobby can easily get support from the politicians and get policies fixed according to its needs. But the anti-tobacco lobby/movement/campaign are yet to achieve its desired goal. In this context, the tobacco industries are increasingly extending farming and business and are even going for big time export. All these activities can be effectively countered and for that a better coordinated communication strategy is needed.

In order to develop such a strategy MRDI conducted a political mapping involving different stakeholders. Before going for the mapping study, key policy actors were identified through a literature review, key informant interview and focus group discussions.

Methodologies applied for the mapping included questionnaire survey involving law makers, NGO representatives, general people, tobacco factory workers, farmers, tobacco product manufacturers, media gatekeepers, and reporters; analysis of newspaper and TV contents, and in-depth interview of top level policy makers. An outline of a communication strategy has also been suggested in this report.

Some major comments and findings of the study:

- We need to activate MPs as they think tobacco policy is not being implemented.
- Civil society activation is needed to build awareness on tobacco's bad effect
- Scopes for working with implementing agencies as tobacco law needs implementation
- Alternative crop search and information generation on the alternative crops are needed
- Position papers need to be prepared on tobacco cultivation
- BAT interacts with media every year. This needs to be countered
- More campaign needed during budget as most news come out then
- Local newspapers lack anti-tobacco analysts so they can be served with ready features
- More interaction needed with media, specially local journalists
- Tobacco companies CSR activities need to be critically reviewed
- Lobby for local tax on tobacco needed
- Farmers' profit should be further probed and published
- Advocacy with doctors needed
- School/ college campaign

Methodology

Key Policy Factor Identification: To understand policy factors in anti tobacco movement, the MRDI team interviewed 25 persons belonging to five equal-number groups identified as Key Policy Actors (KPA). These groups represent external actors, political parties, pressure groups, media gatekeepers and government officials.

The in-depth interviews of the key policy actors were taken for identifying political factors hindering the anti- tobacco campaigns. In the beginning, a literature search along with 10 key informant interviews (KII) and two FGDs (one with BI partners and one with media

gatekeepers) were done to identify the KPAs of Government, Parliament and non-governmental sectors. Out of a long list of 218 persons 40 were short listed.

Political Mapping:

The following tools have been applied for political mapping –

Questionnaire survey: Conducted questionnaire survey among the law makers, anti-tobacco organizations, mass people, tobacco producer, tobacco farmers, donors who funded for anti-tobacco campaign, media gatekeepers, and reporters.

The Survey covered

- **34 Law makers from different constituencies** - many of whom are involved with parliamentary committees on public health, home, agriculture, law and justice, environment. Some of them represent major tobacco cultivation areas. The purpose of these interviews was to understand their willingness, capacity and barriers to reform or implement the existing anti tobacco policy.
- **8 Representatives from NGOs** - involved with the anti tobacco movement working in various districts of the country including the tobacco cultivation areas and also the media. The main donors of these eight NGOs are: Bloomberg Initiatives, The Union, Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, International Development Research Centre and Health Bridge.
- **31 Mass people (smokers/non smokers)** - general people, including two women, of Manikganj, Rangpur and mainly from Dhaka.
- **20 workers of tobacco/bidi processing factory** – who work at different bidi factories, including 11 women
- **6 farmers** - tobacco farmers from Manikganj, Bandarban, Rangpur and Kustia.
- **2 producers** - interviewed two representatives of bidi manufacturing companies that are in operation from 1968 and 1971. The MRDI had contacted British American Tobacco, Dhaka Tobacco and Nasir Tobacco -- which are the main producers of cigarettes in the country -- but they did not respond.
- **17 reporters** – reporters of different national dailies, private television channels and news agencies interviewed. The reporters were special correspondents, senior reporters, staff correspondents, a district bureau chief and some district correspondents from areas where tobacco cultivation is more prevalent.
- **15 gatekeepers** - interviewed 15 gatekeepers of different national and regional dailies, two television channels and one online news media.
- **Donor Agencies** who fund campaign, advocacy and communication for TC in Bangladesh – Could not reach

Media Content Analysis-

The Period monitored - Financial Year 2008-09 and 2009-10.

The two FYs selected as sample for media scanning to monitor any efforts taken by media that influence government policy since two budgets have been announced during the period by the government. The newspaper and TV channels were selected on the basis of their circulation, viewership and coverage patterns.

Content Analysis – Newspaper: Monitored 10 national dailies – Seven Bangla and two English Daily.

The newspaper under study include: The Daily prothom Alo, Jugantor, Samakal, Ittefaq, Bhorer Kagoj, Naya Diganta, Janakantho, The Daily Star, New Age, Financial Express.

Pages and items scans – The team scanned all general pages except the sports and international pages. Besides that, the special page on women, health, children and culture were also monitored. The Editorials for the sample newspaper were scanned for tobacco issues to measure to what extent tobacco issues were prioritized.

Content Analysis – TV Channels: Monitored the prime time bulletin over four Television channels.

The TV Channels are – The State-run BTV and the private satellite channels ATN Bangla, Channel i and NTV.

Bulletin and Items scanned – The Bulletin monitored were prime time for four TV Channels. The entire duration of the bulletin was scanned.

In-depth interview – The team conducted in-depth interview with the Agriculture Minister, Law Minister, Chariman of National Board of Revenue. The team also assigned reporters to find politics in tobacco cultivation area i.e. Kushtia, Rangpur and Bandarban.

Overview

Tobacco is possibly the cheapest in Bangladesh with three sticks of hand-rolled cigarette (bidi) selling for as little as 1 cent. The price of tobacco has hardly increased in the last one decade or so with the bidi prices remaining almost static. This only means tobacco for the lower income group, the largest class in Bangladesh, has become cheaper. The lower income group has no health care coverage and sickness is one major reason for their sliding into deep pocket of poverty. Smoking among this class is also rising fast.

Despite these facts, every year when the time comes for the new national budget a curious thing happens. A number of lawmakers sign up a petition pleading for not increasing tax on bidi. Their common argument: if bidi tax is increased thousands and lakhs of workers will lose jobs. Even this year it has happened when some 90 lawmakers signed such a petition (Annex-10). The result was visible in the budget – bidi remained out of new tax hikes.

During the same time, another curious thing happens. The largest cigarette manufacturer of the country, British American Tobacco, approaches newspapers with data and briefs to plant stories about how bad bidi is and for how long bidi tax has not increased.

While the first case clearly shows the political clout enjoyed by the tobacco industry the second example reflects the dialectic relationship prevailing among the tobacco product users.

But at the same time, some civil society groups exist which are vocal against tobacco and they invariably lobby for tax increase.

Industry's strategy

Tobacco is an intensely fought issue in Bangladesh. The industry is very active in defending and outreaching its activities at different levels. BAT being the largest cigarette

producer has deep penetration in the society and among the farmers. It pins its strategy on a few factors. The company has clearly identified the areas of concern for its business and marshaled its strategy accordingly.

First it wants to project itself as the largest tax payer and propagates that any increase in tax or any step that would cut its business would be disastrous for the government's revenue collection.

CSR – way of accessing top people

Its other strategy is to promote the company as a chief patron of corporate social responsibility (CSR) to both confuse people as to its ultimate trade in poison product and also to loop in favourable social groups who can influence policymaking. Its other objective is to promote itself as an environment friendly organisation which is very concerned with the greenery and so on. This strategy is actually a very well-thought out camouflage campaign by which it counteracts all the things that it does wrong with. So when it actually destroys forests by chopping trees to feed the ovens for tobacco curing, it projects itself as the greatest champion for greens. And it successfully gets the chief conservator of forest on its plantation events. This is also a strategy to counter media criticism that BAT is responsible for widespread forest destruction in the Chittagong Hill Tracts where it has gone for massive tobacco cultivation. But then again it promotes its brand awareness among the young generation who are their prospective smokers and future decision makers by sponsoring events like the one held at the North South University on business innovations by the students through a programme called “Battle of Minds”.

Local tobacco companies' strategy

Against such sophisticated strategies, the local cigarette companies maintain a low-key. They basically depend on an interpersonal level of communication with the policymakers and try to influence policies.

Both these local companies and the bidi manufacturers also have a lot of financial muscle which they use in various ways including in elections to decide who to get elected. The endorsement by lawmakers for the bidi companies is a testimony to this.

The non-smoking tobacco manufacturers also depend on their interpersonal contact with local lawmakers. And their business is promoted as a ‘way of life’ thing without which the traditional life would not go on.

Weak anti-tobacco lobby, strong sentiment

While the tobacco lobby has the huge financial and connection power, the voice of the anti-tobacco lobby is being barely heard.

Probably the first of the pressure on the tobacco industry came in 1999 when anti-tobacco organizations along with a lawyer filed a petition against advertisement campaign on the journey of Voice of Discovery, a yacht that was going around the world under John Player's sponsorship. Subsequently, the court stopped the yacht's entry into Bangladesh waters and also stopped advertisements on the journey and instructed the government to take steps to stop smoking in public places.

It was then that a move was taken to formulate and pass the Smoking and using of the Tobacco Products (Control) Act, 2005.

Drafting of the law was an interesting play of power by different lobbies. The tobacco companies successfully managed to get their representatives into the drafting committee. Not only that they also tried to block inclusion of anti-tobacco organization. It was the support of the World Health Organisation which ultimately paved the way for inclusion of anti-tobacco organizations.

When these actions were being taken, it was found that there was a very positive mindset in the government about tobacco control. This was evident in the fact that when the FCTC was done, Bangladesh was the first signatory to it. Bangladesh also ratified the convention in 2004 and the health ministry took initiatives to formulate a law to control tobacco use.

So up to this stage, the health ministry took a very positive stance on anti-tobacco campaign. However, when the law was passed, it was found to have deviated from the FCTC requirements, which once again proved that the tobacco lobby was successful in leveraging their views.

For example, the tobacco lobby could include in the law provision for separate smoking zones in public places against the FCTC requirement.

They successfully fought the requirement for total ban in tobacco advertisement. Although advertisement in media or through billboards was banned, the tobacco companies could brand their point of sales. As a result these point of sales have become colourful advertisement displays.

The tobacco industry also managed to partially skirt the requirement for putting health warning on tobacco packets. Provision for programme sponsoring is another weakness imbedded in the law.

So it is evident that the tobacco industry found a big political support by being in the law drafting committee and then by manipulating the draft.

The political influence was even clearer when the cabinet had sent back the draft five times for changes. However, the health ministry played a positive role all through.

Influencing administration

The tobacco companies try to influence the administration through their various activities on special days. They also help financially the observation of national occasions as well as local events.

For example, the BAT funds holding of tree festival every year in Bandarban and other places where it has significant presence. Other tobacco companies is also following suit.

BAT also distributes saplings at gratis among the important people including politicians and government officials of Bandarban. The headmen of locals indigenous groups are also regularly given gifts.

Dichotomy

On several counts, the government has pronounced that it wants to put a check on tobacco use and has labeled tobacco as injurious to health. The health minister in the Prothom Alo roundtable on tobacco organized by the MRDI also made it clear that his ministry wants tobacco tax to go up and use the money for treatment of cancer patients. However, it looks quite a contrast when it is found that the government owns at least 35 percent share of British American Tobacco (BAT), the biggest tobacco producer. The government has divested its shares in many an enterprise but not BAT. It is apparent that when the government itself owns a tobacco industry, it cannot take a strong stance on the issue.

Media

The tobacco industry once had a strong clout over the media because it was the biggest advertiser. As a result few anti-tobacco stories or articles used to come out in the media. (Annex-1) In fact, the media were rather supportive of the tobacco industry as is obvious in the labour crisis incident of the BAT (then BTC) in the 1990s.

But eventually as advertisement was banned, the media became free to criticize. Today none of the media is found to have any policy support for the tobacco industry. Rather, media are found to be highly critical. However, it is found that a few pro-tobacco stories crop up in newspapers and the reason is mainly personal contact with the journalists by the tobacco industry.

The tobacco industry, mainly the BAT, has periodic interactions with the media through dinners and parties. Journalists commented that this kind of media relations does not have any impact on content. However, in reality pro-active role of the media is not seen against tobacco. This clearly signifies the value of communication by the anti-tobacco lobby.

Tritiomatra of Channel-i played a dicey role when it hosted a talk show on tobacco. A pro-tobacco lawmaker from the tobacco growing area Fazle Rabbi, a bidi labour leader and a member of Cigaretter Biruddhey Samamona Jote were present in it and they all propagated the idea that tax on bidi should be kept low.

A quick review of media reports on statements given by various top policymakers and stakeholders on tobacco reveal a clear divide in their stances regarding tobacco. Their positions are very contradictory. It is also found that the local bidi lobby has a lot of influence on the policymakers with the appeal that bidi industry employs poor labourers and any step against the bidi industry would be counterproductive for the economy and the livelihood of the workers.

Quite a good number of policymakers including the prime minister and the industries minister have taken a strong position to promote the local bidi industry. Their statements have appeared on the eve of placement of budget in parliament. Subsequently, the tax proposals reflect that the bidi lobby was successful in containing any rise in tax.

Media role

Media apparently play a strong role regarding policy decisions on tobacco. This is reflected in the fact that both the anti- and pro-tobacco lobbies extensively use the media before the budget to push their causes. In a democracy views reflected in the media are naturally taken into cognizance while formulating policies.

While the anti-tobacco lobby held a number of press conferences and roundtables, the tobacco lobby hit back with statements of lawmakers. The tobacco industry, specially the local bidi industry, employed another tactics of taking their workers to street demonstration against any tax raise. In the midst of this tug of war, the finance ministry found a middle path of slightly increasing tax on cigarette leaving bidi untouched.

None of the lobbies actually received any sizeable or important coverage by the media. These activities were passively covered and put in the inside pages and never on front pages. Actually, the media never took it on themselves to set agenda for any of the sides and rather played on with the campaigns of the lobbies. A very few opinion pieces appeared that actually sided with either of the lobbies.

Different ministry stances

It is evident through empirical evidences and from interviews with key respondents and other stakeholders that the ministries of finance, industries, commerce and agriculture hold a pro-tobacco sentiment.

The finance ministry's main concern is the loss of revenue if tobacco industry is harmed. This is the major reason why tax is not increased. However it is also evident that that finance does not take into account the money it can save in terms of health budget if tobacco use is reduced.

The industry ministry also takes a narrow view of boosting industrial output irrespective of the nature of output. The Commerce ministry also follows suit.

The agriculture ministry suffers from a double mind when it concerns tobacco. On one hand, it is driven by the seer desire to increase farmers' income no matter by what means. On the other, it is also concerned by the fact that agriculture land is being lost due to tobacco farming. It needs strong support to be on the track to oppose tobacco farming.

Budget impact

The interpersonal communication and money power of the bidi industry seem to work well as reflected in this year's budget with no tax increase proposed. Rather it has been helped by the proposal of allowing the bidi industry to packet bidis in smaller numbers of 12 and 8 sticks. This would make bidis more easily available with the poor.

In case of cigarette, although the supplementary duty has increased by 2-3 percent, the slab of the lowest priced cigarette has been increased from Tk 8. 40 a pack to Tk 11.

Smokescreen

The bidi lobby often creates smokescreen organizations to advance their agenda. For example, a new group has emerged this year before the budget in the name of Cigaretter Biruddhey Samamona Goshthi (Like-minded group against cigarette). The people in the group have no track record of working against tobacco. They are also not known to the other anti-tobacco lobbyists. This group also demanded things that the bidi manufacturers have been pressing for. For example they said cigarette price should be hiked while bidi should be kept low because it is a local product.

Passivity of anti-tobacco axis

It was observed that the anti-tobacco groups maintain a passive presence and are more segregated in their activities as most of the programs are project based with very little scope for continuation. Also, the efforts are focused particularly on certain areas.

A few donors like The Union, The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and WHO (as partners of the Bloomberg Global Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use fund most of the anti-tobacco activities of local NGOs. But when the donors were contacted to get their views for the political mapping, some of them did not respond.

We interview nine NGOs involved in anti-tobacco campaign and advocacy activities. They are: Young Power in Social Action (YPSA), Chittagong; Action in Development (AID), Jhenaidah; Association for Community Development (ACD), Rajshahi; SHIMANTIK, Sylhet; Alliance for Cooperation & Legal Aid Bangladesh (ACLAB), National Anti-Tuberculosis Association of Bangladesh (NATAB), UBINIG, Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB) Trust and PROGGA, Dhaka.

These NGOs has successes by creating smoke-free public areas under some municipalities and public transports, awareness through media, helping mobile courts, anti tobacco cultivation movement and helping the government frame the anti tobacco law and raise awareness in favour of increasing tobacco tax. Their movement are new compared to the tobacco business and insufficient in a largely populated country like Bangladesh. However, they do not have any strategy to counter the tobacco industry's strategy.

SWOT

Some clear SWOT grids appear from the discussion of the media lobbies and their communication methods.

On the strength window, it can be found that the generally accepted notion that tobacco, specially smoking, is bad has a lot of potential to be fully utilized to advance the cause of anti-tobacco campaign. A large number of lawmakers and policymakers believe that tobacco is harmful and some of them are active in propagating this idea through actions. The doctors and media professionals are also convinced that tobacco should be discouraged.

However, on the weakness window, there appears a number fissures such as project depended anti-tobacco groups, a lack of serious research and activism on the tobacco's harmful effects on economy and agriculture.

In the threat window, we find that the tobacco industry has a lot of money and influence on the local politicians. These politicians are capable of influencing the policymakers.

In the opportunity window, it is observed that a lot of scope to work with tobacco issues remain as little has been done so far. Even with such little campaign, the general understanding about tobacco is quite clear and against tobacco. A number of policymakers are giving their full support behind the cause against tobacco. This can be easily played on to create a strong anti-tobacco campaign.

Communication strategy

The outcome of the interviews and media analysis show the need for more active and decisive communication across various channels and levels to raise awareness about the harmful impact of tobacco. The level of communication that is being done right now is too inadequate to leave any lasting impression on the mind. In fact, the tobacco industry employs better communication tools to create a favourable impression.

It was evident from interviews of the lawmakers that although they large believe that tobacco is harmful for health, yet many of them are hesitant to ban its farming or the industry. For them the main concern is the loss of job and revenue earning of the government. A large number of them are even not sure about tobacco impact on economy. This shows that this important constituents in the fight against tobacco needs to be better communicated with. The civil society has to be activated to make awareness on harmful impacts of tobacco. A platform for the lawmakers should be created from where they talk on tobacco issues.

There was a wide consent among the people interviewed that the tobacco law is not being implemented in its entirety. Even the lawmakers think so. This leaves a scope to work with the wider spectrum of stakeholders to make the implementing agencies apply the law more earnestly. This needs communication activities.

Farmer-level communication is also important in which the agriculture department and other agriculture research institutions should be involved. But since farmers need alternative crops giving enough cash to offset tobacco cultivation, the agriculture ministry and finance ministry should be put in the communication loop. A position paper on tobacco's harmful impact on agriculture should be prepared for the communication purpose.

A periodic newsletter would help communicate on the tobacco issues with the wider audience including the lawmakers. The lawmakers and other policymakers can be interviewed in the newsletter which would make them involved in the campaign and raise their interest in the fight against tobacco. Fact sheets should be published on tobacco issues regularly and sent to all important points. This would be very important during the budget time because it is then that the tobacco companies become more active to pursue favourable tax proposals.

Since media is an important element in any communication strategy, anti-tobacco lobby should meet the media key persons frequently. Right now media contact is almost absent. Both the reporters and gatekeepers need to have a clear understanding on tobacco impact

and tobacco economy. More partnerships needed with the media in launching campaigns. The local media should be properly educated so that they can write intelligent articles and reports on tobacco.

Since a lot of respondents said they became aware of tobacco effects from doctors, a major focus of communication strategy should be on the doctors. If the doctors could be made to commit that they would advise to quit tobacco every time they get a patient, this would help users quit tobacco. at the same time, doctors' frequent presence in anti-tobacco events would give these events more credibility.

As students are found to be a major section who use tobacco, communication activities should target this group. Programmes at schools, colleges and universities should be held to discuss tobacco issues. Lobbying needs to be done to include anti-tobacco materials in curriculum.

Comments

- MPs need better understanding of tobacco economy as a large number of them are uncertain whether tobacco helps economy. Here communication tools need to be employed.
- We need to activate MPs as they think tobacco policy is not being implemented
- Civil society activation is needed to build awareness on tobacco's bad effect
- Scopes for working with implementing agencies as tobacco law needs implementation
- Alternative crop search and information generation on the alternative crops are needed
- Position papers need to be prepared on tobacco cultivation
- Platform needed for MPs to work from as they want to do anti-tobacco activities
- MPs can be used in communication materials
- Newsletters should be prepared and sent to MPs and other stakeholders
- More fact-based campaign needed
- BAT interacts with media every year. This needs to be countered
- More campaign needed during budget as most news come out then
- Gatekeeper awareness needed
- Local newspapers lack anti-tobacco analysts so they can be served with ready features
- Media to be taken along in anti-tobacco programmes
- Regular seminars/ discussions needs to be organised
- More interaction needed with media, specially local journalists
- Reports on tobacco economy have to increase
- Tobacco companies CSR activities needs to be critically reviewed
- Field visits for journalists needed
- Lobby for local tax on tobacco needed
- Media group creation
- Ad campaign against tobacco in newspapers, TV and billboards
- farmers' profit should be further probed and published
- Soil fertility reduction should be probed
- Advocacy with doctors needed
- Local folk media should be used
- School/ college campaign
- Push should be on to include anti-tobacco issues in education curriculum

Annex-1

Report on Coverage on Tobacco issues in Bangladesh News Media in the Year 2008-2009 and 2009-2010

Summary:

The Bangladeshi national newspapers and television channels cover tobacco related news, features and articles predominantly from an anti-tobacco perspective. However the MRDI's media monitoring found that a small percentage of these items defend different perspectives of the tobacco industry or are pro-tobacco.

Tobacco is not a mainstream news coverage issue and its related news get published mostly during special occasions (like anti-tobacco day) or budget.

The media's strongest emphasis in covering tobacco related items is on health aspect, followed by tobacco related law, policy and warning issues.

The least covered aspects of tobacco related news are children, CSR, production and labour. Though small in terms of publication, all of the CSR news in some ways promoted the image of tobacco companies.

While a small part of the total news had been pro-tobacco, these items push forward arguments in favour of reducing tobacco taxation and cultivation among other issues. But the number of arguments in favour of increasing tax or discouraging cultivation is overwhelming.

The biggest actors of the tobacco related stories are activists, followed by the media itself—while the government officials have a moderate role as actors. Parliamentarians or health experts play a small role.

The industry people were the biggest actors on the issues of policy and CSR while anti-tobacco activists led the voices in health, law amendment, taxation and warnings. The media itself led in the focuses of environment, production, farming and labor. There was only one editorial published during this two years.

Findings in newspapers

To understand the nature of media coverage of tobacco issues, the MRDI media monitoring team tracked 10 national newspapers published between July 2008 and June 2010.

The monitoring found a total of 360 items published in these newspapers as reports, features, opinion pieces, letters, photo features etc; but they are overwhelmingly different types of news reports. Out of these items, 21 were found to be favourable for the tobacco sector in one way or another.

Table-1 Year wise coverage at a glance

Items Covered	Total items	Percent
July 2008 to June 2009	156	44
July 2009 to June 2010	204	56
Total	360	100

More tobacco related items were published during 2009-01 (56 percent) than the previous year.

Table-2 Newspaper wise coverage

Newspapers		
	Frequency	Percent
Prothom Alo	52	14.4
Jugantor	33	9.2
Samakal	20	5.6
Ittefaq	68	18.9
Bhorer Kagoj	37	10.3
Naya Diganta	39	10.8
Janakantha	22	6.1
The Daily Star	42	11.7
New Age	28	7.8
Financial Express	19	5.3
Total	360	100.0

Among these newspapers, the Ittefaq published the maximum number of items (18.9 percent of the total), followed by Prothom Alo (14.4 percent), and The Daily Star (11.7 percent). The Financial Express published the least number of items (5.3 percent), followed by Samakal (5.6 percent) and Janakantha (6.1 percent).

Table-3 Items Covered

Type of items covered	Frequency	Percent
Event Report	176	49.2
Special Report	71	19.8
Feature/Interview	31	8.7
Editorials	1	.3
Op-Ed	13	3.6
Letters	43	12.0
Only Photograph	7	2.0
Others	16	4.5
Total	358	100.0

Half of the items are event reports while another 19.8 percent are special reports, 12 percent letters and 8.7 percent features and interviews. There was only one editorial (representing 0.3 percent) and 7 photo features.

Majority of the items were written by the newspapers' staff correspondents (42.2 percent), followed by 18.1 percent local correspondents. Diverse sources representing 26.9 percent provided other items while 3.1 percent represented press releases or handouts.

The majority of the news came out in the national and metropolitan pages (22.5 percent and 19.2 percent). Though there had been hardly any editorial on tobacco issues, the editorial pages ran 13.3 percent items as post editorials and letters. The front, back and business pages ran 20-21 items each (around 5.6 percent). The health pages, which are weekly

supplements of these newspapers, gave 6.1 percent coverage. There were 4 items each in the children's page and different supplements.

Majority of the items came out in the upper folds of the newspapers (58.6 percent)—implying that they were given more importance than other items. Some 64 items (17.8 percent) had accompanying images or photographs, while there were eight pictorial warnings and just one instance of use of table or graph.

In terms of story focus, the issue of health dominated the stories with 168 items (47 percent) in focus. Its followed by focus on law or law amendment (27 percent), policy (20 percent), warnings (14 percent), taxation (12 percent), and farming (11 percent). Least in the focus were children and CSR by tobacco companies (2 percent each) and labor and production issues (3 percent).

The media monitoring team also identified anti tobacco activists as the dominant actors in the stories (visible in 34 percent stories); followed by the media itself (18 percent); government (15 percent), and health specialists (11 percent). Lawmakers, environmentalists or agriculturists represent the least number of actors in the stories (2 to 3 percent) while industry insiders are found to be representing 8 percent actors.

Many stories (52 items) came out before certain special occasions like anti tobacco day and budget; but majority stories were published throughout the year.

An overwhelming majority of the published items are anti-tobacco (81.9 percent); while pro-tobacco items represent 6.9 percent (22 items).

Again, among the pro-tobacco items, 15 items favoured local manufacturers and six items multinational companies.

Close to 40 percent of the items came out as single column news while 27 percent as double column; 20 percent three-column and 9 percent four-column stories. There is one instance of an eight column item.

The focus of the stories that came out before any special occasion (other than the budget) was predominantly health with 39 items, followed by focus on policy (25 items) and law or amendment issues (22 items), and warnings (12 items).

During the national budget, the issue of tobacco taxation drew the maximum attention of the media with 12 items out of total 21 items published.

The monitoring detected that the media pays no special attention to tobacco items during the parliament session as they published only six items.

An analysis of the content of these news show that these stories have surely emphasized on anti-tobacco arguments from various perspectives; while they have also incorporated some pro-tobacco arguments. In terms of number, there had been 485 points of arguments in these stories against tobacco while there were 36 points in favour of tobacco.

Most of the pro-tobacco arguments were over the issue of taxation (9 instances). However on the same issue, there had been overwhelming arguments (33) against tobacco.

The second most promoted pro-tobacco arguments were given on the issue of tobacco farming (6 instances) against which, 31 anti-tobacco arguments were made.

Health, which draws the newspaper's major attention—put forward 155 anti-tobacco arguments as against four pro-tobacco points.

Issues like tobacco law, policy, environment, taxation, children and warnings also dominantly get published with anti-tobacco arguments with a few or no pro-tobacco arguments.

However, tobacco promoters get a free reign in promoting Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) news. The monitoring found 4 points for pro-tobacco CSR—while there was no counter argument.

On the question of issues like labour, pro-tobacco arguments came out in 5 instances while anti-tobacco arguments 6 instances

Similarly in covering tobacco production, the newspapers ran 4 points of pro-tobacco arguments with 8 anti-tobacco arguments.

While graphically presenting the tobacco related items, the newspapers preferred to use photographs the most, followed by some pictorial warnings and very rarely with graph. The papers ran 64 photos, 8 pictorial warnings and just one graph.

With 11 photos and 3 pictorial warnings, The Daily Star turned out to be the leader in presenting tobacco related news with graphics. It is followed by Ittefaq (11 items), Samakal (8) and Prothom Alo, Jugantor and Naya Diganta (7 each). The Financial Express and New Age published the least number of graphics.

In determining who the actors of these news items are, the monitoring team found that activists top the list consisting of nine different types of actors. Activists (199 instances) were followed by the media themselves (140 instances) as the major actors, followed by the industry people (92), government (89), and health specialists (67). The least actors were environmentalists (17), agriculturists (21) and lawmakers (27).

Again, the actors were most vocal about health issues (194 instances) with activists leading arguments, followed by health specialists, media itself and the government. The actors also emphasized on policy and law issue (123 each), tax (59), warning (44) and farming (35). The actors spoke little about children, CSR, production, business and labor.

Its interesting to note that industry people were the biggest actors on the issues of policy and CSR while activists led the voices in health, law amendment, taxation and warnings. The media itself led in the focuses of environment, production, farming and labor. Health specialists led the issue of health.

Newspaper wise, Ittefaq that ran most stories on tobacco emphasized on health related tobacco stories (34), followed by 18 on law, 12 on policy, 10 on warning. It also ran three stories on children (which is half of all the tobacco stories that focused on children) and five on CSR (which is maximum CSR coverage considering the total number of all CSR items published in these newspaper is 13).

Leading daily Prothom Alo emphasized on health related tobacco stories the most (19 items), closely followed by law and policy stories (18 and 16). It ran two items on children.

The Daily Star also emphasized mostly on health followed by law, policy, warning and taxation. This pattern is similar in case of all other newspapers—Jugantor, Naya Diganta, Samakal, New Age, Bhorer Kagok, Janakantha and Financial Express.

Findings in TV

The monitoring team also scanned tobacco related news in four television channels of BTV, ATN Bangla, Channel I and NTV. These four channels ran 50 items in the 30-month period (from January 2008 to June 2010), with almost half of the items broadcast from NTV (24 items), followed by BTV (11), Channel I (9) and the least with ATN Bangla (6). Most of these items (29) came out during the period of July 2009 and June 2010.

Table-4 – Year wise coverage

Monthly Segregation	items	%
January 2008 to June 2009	21	42
July 2009 to June 2010	29	58
Total	50	100

Out of these 50 items, 11 were found to be pro-tobacco stories. Of them, nine favored local tobacco companies.

Like the print media, the TV channels also predominantly covered events (72 percent)—and their staff correspondents ran most of the stories (88 percent).

In news treatment half of the items were out of vision while 44 percent were package. Only two items were in-vision. The tobacco related items mostly came out in the second half of the news (48 percent), followed by the first half (40 percent).

Most news items were given scroll treatment (44 percent) while some came as headlines (14 percent).

In terms of focus of these stories, the TV items were unlike those of the print medium. Most of their stories focused on taxation (20 instances), followed by warnings (19), health (16) and law (11). Issues that got some attention were farming (7) and labor (6). Environment, children, production, policy and CSR got least focus.

The actors of the TV news are led by the government (17 out of 60 actors); followed by activists (16) and then followed by, equally, industry people, lawmakers and media.

Half of these items came out before any special occasion while during the parliament session 18 percent items came out and eight percent during the budget season. Health, law, taxation and warnings were highlighted in the stories that came out before any special occasion. During budget taxation got most attention among other issues while during parliament sessions health got most attention.

Although focus wise taxation came as the most highlighted issue, it is tobacco related health issue that got the maximum air time for 16 items. The NTV ran the longest package reporting of one item airing for 3 minutes 26 seconds.

Table-5 Focus of Story to TV Channels

Focus of the story	TV Channels				Total
	BTV	ATN Bangla	Channel i	NTV	
Health	6	2	2	6	16
law/Law amendment	5	1	2	3	11
Policy	0	0	1	1	2
Environment	0	0	0	1	1
Taxation	1	4	4	11	20
Children	0	0	0	1	
Warnings	8	2	2	6	18
Production	0	0	0	2	
Farming	1	2	2	5	10
Labor	0	0	0	6	
CSR	0	0	0	2	2
Total	21	11	13	44	89

Among the channels, the NTV ran most items focusing on taxation, followed by six each on warning, health and labour. Farming came next with 5 instances. The NTV also ran two instances of CSR. The NTV also focused on law, policy, environment, children, and production by small instances.

The BTV mostly focussed on warnings (8), health (6), law (5) and it focused once on taxation and once on farming—and its' items did not carry any other focus.

Channel I gave most focus on taxation with only four instances and some focus on health, law, warning, farming and policy.

ATN Bangla also paid most focus on taxation with just four instances and some focus on health, farming, warning and law issues.

Annex-2

Report on Interviewing Law Makers

A. Introduction

The MRDI interviewed 34 lawmakers-- many of whom are involved with parliamentary committees on public health, home, agriculture, law and justice, environment. Some of them represent major tobacco cultivation areas. The purpose of these interviews was to understand their willingness, capacity and barriers to reform or implement the existing anti tobacco policy.

B. Summary

The interview found strong opinion against tobacco among the parliamentarians who do not want to see tobacco cultivation in their own neighborhood, although many of them do believe tobacco gives the nation some economic benefit.

To control tobacco, they suggested

- a. encouraging tobacco farmers to alternative farming,
- b. create strong public awareness against tobacco,
- c. A long term policy to phase out tobacco and
- d. stronger role of the mass media and NGOs in increasing public awareness.

In the interview, the MPs unanimously agreed that tobacco cultivation causes harm to environment; tobacco increases health risk and that tobacco was the single most cause of many life threatening diseases.

They did not also support tobacco farming in their own constituencies. Ten of them had turned to public campaign to prevent the farming in their areas by discouraging farmers and general people about negative impact of tobacco and its farming.

To motivate all lawmakers to support amendment of the anti tobacco act, they recommend stronger campaign, exchange of views with MPs, and formation of anti-tobacco group with the MPs.

Majority parliamentarians agreed that the government's tobacco control policy was not being properly implemented. They prescribed a policy to end tobacco cultivation or business that should offer alternative farming to tobacco farmers; control loans for tobacco farming and; introduce punitive measures for violation of tobacco laws.

But when it came to giving opinions on economic impact of tobacco, the MPs were divided. Thirteen parliamentarians did not see tobacco's contribution in development, 12

MPs maintained a neutral stance and four believed that tobacco contributed to economic development.

Those who saw tobacco's economic contribution argued that tobacco created job opportunity and it generated huge revenue for the government.

Those who responded negatively said that tobacco sector's revenue contribution was much smaller than the health cost incurred by the people due to tobacco related diseases. Tobacco had a negative impact in the overall development of the nation, they said.

Again half of the MPs said a stringent tobacco control would reduce government revenue and affect rural job market and cottage industry. One MP said that controlling tobacco would harm a large number of farmers.

Nevertheless majority of the parliamentarian, except five, said they would support a stringent law banning tobacco.

Again an overwhelming majority support increasing tobacco tax in the next budget. Only five MPs—including two from tobacco producing constituencies-- oppose it.

Half of the MPs believe tobacco manufacturing companies do not exert influence on the government while 11 believe that they do as they pay large amount of tax, maintain a good network with government high ups; the companies—especially the foreign ones—have strong lobbies to influence the government in favour of tobacco.

C. Findings

As part of the tobacco political mapping study, the MRDI research team interviewed 34 lawmakers with a set of 13 questions. Of these lawmakers, 25 belong to the ruling Awami League, five to main opposition BNP, two Jatiya Party, one independent and one Workers Party. At least sixteen of them hail from constituencies where tobacco cultivation and tobacco production is strong.

What is your opinion on tobacco farming and business

Responding to the first question what was their opinion on tobacco farming and trading, all of them said that they believe tobacco cultivation causes harm to environment. They reinforced their stance with the arguments that thousands of people were facing untimely death due to tobacco addition; that processing the tobacco causes air pollution and its cultivation depletes soil fertility.

All of them unanimously agreed that tobacco increases health risk and argued that tobacco was the single most cause of many life threatening diseases; and that one can understand the risk by refraining from consuming tobacco just for one day; and that it contains a number of harmful chemicals including nicotine.

Interestingly, the parliamentarians were divided on the question whether tobacco had a role in the overall economic development of the country.

Table-1 Tobacco is playing a role in economic development of the country

Yes	No	Neutral	No Answer
4	14	13	3

Those who responded positively argued that tobacco was giving job opportunity to a part of the country's jobless people and that the government earns huge revenue from the sector. Those who responded negatively said that though tobacco gave huge revenue to the government, the treatment cost incurred by the people due to tobacco related diseases was

much bigger. They further argued, tobacco had a negative impact in the overall development of the nation; it was somewhat unhealthy; it had more harmful effect than benefits; only tobacco farmers and traders make money out of it and finally, they said though the profit from tobacco is visible, the harms were not so visible.

Table-2 Aware of the tobacco control act, all except one parliamentarian replied positively.

Yes	No
33	1

But they don't believe that the government policy regarding tobacco control was being properly implemented as majority said no.

Table-3 government policy regarding tobacco control was being properly implemented

Yes	No
33	1

What should be done to implement the policy completely

Those who replied in negative were asked what should be done to implement the policy completely. They said more actions should be taken to increase public awareness on the harmful effect of tobacco. Public awareness campaign should aim at all kinds of people—from government employees to general people, while parliamentarians should develop a sense of responsibility. They further argued that the government should be serious about this issue and be strict in certain areas. Some opined that tobacco has to be completely banned. Some said that local government members should be involved in the social awareness campaign. They also noted that the government has to frame a new law, be sincere about it and take a long term plan on tobacco.

What kind of policy the government should adopt to end tobacco cultivation and business-

The MPs gave three kinds of suggestions:

- there should be alternative farming
- framing of a policy and
- implementing the law and public awareness.

On the point of alternative farming, they suggested that tobacco farmers should be enlisted to allow them to work under alternative farming projects.

On the point of framing a policy, they suggested the tobacco companies should not be allowed to market products through joint collaboration; taking a series of steps to end tobacco cultivation; control loans for tobacco farming and introduce punitive measures for violation of tobacco related laws.

The study was seeking the parliamentarians' argument in case they believed that tobacco should not be controlled. One of them said that controlling tobacco would harm a large number of farmers.

Opinion on tax issue

On the sixth question seeking the respondents' opinion whether tax should be increased on tobacco further in the next budget, all except five MPs said yes. Two of these five MPs hail from Kustia where tobacco cultivation is dominant.

Twenty nine out of 30 parliamentarians did not support tobacco farming in their own constituencies. Of them, 10 MPs had taken initiatives to prevent the farming in their areas, while six had not.

Those who took initiatives against farming shared what they were doing: many of them said that they had started a public campaign against tobacco; gave out anti-tobacco posters, leaflets of the World Health Organisation; and participated in seminars against tobacco farming in presence of farmers.

One parliamentarian said that he neither discouraged nor encouraged anyone for tobacco farming while another said personal initiative was futile in preventing tobacco cultivation.

Whether tobacco manufacturing companies exert influence on the government

Yes	No	No Answer
11	16	3

Those who said yes explained that the companies pay large amount of tax, plus they maintain a good network with government high ups; the government nurtures the companies expecting them to pay more revenue while the companies take the advantage; the companies—especially the foreign ones—have strong lobbies to influence the government in favour of tobacco; and finally they said like most other countries, the business groups always try to influence the government.

How to sensitize the lawmakers

MPs should be updated on the issue time to time; involving the MPs in anti-tobacco meetings; making the parliament building completely a smoke free area; utilizing the mass media in holding opinion exchange programme with the MPs.

How to gain support of law makers in amending the anti-tobacco law

The campaign should be strengthened and exchange of views with the MPs should take place; make the mass medium more interested in publicizing related news; personal lobbying and formation of anti tobacco group with the MPs; hold discussions; effective measures should be taken by the MPs.

Would support a stringent law banning tobacco

On the question whether they would support a stringent law banning tobacco, an overwhelming majority of 24 agreed, while five disagreed. Once again, these five include the two MPs of Kustia who opposed increase of tax on tobacco.

Government's hurdles for amending anti tobacco

The MPs were offered multiple sets of answers in this question. Sixteen MPs said that this would reduce government revenue. Seventeen opined that this would affect the rural job market. Sixteen opined that it would destroy the cottage industry. Nine of them said that there was no government study or survey on this subject while seven said there was no long term plan on tobacco products manufacturing and their marketing.

What should be done to control tobacco

Firstly, farmers should be encouraged for alternative farming by discouraging them to cultivate tobacco and the government should chalk out a plan to rehabilitate tobacco farmers.

Secondly, the MPs felt that it cannot be controlled by the law alone—there was no alternative but to create strong public awareness against tobacco.

Thirdly, some suggested the government must frame a strong law banning tobacco by considering the issue as a national issue. Some others suggested tobacco control can not be achieved overnight and therefore the government must take a long term policy.

Finally, they suggested the mass media must be involved in the campaign against tobacco and encourage journalists to make more reports on the issue. The mass media and the NGOs can play a strong role in increasing public awareness.

Annex-3

Report on the findings of the interviewing Anti Tobacco organizations

A. Introduction

The MRDI interviewed representatives of eight non government organizations¹ involved with the anti tobacco movement working in various districts of the country including the tobacco cultivation areas and also the media. The main donors of these eight NGOs are: Bloomberg Initiatives, The Union, Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, International Development Research Centre and Health Bridge.

B. Summary

The NGOs that are involved with anti tobacco advocacy and public campaign believe that weakness and lack of interest of the government in implementing the anti tobacco act was the main impediment of the anti tobacco movement. They also commonly faulted lack of public awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco; lack of campaigns; inactive taskforces and limitation of the mobile courts.

To overcome these limitations, the NGOs were hammering on public awareness campaigns in various forms, holding advocacy meetings with the administration to discuss weaknesses of the anti tobacco law and pushing the government to take the issue as one of its main agendas.

They identify the tobacco companies, businessmen and tobacco product vendors as the ones who obstruct the anti tobacco movement.

All of these NGOs claimed their success in implementing some anti-tobacco programmes which are mainly having been able to make smoking free public areas under some municipalities and public transports and helping mobile courts etc. Two NGOs are hammering on an anti tobacco cultivation movement. Another has succeeded in helping the government frame the anti tobacco law and raise awareness in favour of increasing tobacco tax.

All of the NGOs are optimistic about the success of the anti tobacco movement saying that this is based on a solid moral ground of ensuring better health— as opposed to pro-tobacco business culture which is based on immoral ground. They said that the movement is new compared to the tobacco business culture, therefore it was only a matter of time and increasing public pressure to make the movement a complete success.

They added that the existing programmes of the movement were insufficient in a largely populated country like Bangladesh. There should be greater emphasis of the campaign equally at rural and urban areas aiming at various social segments—including the schools and the officials and law enforcers themselves. There should also be better coordination between the government and private sector efforts. Sustainable alternative cultivations should be offered to the farmers.

¹ Young Power in Social Action (YPSA), Chittagong; Action in Development (AID), Jhenaidah; Association for Community Development (ACD), Rajshahi; SHIMANTIK, Sylhet; Alliance for Cooperation & Legal Aid Bangladesh (ACLAB), National Anti-Tuberculosis Association of Bangladesh (NATAB), UBINIG, Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB) Trust and PROGGA

To reduce foreign fund dependency to carry out such movement, the government may raise the fund through CSR of the private companies and use a part of tobacco revenue should to carry out the movement.

Most of the NGOs appreciate the government's role in the anti tobacco movement, but they said the government needs to do more to make it a success by integrating the movement in its overall health programme; amend the anti tobacco law, and activate the taskforces to implement the law.

C. Findings

Anti-Tobacco activities

The main anti tobacco activity of all of these NGOs is advocacy. Half of them additionally focus on campaign as main activities and three of them are involved with research.

Table - 1 Anti-Tobacco activities

Advocacy	Campaign	Research	Others
7	4	3	Freeing public place and public transport of smoking; Capacity building of journalists; Supporting the government in implementing tobacco control act at public transport and public places and increasing awareness.

The main impediments of the anti tobacco program

- NGOs commonly faulted the weakness and lack of interest of the government in implementing the anti tobacco act. The act itself is vague and weak, not adequate to control tobacco.
- They also commonly faulted lack of public awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco; and lack of campaigns.
- There was no legal department or committee at the local government level that would specifically implement the anti tobacco law.
- One said that the elected leaders of public transport and market place associations were disinterested to apply the law in their respective areas fearing loss of votes; lack of cooperation from the administration officials who were smokers; lack of clear plan and skills among the government and the civil societies; dynamic marketing policy of the tobacco companies that bypasses various restrictions; inactive taskforces and limitation of the mobile courts and lack of campaigns through the mass media.
- One interviewee said tobacco had social acceptability, plus it is cheap and widely available in a context where people are not adequately informed about the harmful effect of tobacco. At the policy level, there is a myth about revenue earning from tobacco and how the tobacco sector provides employment. The tobacco companies

have influence over the policy level. There is lack of updated research or information regarding tobacco control.

- Another pointed out, the anti tobacco program is limited within certain organizations.

Strategies have the NGOs adopted to overcome the hindrances-

Responding to another question what strategies have the NGOs adopted to overcome the above-mentioned hindrances, the respondents talked about awareness building campaigns at different levels ranging from media to district and upazila level organisations.

- One said that they have been holding meetings with the community and stakeholders, organizing rallies, folk song festival, street drama, celebrating anti smoking day; publishing and distributing newsletters, posters and leaflets, installing billboards etc. besides they were helping the authorities hold taskforce meetings and conduct mobile courts.
- Another said they were conducting research and disseminating information; networking with the anti-tobacco coalition and NGOs; networking with local government officials and government officials; monitoring activities of the tobacco companies etc.
- One respondent said that they were holding advocacy meetings with the administration discussing the weaknesses of the anti tobacco law and pushing the government to take the issue as one of its main agendas.
- One NGO claimed that it was trying to create a long term social movement through publishing reports and features in the media; promote the concept through media on pushing up tobacco's price to make it out of reach for the commoners and promote through media the idea of updating the tobacco law.

Organizations generally try to obstruct the anti tobacco movement

Replying to a question which organizations generally try to obstruct the anti tobacco movement, they pointed their fingers at the tobacco companies, businessmen and tobacco product vendors. Some of them additionally said that administrative officials who are smokers also create obstruction; one said that not all media houses extend their cooperation and the youth, politicians and professionals also do not cooperate.

Table-2 whether they had taken advice from a professional communication expert in planning their anti tobacco campaign

Yes	No
07	01

Some successful anti-tobacco campaigns

- The NGOs were asked to mention some successful anti-tobacco campaigns that they had run. One said that it had succeeded in making Barisal City Corporation tobacco free; 376 public places, 791 public transports, 54 establishments have been declared smoke free; held 95 meetings with the taskforce to implement the law;

help conduct 70 mobile courts, held meetings and workshops with stakeholders and formed nearly two dozen community vigilance teams.

- Another said his NGO had formed voluntary anti-tobacco coalition groups in four areas. It made the mayors of Chittagong City Corporation, and the pourashavas of Cox's Bazar, Feni and Comilla declare their respective areas as smoke-free zones. The NGO had made 500 public places and transports as smoking free; prepared instructions on how to make an area smoke free and supplied those to four local government bodies etc. It had become the plaintiff in a case seeking a ban on tobacco cultivation in Bandarban district. Following this lawsuit, the court has restricted the cultivation within 1000 hectares of land.
- Another NGO has freed from smoking 13 educational institutions, 850 bus terminals and railway stations, one pourashava, one upazila parishad and one shopping mall.
- One NGO has provided training to 251 journalists of Dhaka and divisional towns as a result of which, the number of anti-tobacco reports and features has increased. A journalist network named anti tobacco media alliance has been established and it is set to introduce an award on anti tobacco journalism.
- One NGO has succeeded in incorporating with the anti tobacco movement the harmful effect of tobacco cultivation and has been able to draw the attention of the media on the linkage between food shortage and tobacco cultivation. It has also founded an anti tobacco women front.
- Another NGO has succeeded in activating taskforce committees in 13 upazilas and district headquarters of Narsingdi and Manikganj. Of them 10 upazilas have been declared tobacco free. The public transports in these areas have been declared tobacco free.
- One NGO has succeeded in helping the government frame the anti tobacco law and regulations; create public awareness for controlling tobacco cultivation, increasing awareness in favour of increasing tobacco tax and create public opinion in favour of the tobacco control act.

Table-3 Optimistic about the success

Yes	No
08	-

Reason for the optimism

- This movement is for the better health and life of the people, therefore it would always get public participation and support. This is one movement where people are united nationally and internationally.
- As the first signatory to the FCTC, tobacco control is an important issue for Bangladesh. Now the country has a strong network of anti tobacco organizations and government agencies; and an increasing public opinion against tobacco.

- The anti tobacco movement is relatively a new movement against a culture that's several hundred years old where tobacco companies enjoy a strong position. While it would take some time to succeed, Bangladesh has already succeeded in turning the movement a social movement. Widening the present movement would surely help succeed in achieving the goals.
- Those who work for tobacco, they are there by immorally using power. The anti tobacco movement on the other hand is based on moral strength. As long as there is unity, the anti tobacco movement will succeed.

Table-4. Whether the existing programmes of the anti tobacco movement were sufficient

Yes	No
-	08

What else could be done to make the movement successful

- They suggested giving equal importance for rural and urban areas while undertaking anti tobacco programmes; undertake more programmes as the present ones are too inadequate to cover the huge population of the country and; the government should take some programmes and strengthen coordination with the private sector.
- There should be more initiatives at the grassroots level; strengthening and making aware the law enforcing authorities; increase anti tobacco campaigns in the mass media—especially in the electronic medium; and adequately fund for continuing research at local and national level.
- One suggested increasing advocacy with the administration and increase public awareness campaign.
- Another noted, there should a campaign targeting the schools and encourage sustainable alternative cultivation for the farmers. Another interviewee added that the tobacco farmers should be offered financial incentives for alternative farming. The government should impose special tax or levy on the tobacco companies and relocate the tobacco factories from safe places—away from the public. Another NGO categorically suggested using 23 percent of the revenue from tobacco for the movement.
- The government should control setting up of new tobacco factories.
- On the question how these programmes can be funded other than foreign aid, the responded came up with various answers. One suggested it could be government funded and private-public funded.
- Another suggested the fund can be raised through corporate social responsibilities as an important public health issue. Besides the government can use the revenue earned from the tobacco sector to control tobacco consumption.

- One suggested the government increase its health budget and include allocation for anti tobacco movement and awareness building programme. The government may further increase tax on tobacco and use that for anti tobacco movement.
- Finance can be arranged through lottery and encouraging the local donors to chip in.

NGO's future plans on anti tobacco movement

- One respondent said that their programmes would be further expanded with long term vision, intensifying and expanding relationship with related local and international organizations to strengthen the movement.
- One said s/he would ensure making all the districts of Chittagong Division tobacco free through the local governments; build mass awareness and take initiatives to make the taskforces effective so that the tobacco control act could be implemented.
- Even if they did not have adequate funds, they would continue the movement.
- An anti-tobacco journalism will be introduced while the anti-tobacco movement would be taken to the school level.
- Another said they would build public opinion against tobacco cultivation and unify the campaigners for anti-smoking and anti tobacco cultivation and strengthen the anti tobacco women alliance.
- An NGO aims at integrating the anti tobacco movement with the programmes for chest disease; another wants to decentralize the movement and another wants to free from tobacco all public transports in the Khulna Division and create at least 5 million beneficiaries from the movement.
- Evaluating the government in controlling tobacco and implementing the law, most of the respondents appreciated the government for taking some major steps for tobacco control—but they said they expect more actions from the government.
- The government is helping the non-government anti tobacco movement and playing an important role by forming the national tobacco control cell. However the government can play a stronger role if the anti tobacco programmes are included in its health programme.
- Respondent noted that the government needed to take effective measures to implement the anti tobacco law and amend it, and activate the taskforces.
- One respondent felt that the government has no role in controlling tobacco product, but it speaks about the control due to the anti tobacco movement.
- Due to lack of law implementation and proper planning, the country is yet to see the benefits of the movement. The government should integrate the anti tobacco non government organizations with its own programmes to make the maximum impact.
- The government's role was encouraging, but to have the results, the government needed to be enthusiastic about it.

Annex-4

Report on the findings of the interviewing Citizens/ Mass people

A. Introduction

As part of the study for political mapping of the tobacco sector, the MRDI interviewed 31 general people, including two women, of Manikganj, Rangpur and mainly from Dhaka.

The average age of the interviewees is 34, the highest age being 65 and the lowest 18. By profession, they are service holders, jobless, labourers and college students.

B. Summary

The interview of the citizens—most of whom are smokers-- found that they were aware about the health hazards of smoking. They were all aware of the health and environmental hazards of tobacco cultivation and consumption.

A few of them quitted the habit due to health reasons or under family pressure. They said their awareness about tobacco's harmful effect derived from social networking, media exposure, anti tobacco campaign and warnings on cigarette packets.

Most of the people perceive the anti-tobacco campaign in the country as ineffective. Their exposure to the campaigns is not consistent.

To build mass awareness, they suggested launching campaigns from community based organizations and at the rural and school levels; encourage media to publish reports based on research and the negative impact of tobacco cultivation; encourage alternative farming; promoting anti tobacco advertisements at TV/Radio; ban production and consumption of tobacco etc.

They strongly emphasized on raising awareness at family levels so that their peer pressure on smokers help reduce smoking habits.

The interviews also showed that half of the interviewees were unaware of the anti tobacco act and those who knew about it only know that smoking in public places was punishable with a Tk 50 fine. They felt that this law was not being implemented as the public and the law enforcers themselves were unaware of the law and the government was not serious about it.

More than half of the interviewees thought the government was trying to discourage tobacco consumption, but it was soft because of the revenue earning from the sector.

Many of them thought that the tobacco companies had strong influence on the government.

While some of the interviewees oppose the idea of a price hike of cigarettes, majority supported it saying that it might help people quit smoking— but the price of *Bidi* should be hiked as well for best results. One third of time opposed the idea of price hike saying that it would not change the habit of the smokers but increase his personal expenses.

Again two third of the interviewees said they would support a ban on tobacco cultivation and production as it was poisonous to health. They said there were more important crops to cultivate instead of tobacco. The one third people opposing such a ban said it would make a lot of people jobless and affect the government's revenue earning.

C. Findings

Yes	No	Remarks
26	04	Of the non-smokers, three persons used to smoke in the past (quitted smoking three to nine years ago) and one never smoked.

Among the interviewees, 26 are smokers and four non-smokers. The average smoking age of the smokers is 12.5—the highest being 40 years and the lowest being one year.

Those who quitted smoke, did so mainly because of health reasons. They also cited their increased awareness and family pressure for their decision.

Table -2 Aware of the harmful effect of smoking

Yes	No
29	-

How they became aware

They became alerted by well-wishers advice, reading newspapers, anti-tobacco advertisements, warnings on cigarette packets and also through media campaign, personal health deterioration, social networks and the internet.

Recall any anti-tobacco campaign or publicity that has influenced them

They can recall such publicity, that did not influence all of them as they still smoked. However one individual said that he had quitted smoking upon watching some campaign in the television. Another person noted that his doctor's discouragement had influenced him.

One said that they heard pro-tobacco campaigns of *Bidi* companies and he thought *Bidi* was not very harmful.

Some of the campaigns that they can recall included advertisements in the newspaper, anti-tobacco discussion on the occasion of campaign for tuberculosis prevention, human chain campaign by some NGOs, television campaign, campaigns in the internet. They added that other than campaign, social pressure made them aware of the harmful effect of tobacco.

Majority of the respondents said that the way the present anti-tobacco campaigns were trying to raise awareness failed to make them aware. However a dozen of them said yes. Another person said that he was unaware of such a campaign.

Build mass awareness what else could be done

When asked to build mass awareness what else could be done—they gave a host of suggestions.

They suggested setting up community oriented organization for this purpose; launching campaigns with banners, festoons in public places and hold seminars, staging drama and discouraging tobacco farmers at local level; encouraging the media to publish reports based on research and the negative impact of tobacco cultivation; launching campaigns at the village and school levels; raise tax on cigarettes; increasing awareness at the family level; encouraging alternative farming; promoting anti tobacco advertisements at TV/Radio and through talk shows with eminent personalities and musicians and hammering on the parents to keep their eyes on their children and finally, ban production and consumption of tobacco. They strongly emphasized on raising awareness at family levels so that their peer pressure on smokers help reduce smoking habits.

Besides, they advocated for running large advertisements—full page advertisements on particular days. In some targeted areas, the anti-tobacco campaign may be presented as video on large screens. There should be anti-tobacco messages on large billboards.

Additionally, the government may adopt various measures promoting anti-tobacco concepts. For instance, admission of children of non-smoker parents would get priority over smoker parents; adding in text books for students information on the harmful effect of tobacco. The country's leading politicians should set examples by publicly quitting smoking.

Table-3 Aware about the anti tobacco act 2005

Yes	No
15	15

Those who know said that as per the act, mainly know that smoking in public places is punishable with a Tk 50 fine. One said despite this law people smoke right in front of the police. Another said he did not know what kind of punishments were there in the law. One said he knew sale of cigarettes to anyone under the age of 18 is banned; cigarette advertisements are banned and tobacco companies are not allowed to sponsor any programme. One said that he did not know who would implement the law.

Why this law is not being properly implemented

The law enforcers themselves were unaware of this law; many of the law enforcers themselves were smokers; it is not possible to implement such a law because the country is corrupted; the government is not interested to implement it or it does not give the law the due importance. The anti-tobacco initiatives are also marred as tobacco production is seen as a profitable venture.

Besides, there is a lack of publicity and awareness. The people do not know about the law much and therefore they do not assert any pressure. Poor education level of the country is also blamed. The government is also not very serious about the awareness campaign.

Replying to the question whether the government was playing any role in discouraging tobacco use, 17 said yes while 13 said no.

Why the government was soft on tobacco issues

An overwhelming majority of the respondents replying that its because the government earns revenue from the tobacco sector. More than half of them added that its also because tobacco vending provided many people with jobs; 12 of them added that the sector gave employment opportunity to many. Besides, the tobacco companies exert influence and there is a lack of awareness in the government itself.

Raising the price of Cigarette

On the question of raising the price of cigarette, their answers varied widely. Many of them said the price should be increased more as it was still easy to buy, while some said the price was already too high.

Those who favoured further price increase argued, that it should be made beyond the reach of the general people as once the price is sky high, many may quit smoking. Those who sought lowering the price said that it was too high compared to that of Bidi.

Many of them observed while the prices of lower quality cigarettes were too low—which was spreading the habit of smoking.

What would be their reaction if the price of cigarettes is increased

On the question if the price of cigarettes is increased, what would be their reaction, 12 of them said they would welcome it, eight said they would reduce smoking and 10 opposed the idea. Those who welcomed it and those who said they would cut down smoking noted that if the price is increased many people would quit the habit, or cut down smoking as it would discourage smokers. But they asked, what about Bidi. Those who opposed the idea said that it would not affect the habit, but it would affect personal finances of a smoker. They further said while cigarettes are available, smokers would not quit smoking just because of the price.

Support if tobacco cultivation and tobacco products are banned

Responding to the question whether they would support if tobacco cultivation and tobacco products are banned in the country, 19 said yes while 11 said no. those who supported the ban justified their argument on health grounds. They said, since it was poisonous, it should be banned.

They added, the cost of health treatment would continue to rise if tobacco productions are not stop. To keep the people healthy, it was the way to go.

They added, all drug addictions begin with smoking. If tobacco cultivation is stopped, cigarette production will be affected and it will lead to reduction of smoking and other types of tobacco consumption. The young generation, specially students, were the worst victims.

They further argued that alternative cultivation was more important than tobacco.

Those who opposed ban justified the argument on economic grounds. They said that between one and 1.5 crore people were involved with tobacco sector. If a ban takes place, these people would become jobless. Besides, this would mean the local cigarettes would be replaced by imported ones. Besides the government's revenue earning would decrease. The government may consider tobacco exports as it would fetch a lot of money. One person argued that smoking was a personal matter; whether an individual should refrain from the habit or not was not a matter of a law.

Again, on the question whether they support the statement that tobacco was seriously harmful for environment and health—everyone said yes.

Annex- 5

Report on interviewing Factory workers

A. The MRDI interviewed 18 bidi factory workers, including 11 women, as part of its study for political mapping of tobacco sector.

B. Summary

Aging between 13 and 65, these labourers work at different bidi factories as they did not have other job opportunities or as they have seen their parents or spouse or neighbours work there.

The factories do not offer a standardized pay or facilities. The pay is drastically different from one district to another. Manikganj, which is close to the capital, gives more than double the pay of Rangpur—which is the traditional hub of tobacco.

Half of the respondents express their unhappiness over the factories, while the remaining liked their job because of proximity from their homes, and cash payment. They are open to running small businesses or enterprise if a loan is offered for alternative livelihood.

There is no association of the workers to protect their rights.

They are generally aware about the harmful effect of tobacco on health and environment. But they were hardly ever discouraged by anyone to work in a bidi factory.

The most common diseases experienced by the workers in the previous two years are cough and fever.

C. Finding:

Age and Experiences

The average age of these workers is 36, with the oldest being 65 years old and the youngest 13. They work in six bidi factories in Manikganj, Rangpur, Kustia and Jessore. The average years of their service is 17 years with 40 years being the highest and 3 months being the lowest. They work for 12 hours a day and almost throughout the year. In Rangpur a worker makes 20 taka per thousand bidi manufacturing (a worker can make up to 3000 each day) while in Manikganj, a worker earns up to TK 400 a day and in Kustia Tk 100.

In Rangpur, at least three persons in a family are involved in making Bidi; in other districts family members are also work as farmers, rickshaw pullers and garments workers.

Table – 1. Average income of the workers (monthly)

Districts name	Average Income
Manikgonj	5290/-
Kustia	3000/-
Rangpur	2125/-
Jessore	5025/-

How they got the job

Most of them said that they got into the factory seeing others in their area work there. Some entered the profession following the trail of their parents or spouse. Due to poverty they started working at an early age. Another said he was recruited through a contractor. Half of the workers like their job while the remaining do not.

Explaining why they like their job, some said it offered them cash, which was unlike other jobs. Some said that it was convenient because the factory was close to their homes. Some said that the pay was much better than other jobs around. This gives working opportunity round the year. The job was not hard.

Reasons behind despite disliking

A few said they were working despite disliking it because there were no other job opportunity.

Benefits they get from the factories

Talking about the benefits they get from the factories, one said that their employer was a kind man who gave them weekly leaves and other leaves when necessary; another said they get health benefits and eid bonus; another said they get snacks and free bidi and cigarettes. But then there were some who said that they get no extra benefit. Eight of them said that this was the only job providing factory in their area.

Eight of them said they get timely salaries; three said tobacco pay was higher than pay in other sectors. All except one said that they know about the harmful effect of tobacco on health.

Expenditure on Health

The workers in the previous two years spent between Tk 1000 and 40000 for treatment of various disease of themselves or their family members. The most common disease experienced by the workers themselves are cough and fever.

One reported chest pain of his mother, another own ear problem, unspecified disease, heart disease of husband, gynecological problem, heart disease of daughter, tuberculosis of daughter, cough, fever and paralysis etc.

If their factories are closed, what would they do?

Some of them said they would be forced to sit back at home as there were no other job opportunity; some said they would go for home services or garments factory works; some said they would go for farming or job at jute mills nearby or other nearby factories; they would work as van or rickshawpullers etc.

Would they accept alternative livelihood

When asked if they were offered alternative livelihood by the government or other organizations, would they accept it, all except two agreed. Those who agreed said that they wanted to open a small business by taking a loan; be a service holder; run animal farm; take training for new skill to get into some new profession; open tailoring service; take any job suitable for women etc.

Any discouragement

Only two out of the 18 workers said that they were discouraged by their guardians and a local NGO not to work in the bidi factories.

Awareness on tobacco control act-

Half of them are unaware of the tobacco control act, while the others are aware. But all of them subscribe to the statement that tobacco is harmful for health and environment.

If in the future tobacco is banned, they would try to find suitable alternative jobs, or start farming, migrate to Dhaka or other districts or work at garments factories or homes.

Annex-6**Report on Interviewing Tobacco farmers**

As part of the study for political mapping of the tobacco sector, the MRDI interviewed 6 tobacco farmers from Manikganj, Bandarban, Rangpur and Kustia.

Summary

The interviews reveal that farmers are aware of the harmful effect of tobacco on human health, and little bit on soil and environment. But they are strongly driven to the farming because of ease of farming and cash returns.

They said that the tobacco companies provide investment (except for two farmers who fund themselves) and ensure fertilizer and pesticide and in the end, they purchase the tobacco in cash. Some even said that the tobacco companies even help them supervise the farming.

They further said that such farming requires less labour and the per bigha return can be five times higher compared to paddy farming.

Interestingly out of these six farmers, the one from Rangpur—which is the oldest tobacco cultivation area—incurs Tk 4500 loss per bigha per season. Yet he continues to cultivate tobacco for the cash, which he says he ‘adjusts’ with other crops that he grows in his land. He also said that he believes tobacco cultivation is good for the soil as other crops grow well in the same land after tobacco harvest.

On the other hand, the farmers from Bandarban make the most profit of Tk 64,700 per bigha. This area is the latest tobacco cultivation area.

Half of these farmers are actually not interested in switching to other crops—if tobacco cultivation is banned because they find tobacco cultivation very convenient. One felt so strongly about such ban that he said he would wage a movement if that happened.

But they say if proper incentives like easy financial support, assurance of seeds, fertilizer and pesticides and guaranteed sale are ensured, they would switch to alternative farming.

None of these farmers were ever discouraged by anyone to refrain from tobacco farming. Only one farmer had some advice on alternative farming from the agriculture extension department.

Findings

Four out of six farmers are from old tobacco farming areas of Manikganj, Rangpur and Kustia and they are producing tobacco for 13 to 30 years now. The remaining two are from Bandarban where tobacco farming is a new phenomenon—and they are farming for the last four to five years.

Before they started tobacco farming, they cultivated paddy, jute, sugarcane, potato and vegetables.

Answering to the question what encouraged them to switch to tobacco farming, the common answer was: tobacco farming is more profitable than other produces. One farmer said that all others in their area cultivate tobacco, so he joined in. Another said that his ancestors were involved in tobacco farming—which prompted him to join the league. Two farmers said they are encouraged due to confirmation of sales and supply of primary investment, fertilizer and pesticide.

Answering to the question what is their source of financial assistance, four out of the six named tobacco companies—mainly British American Tobacco, followed by Akij and Abul tobacco companies. The remaining two cultivate with their own finances. None of them take loans from bank or NGOs.

But their claim of tobacco being the most profitable crop contradicts with the fact that the farmer from Rangpur incurs Tk 4200 loss per bigha for tobacco cultivation. Rangpur is the oldest tobacco farming area of the country. Bandarban, being the latest tobacco farming area, gives the highest return of Tk 64,700 per bigha. The per bigha earnings in Kustia and Manikganj are Tk 45,500 and Tk 48900.

Replying to the question how they were getting more profit by cultivating tobacco compared to other crops, most farmers replied that they earned more money from selling tobacco than paddy and that they get the sales paddy in cash. One said whereas he earned Tk 5000 per bigha paddy, he made Tk 25000 per bigha tobacco. Another said he did not have to worry about investment and fertilizer as the tobacco companies provided those. He said, the tobacco companies even help him supervise the farming. The lone farmer from Rangpur who incurs loss explained that while he incurs loss, he gets cash from selling the tobacco. He balances this cash with other crops in his land, he adds.

They were asked if they get proper incentives, would they switch to alternative farming—all except one from Manikganj said yes. He explained why he was more interested in tobacco saying that compared to other crops, cultivating tobacco needed lesser labour and gave more profit. He would switch to other crops only if they prove to be more profitable upon cultivating them for a couple of years.

Those who would switch to other crops explained what kind of incentives they expected: easy bank loan or cash support as investment, assurance of seeds, fertilizer and pesticide, and guaranteed sale.

All of the farmers said that they were aware of the pitfalls of tobacco farming on health and soil. However one said that while tobacco was harmful for health, it was not harmful for

the soil. Another said while tobacco farming harms the soil, it did not harm his health as he is used to consuming it.

The farmer from Rangpur, who incurs loss, said that tobacco was good for the land as other crops grew well after tobacco harvest. This explains why he cultivates tobacco even though he incurs loss.

Sharing their level of awareness, they further said: tobacco causes cold and cough, depletes soil fertility, causes breathing problem and asthma and diabetes.

Answering to another question whether they supported the statement tobacco harms health and environment—all of them said yes.

None of these farmers were ever discouraged by anyone to refrain from tobacco farming.

None except one farmer got any advice from the government's agriculture extension department for alternative farming. One had however received advice.

None of them get any subsidy for tobacco farming.

They were asked what would they do if in the near future tobacco cultivation and production are banned, two farmers strongly opposed. One said he would wage a movement another said that the local parliamentarian has been told that farmers should be allowed to cultivate tobacco. Another farmer who has a lot of land said that while he would switch to other crops, he would still prefer tobacco farming as it requires less labour. The remaining three said, they would switch to traditional farming, or paddy and vegetables and one said if the government provided grant, he would switch to alternative farming.

Annex- 7

Report on interviewing representatives of tobacco producers

As part of the study for political mapping of the tobacco sector, the MRDI interviewed two representatives of *bidi* manufacturing companies that are in operation from 1968 and 1971. The MRDI had contacted British American Tobacco, Dhaka Tobacco and Nasir Tobacco-- which are the main producers of cigarettes in the country—but they did not respond.

Summary

The bidi manufacturers believe that the government and the anti-tobacco NGOs were the impediments of tobacco sector and that the government's tax policy had affected sale of bidi. The companies however have their marketing strategy to overcome the impediments.

An association of tobacco manufacturers was putting pressure on the government to reduce tobacco tax—but it was not working.

They are divided over the impact of the anti tobacco campaign on the actual sale of tobacco products.

The bidi industries do not offer any standard health precautions to tobacco workers; no real CSR and no initiatives to compensate environmental damages caused by tobacco production.

They do not believe that tobacco was really harmful for the economy.

Findings

The two interviewees believe that the government decision, policy and the tobacco control act were standing in the way of their business. They identified the impediments as

- a. lower prices of cigarettes which had resulted in lesser consumers of bidi;
- b. high tax leading to increase of cost of production of bidi;
- c. high price of bidi papers.

Responding to a question what is their strategy to overcome such impediments, one representative said they offered two free packs of bidi per 40 packs of purchase while another said they gave some gifts to the annual bidi vendors.

Replying to a question what kind of precautions do their bidi companies take to minimize health risk of tobacco workers, one said they provide mask to workers and service of a standby village doctor while the other said he did not offer any precautions.

One of the respondents said that his company did not provide any extra facilities to the workers while the other said he gave Tk 100 bonus to each worker during the two eid festivals each year.

None of the two bidi factories has any initiative to compensate the environmental losses caused by tobacco production.

On the question of corporate social responsibility, one said that his factory provided help to various clubs for local development and during floods; people take shelter at his factory. The other said he did not have any CSR activity.

They said there was an organization of the tobacco manufacturers which put pressure on the government to reduce tobacco tax among other issues. But they believe that such pressures were not successful.

They view the government and anti tobacco NGOs as the impediments of tobacco production.

However they were divided over whether the anti tobacco campaign had affected tobacco business. One said yes, another no. One who said no noted that the campaign has affected the demand of bidi.

One of the two said that there had been occasions when he was discouraged to produce tobacco. The media and various anti tobacco NGOs had advised him to refrain from tobacco production. They however did not suggest any alternative.

On the question how the government was benefited from tobacco production, they said that the government was earning income tax from bidi sector.

They did not agree to the statement that tobacco causes more harm than benefit to the national economy. They argued that the country's females did not smoke; but they often suffered from diseases that are typically caused by smoking. Non-smokers often suffer from the diseases identified as results of smoking.

Although they knew tobacco was harmful for environment and health, why do they carry on with this business? They said that in their area, there was no alternative industry for the workers. The tobacco factories have made some contribution in taking care of unemployment.

If tobacco cultivation and production is banned in the country in the future, what would the producers do? They said that if the government offers alternatives and support, they would certainly welcome the alternative industry.

Annex- 8

Report on Interviewing media Gatekeepers

A. Introduction

As part of the study for political mapping of the tobacco sector, the MRDI interviewed 15 gatekeepers of different national and regional dailies, two television channels and one online news media.

B. Summery

The interviews show that most of the media gatekeepers consciously filter out pro-tobacco stories and promote anti-tobacco stories. They emphasise mostly on health risk aspect, followed by tobacco cultivation, tax and policy issues.

The interviews also indicate that not all the gatekeepers are aware about the real tobacco issues. For instance, one gatekeeper thought the use of tobacco has declined. Another gatekeeper did not think it was necessary for journalists to receive training on tobacco issues.

The gatekeepers are divided over the issue whether the tobacco companies influence journalists to publish related news. Some said despite public relation activities of the tobacco companies, the media print tobacco related news independently upon judging their value in the light of public interest. Others said, the PR does influence journalists indirectly.

In a separate answer, most of them said that they do not face pressure from anyone to publish pro or anti-tobacco news items.

Most of the gatekeepers said their media house had published around 10 tobacco related news in the last one year and that it is insufficient. They attributed this insufficiency to lack of in-depth understanding of both reporters and gatekeepers of tobacco issues and ideas about the issues that need to be focused.

They also said that tobacco is not a stand alone news beat and it is usually covered by a reporter who covers several beats. To integrate the media with the anti tobacco campaign, they suggested campaigners take media houses as their media partner to maximize impact.

They also suggested the journalists need orientation and the anti tobacco organizations should hold more events. There should be workshops or seminars for journalists at the district level. They said that while the tobacco companies maintain good PR with the press, the anti tobacco organizations do not. This gap must be filled.

On the question how the media could influence in amending the tobacco control act, they said an increased flow of reports would exert influence over the government in approving the amendment.

There should be increased reports on tobacco farming and how it is taking more land every year and highlight alternative farming.

C. Findings:

Importance as news item

Responding to a question which type of report on tobacco gets the most importance, all of the gatekeepers highly emphasized on the health risk aspect. Nine of them gave various degrees of emphasis on tobacco cultivation. Half of them also gave some importance on news on tobacco tax and policy issues.

But some of them think that tobacco use has reduced over the years-- which is contrary to the actual trend.

Flow of tobacco related news

Most of the gatekeepers say the flow of tobacco related news reaches maximum level when there is an event, or when there is a budget session. Besides, they identified the anti tobacco day as one such occasion when tobacco related news increase.

On the question if the public relations activities of the tobacco companies influence publication of tobacco related news, the gatekeepers were divided in their opinions.

Do the public relations of Tobacco Company influence the media?

Those who said the public relations could not influence the media, said that the PR sections sometimes request them to publish press release—but whether that would be printed is entirely up to the newsroom. They may nag the media, but its ineffective.

Another said that the media would print news by ensuring the versions of both the parties to ensure neutrality. One gatekeeper pointed out that since tobacco is harmful for public health, there was no scope to take a public stand in favour of tobacco. If a tobacco company contacts over some news, it knows our public stance and therefore it does not try to persuade much over printing something favourable.

A gatekeeper said that since there was no scope for advertisement, the tobacco companies can not influence the district level newspapers.

Those who said the public relations do influence the media, explained that the tobacco companies give various gifts to the journalists or take them to foreign trips. They also host cocktails and other programmes at the capital's best hotels for journalists. The tobacco companies then resort to requesting the journalists not to print certain information.

One gatekeeper categorically said that the British American Tobacco company every year hold opinion exchange programmes with local journalists and exert influence over them so that they would write something good about the tobacco industry.

Consideration of the gatekeepers about news related to tobacco

On the question whether the gatekeepers print any news related to tobacco, 10 answered no while the rest said yes. They explained how they take such decision as saying they weigh the news value, public and national interest first.

Several gatekeepers said that his main concern is public health when it comes to publishing tobacco related stories.

One said he never considers how much revenue the tobacco sector is providing to the government. Another said no news is printed if that encouraged smoking or tobacco business or even farming.

A gatekeeper said that whether a news would be printed depended on its importance.

A gatekeeper pointed out if it is a corporate affair news—like declaring dividend or announcing the financial performance of a tobacco company; or if there is a new appointment there—we print the story.

Number of news printed/produced in the last one year -

On the question how many tobacco related news items were printed in their respective media in the last one year, the lowest number spelled out was three to four and the highest 50. Most of the media houses published around 10 items. Four respondents put the number of publications above 20. Three gatekeepers did not respond to this question.

Most of the respondents did not consider the number of publication in the last one year was sufficient while only one thought it was enough.

Reasons for inadequate news flow-

- They mainly faulted in-depth understanding of both reporters and gatekeepers of tobacco issues and ideas about the issues that need to be focused.
- The media needs training and orientation.
- The media look at the tobacco issue as an ordinary issue.
- The media do not take the health aspect of tobacco that seriously.
- The media do not assign a reporter exclusively covering tobacco sector as a beat; instead it is one of several beats covered by a single reporter.
- In news judgment, there are more important issues in the country like food shortage, crime, poverty etc that demand more attention.
- They also attributed to this lesser number of reports to the silent persuasion by the tobacco PR.
- A district level gatekeeper said that the district correspondents face many types of pressure over tobacco.

How the media should be integrated

On the question how the media should be integrated with the anti tobacco campaign, the gatekeepers suggested different types of approaches like through programmes or through training or through improving media relations.

- **Media partnership**

They said the campaigners may seek media partnership with particular programmes; hold regular discussions; and encourage the journalist leaders to declare their forums like the National Press Club or Dhaka Reporters Unity to declare smoke free zone.

- **Orientation/Training/Workshop**

They also suggested the journalists need orientation and the anti tobacco organizations should hold more events. There should be workshops or seminars for journalists at the district level.

Besides the media should be made aware of the critical issues of tobacco—like the long-term harmful effect tobacco farming or how the tobacco companies lure farmers or consumers.

- **Media relation capacity**

In suggesting improvement of media relations, they said that while the tobacco companies maintain good PR with the press, the anti tobacco organizations do not. Therefore they do not have the necessary connections, although the press is largely against tobacco. This is why they should improve their relations. There should be opinion exchange programmes between the two parties and the anti tobacco organizations should try to be useful to the media by providing them with information when in need.

How the media could influence in amending the tobacco control act

An increased flow of reports would exert influence over the government in approving the amendment.

They said that the media should demonstrate clearly its anti tobacco stance and promote anti-tobacco campaign by giving various incentives; publish case studies on the harmful effect of tobacco; declining commercial transactions with any tobacco company and publish news and analysis on how the amendment would serve the public health better.

They said that the media should also report on the flaws of the present tobacco act and how these flaws have allowed tobacco growth.

There should be increased reports on tobacco farming and how it is taking more land every year and highlight alternative farming.

Annex-9

Report on interviewing journalist/reporters

A. Introduction

The MRDI interviewed 17 reporters of different national dailies, private television channels and news agencies to understand the political mapping of tobacco sector. The reporters were special correspondents, senior reporters, staff correspondents, a district bureau chief and some district correspondents from areas where tobacco cultivation is dominant.

B. Summary

The majority reporters in this series interview have said that health aspect of tobacco reporting gets the maximum importance from their media houses. Event based tobacco reports get secondary importance, followed by tobacco economy, tax and policy issues and tobacco cultivation and its negative environmental impact.

The media houses however mainly assign the reporters to cover event based tobacco stories, followed by the health aspect of reporting and then some on tax and tobacco. Some reporters do not get any instruction.

They said that the Public Relations Departments do influence the media in publishing certain news. They exert this influence by developing friendship with journalists who are invited to various parties and given gifts.

The reporters believe there should be more in-depth reports on the health hazards caused by tobacco, its environmental hazards, loss of agricultural land to tobacco cultivation, loss of soil fertility, tobacco economics, dodging of tax by tobacco companies and alternative farming.

They think that in order to influence tobacco control act amendment, the press should report on the flaws of the existing law, make stories that creates public opinion and motivates the authorities, and make investigative stories on environmental and agricultural harms caused by tobacco.

Suggesting how the media can be integrated with the anti tobacco programmes in the country, the reporters suggested sensitizing the media policymakers by the anti tobacco campaigners.

Journalists should be involved in training and workshop, offered fellowship in the research on tobacco, supplying the reporters with updated information and pictures. A reporters network involving those who report on tobacco may be established.

Majority of them said they get requests from both the pro and anti tobacco lobbies to publish certain reports. The pro-tobacco lobbies are: the tobacco and Bidi companies, tobacco farmers. The anti-tobacco lobbies are: various anti-tobacco platform and NGOs, educated and conscious citizens, students and teachers, physicians, the media authorities and the journalists themselves, environmentalists and the forest department.

C. Findings

Responding to a question how many tobacco related reports they filed in the last one year, four reporters said they did not file any, while majority (11) of them said they filed between one and six reports and two said they filed 10 to 15 reports.

Majority of the reporters said that the health aspect of tobacco reporting get the maximum importance from their media houses. Event based tobacco reports get secondary importance, followed by tobacco economy, tax issues and policy issues. Three reporters additionally said that tobacco cultivation also gets high importance. They added, their publications also emphasised on stories on the negative environmental and agricultural impact caused by tobacco cultivation, and that how except for that for tobacco, all kinds of arable lands are shrinking.

On the question how do the public relations activities of the tobacco companies try to influence publication of tobacco related reports, all except one said they do influence publication of news.

The one who said there is no influence argues that as tobacco does not get news priority, the public relation departments do not try to influence. The remaining reporters said that the PR departments try to build a friendly relationship with the journalists—especially the senior ones-- through various parties and gifts. The companies later exploit this relationship in sometimes getting a story killed or published.

Many have said that they send gifts in various times and behave politely. When they make a request, the journalists can not ignore them entirely.

A reporter said that after the ban on tobacco related advertisements, the tobacco companies promote themselves through holding programmes like tree plantation and other CSR activities.

A reporter said that through their influence, the tobacco companies sometimes manage higher authorities of a media and get green signals to take journalists to field trips in tobacco cultivation areas at their own expenses. After this trip, they present the journalists with various gifts and thus influence the media.

On the question what type of tobacco reports are sought from reporters from the office, majority (eight) said they are event based, followed by health risks (seven) and tax and tobacco (three each). Four said they get no instructions and two said they were asked to file reports on tobacco policy. One reporter additionally said that though the office did not have specific instruction, if he sent stories on tobacco tax evasion, his office published those stories giving them due importance. Another reporter said that his office sought reports on environmental and agricultural damage done by tobacco.

Responding to a question what type of tobacco reports should be published, all of them said there should be more in-depth reports on the health hazards caused by tobacco, its environmental hazards, loss of agricultural land to tobacco cultivation which would eventually cause food production shortage, loss of soil fertility, tobacco economics, dodging of tax by tobacco companies and alternative farming.

On the question how the media could influence in amending the tobacco control act, they said that the media could play its role through both reporting and editorials aiming to raise public awareness. In reporting, they can publish advocacy reports highlighting health hazards and other negative aspects of tobacco, report on the existing law and public opinion about it, highlighting the needs of amending the law or the weaknesses of the law, make stories that creates public opinion and motivates the authorities, reports on how the existing law can not be implemented, investigative stories on environmental and agricultural harms caused by tobacco.

The media should also emphasise on multiple editorials against tobacco.

Suggesting how the media can be integrated with the anti tobacco programmes in the country, the reporters suggested sensitizing the media policymakers by the anti tobacco campaigners.

The media policymakers should be frequently contacted to help them understand the importance of covering tobacco issues. The media should be encouraged and inspired to focus more on the issue by introducing a media award and create a study circle.

The gatekeepers should be made more aware on the issue while the reporters should get training.

The field level journalists and media gatekeepers should be brought to the same discussions on tobacco reports highlighting people who have been affected by tobacco use.

There should be a media group that would be involved with anti-tobacco programme.

The media should be encouraged to make investigative reports in three phases of tobacco production covering the beginning to tobacco cultivation, during the mid period of the crop and finally after harvesting the crop.

As part of the integration of the media, journalists should be involved in training and workshop, offered fellowship in the research on tobacco, supplying the reporters with updated information and pictures and motivate inspire the journalists about their citizens' responsibility.

A reporters network involving those who report on tobacco may be established. Journalists may be encouraged to join such a network under a fellowship or some awards.

Other than these, the reporters should be given the support of specialists. They may be involved with the anti tobacco committees at the district and upazila levels.

Besides there should be regular anti tobacco advertisements, and activists should hold more seminar and workshops on the issue.

On the question whether they get requests from both the pro and anti tobacco lobbies to publish certain reports, majority (14) said yes.

Elaborating further they identified the pro-tobacco lobbies as the PR department of the tobacco companies, tobacco farmers, BAT, Nasir Tobacco and Dhaka Tobacco and the Bidi companies. They said the Bidi companies make an appeal to the journalists that if their factories are closed, thousands of people would become jobless. They offer money to the journalists as well.

They identified the anti-tobacco lobby as various anti-tobacco platform and NGOs, educated and conscious citizens, students and teachers, physicians—especially oncologists, the media authorities and the journalists themselves, environmentalists and the forest department.

Annex-10**Specific mappings of member of the parliamentarians who submitted petition to NBR**

Sl. No.	Name	Party affiliation	Parliamentary Committee/Position	Position on Tobacco Control	Represents the bidi/tobacco growing districts
1	Shajahan Khan	Bangladesh Awami League	Minister, Ministry of Shipping and Inland Water Transport	Pro-Tobacco	No
2	Shamsul Haq Tuku	Bangladesh Awami League	State Minister, Ministry of Home Affairs	Pro-Tobacco	No
3	Begum Monnujan Sufian	Bangladesh Awami League	State Minister, Ministry of Labour & Employment Welfare and Overseas Employment	Pro-Tobacco	No
4	Shajahan Miah	Bangladesh Awami League	State Minister, Ministry of religious Affairs	Pro-Tobacco	No
5	Rashed Khan Menon	Bangladesh Workers Party	Member, Business Advisory Committee	Pro-Tobacco	No
6	Hasanul Haque Innu	Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal	Chairman, Committee on Ministry of Post and Telecommunication	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
7	Advocate Fazle Rabbi Miah	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Business Advisory Committee	Pro-Tobacco	No
8	Dipankar Talukder	Bangladesh Awami League	Minister, Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
9	Motahar Hossain	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on Ministry of Primary and Mass Education	Pro-Tobacco	No

10	Sheikh Abdul Wahab	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Ministry of Education	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
11	Dabirul Islam	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on Government Assurance	Pro-Tobacco	No
12	M Abu Talha	Jatiya Party	Member, Committee on Ministry of Establishments	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
13	Mosammat Shefali Momtaj	Bangladesh Awami League	Member of the Parliament	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
14	Israfil Alam	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Ministry of Labour and Employment	Pro-Tobacco	No
15	Shahida Tarekh Dipti	Bangladesh Awami League	Member of the Parliament	Pro-Tobacco	No
16	Farida Akter Hira	Bangladesh Awami League	Member of the Parliament	Pro-Tobacco	No
17	Zillul Hakim	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the ministry of Fisheries and livestock	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
18	Mojibur Rahman Saroar	BNP	Member, Committee on the ministry of Agricultur	Pro-Tobacco	No
19	Fozle Hossain Badsha	Workers Party	Member, Committee on Estimates	Pro-Tobacco	No
20	Mir Showkat Ali Badsha	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the ministry of Fisheries and livestock	Pro-Tobacco	No
21	Monirul Islam	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the ministry of Social Welfare	Pro-Tobacco	No

22	Keramot Ali	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on Library Committee	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
23	Nurunobi Chowdhury	Bangladesh Awami League	Member of the Parliament	Pro-Tobacco	No
24	Mouazzem Hossain Ratan	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications	Pro-Tobacco	No
25	Md. Abdul Wadud	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on Ministry of Textile and Jute	Pro-Tobacco	No
26	Mesba Uddin Farhad	BNP	Member, Committee on Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism	Pro-Tobacco	No
27	Anwar Hossain	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Ministry of Health and Family Planning	Pro-Tobacco	No
28	M A Jabbar	Jatiya Party	Member, Committee on the Ministry of Environment and Forest	Pro-Tobacco	No
29	Sultana Bulbul	Bangladesh Awami League	Member of the Parliament	Pro-Tobacco	No
30	Ishaq Hossain Talukder	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Library committee	Pro-Tobacco	No
31	Abdul Mannan	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the ministry of Agricultur	Pro-Tobacco	No
32	Shri Biren Sikder	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on Public Undertakings	Pro-Tobacco	No
33	Md. Khaledur Rahman Tito	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on Public Undertakings	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
34	Kabirul Haque	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the ministry of Youth and Sports	Pro-Tobacco	No

35	Talukdar Mohammad Touhid Jong Murad	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the ministry of Youth and Sports	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
36	Shah Alam	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Minsitry of Education	Pro-Tobacco	No
38	Zainul Abdin Faroque	BNP	Chief Whip to the Opposition and Member, Committee on Public Undertakings	Pro-Tobacco	No
39	Afaz Uddin Ahamed	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Minsitry of Primary and mass education	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
40	Najnin Sultana	Bangladesh Awami League	Member of the Parliament	Pro-Tobacco	
41	Advocate Shafiquel Azam Khan	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the ministry of Youth and Sports	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
42	Noor-e-Alam Chowdhury	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Ministry of Housing and Public Works	Pro-Tobacco	No
43	Ali Azgar	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Ministry of Industry	Pro-Tobacco	No
44	Nazrul Islam Monju	BNP	Member, Committee on the ministry of Communication	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
45	Narayon Chnadra Chanda	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
46	Solaiman Haque Joarder	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Minsitry of the Post and Telecommunications	Pro-Tobacco	No

47	Begum Sultana Tarun	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on Ministry of Women and Children Affairs	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
48	Benjir Ahmed	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Ministry of Land	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
49	Tipu Munshi	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, committee on the Ministry of Commerce	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
50	Md. Sirajul Akbar	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on Estimates	Pro-Tobacco	No
51	Mustafizur Rahman	Jatiya Party	Member, Committee on the Ministry of Local government, Rural Development and cooperatives	Pro-Tobacco	No
52	Abdus Sattar	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on Ministry of Housing and Public Works	Pro-Tobacco	No
53	Nur Jahan Begum	Bangladesh Awami League	Member of the Parliament	Pro-Tobacco	
54	Zafor Iqbal Siddique	Jatiyo Party	Member, Committee on the Minsitry of Fisheries and Livestock	Pro-Tobacco	Yes
55	Shaheen Monowara Haque	Bangladesh Awami League	Member of the Parliament	Pro-Tobacco	
56	A S M Firoz	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on Private Members Bills and Resolutions	Pro-Tobacco	No

57	K M Khalid	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the ministry of Chittagonj Hilltracts affairs	Pro-Tobacco	No
58	Rumana Mahmud	BNP	Member, Committee on the Ministry of Commerce	Pro-Tobacco	No
59	Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anni	BNP	Member, Committee on Ministry of Textile and Jute	Pro-Tobacco	No
60	Golam Faruq Khandakar Prince	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the ministry of Youth and Sports	Pro-Tobacco	No
61	H M Golam Reza	Jatiya Party	Member, Committee on the ministry of Communication	Pro-Tobacco	No
62	Tanjim Shakil Joy	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Ministry of the Science and Information & Communication Technology	Pro-Tobacco	No
63	Ronjit Kumer Roy	Bangladesh Awami League	Member, Committee on the Ministry of Land	Pro-Tobacco	Yes

Annex-11

Policy Makers/ Law Makers/influential versions taken from print media

(Fiscal Year 2008 – 2009 and 2009 – 2010)

Newspaper	Date	Name of the speakers	Quotes	Remarks
Jugantor	5/9/2008	M A Mazid, Chairman, NBR	Tobacco consumption increases national economic expenditure. The present VAT and Tax on tobacco and tobacco products are not balanced. To bring down tobacco related expenditure, the tax structure needs to be revised.	Anti
Jugantor	5/9/2008	Dr. Atiur Rahman, Chairman, Unnoyon Shommonoy	Campaign against tobacco has begun. It has to be spread countrywide and eventually this will bring down the health hazards of the peoples.	Anti
Jugantor	5/9/2008	Mohammad Alam, Member, NBR	Tobacco cannot be controlled through raising tax. Only raising awareness among tobacco consumers can help bring down the consumption. On the other hand, imposing high tax will increase smuggling of tobacco. So, NBR has to consider the consequences.	Anti
Ittefaq	5/9/2008	M A Mazid, Chairman, NBR	Market remains unaffected by tax rise as tobacco companies are balancing it out through profit-cut. Tobacco sector is a very good source of revenue. But we do not want to see it this way. The tax allocated in the budget on tobacco will be revised if needed.	Anti
Bhorer Kagoj	5/9/2008	M A Mazid, Chairman, NBR	Social responsibility has made the government raise tax on tobacco. Every tobacco consumer should give up tobacco consumption to reduce the pressure on national economy.	Anti
Bhorer Kagoj	5/9/2008	Dr. Atiur Rahman, Chairman, Unnoyon Shommonoy	The country is making a loss of 5 thousand crore Taka every year from tobacco related diseases but earning only 2.4 crore. So, it is clear the country makes a total loss of 2.6 crore from the tobacco sector.	Anti
Janakantha	5/9/2008	Mohammad Alam, Member, NBR	In the present fiscal, 5 thousand crore taka has been fixed for taxation on tobacco which is higher than last year.	Anti
Financial Express	30/09/2008	Nasiruddin Biswas, Chairman, Bangladesh cigarette manufacturers association	There could be larger repercussions on the industry as a whole and the hefty TK 42 billion supplementary duty and VAT generated by the end-product. The crop	Pro

			has fast clawed a sizeable export market of US\$ 31 million.	
Financial Express	30/09/2008	Abdul Aziz, state secretary	We are giving fertilizer to tobacco farmers at import cost. They are paying TK 70 for a kg of urea whereas the other farmers get it for tk 12. Economic benefits far out weighed the pressures to discourage the crop.	Anti
Financial Express	30/09/2008	Mahmudur Rahman, BAT	Tobacco is the only crop where the farmers sell direct to the companies without the curse of the middleman hanging over them. Kushtia and Manikgonj have tobacco growing on high land but a lack of irrigation prevents cultivation of food crops there. Rahman says of the refusal to 'help' tobacco farmers.	Pro
Daily Star	17/11/2008	AHM Khairuzzaman Liton (RCC Mayor)	Media can play an important role in raising public awareness against the social menace. He announced RCC Bhaban a smokefree zone.	Anti
Daily Star	17/11/2008	Salahuddin Ahamed, Member, Bangladesh energy regulatory commission	He urged people from all walks of life to launch a social movement against smoking.	Anti
Ittefaq	22/12/2008	Barrister Rafiqul Haq	The nation can be released from the curse of tobacco through creating awareness and proper implementation of the existing laws.	Anti
Prothom Alo	12/04/2009	Farid Uddin Ahmed, Professor, Economics dept, Dhaka University	Raising tax on and cost of tobacco products will have a positive impact on the economy as well as public health.	Anti
Daily Star	12/04/2009	Dr. Atiur Rahman, Economist	Narcotics control act 2005 must be raised to make it capable of stopping campaign programs that promote smoking.	Anti
Daily Star	12/04/2009	Dr. Shahdin Malik	Since the country cannot run an anti-smoking campaign, there is no one to take legal measures against people violating such laws.	Anti
Janakantha	31/05/2009	Dr. Arup Ratan Chowdhury	I want to draw attention of the hon'ble minister on raising tax on tobacco in the up-coming budget as it does no good to people. Also in the upcoming parliament, please revise the tobacco-control act through placing violent images of tobacco effects on health on 50% space of promotional tobacco (bidi,	Anti

			jarda, etc) packages.	
Jugantor	31/05/2009	Dr. Nurul Islam	All the tobacco-packages must have warning signs and texts. The tax must be raised to severe extent like 100 or if possible 200%.	Anti
Prothom Alo	31/05/2009	Mahbubul Alam, Editor, The Independent	Anti-tobacco campaign hasn't spread far in rural areas.	Anti
Ittefaq	30/3/2009	M A Mazid, Chairman, NBR	As per agreement with UN, every year tax on tobacco must be increased.	Anti
Ittefaq	30/3/2009	Dr. Atiur Rahman, Economist	Death from tobacco can be controlled by raising tax.	Anti
Bhorer Kagoj	5/3/2009	Barrister Tania Amir	The law must be strengthened to such extent so that the tobacco companies fail to find any weakness in it.	Anti
Financial Express	01/06/2009	President Zillur Rahman	President Zillur Rahman drew the attention of the government for including anti-tobacco articles in school curriculum to raise awareness among the new generation against smoking.	Anti
Janakantha	1/6/2009	Dr. Syed Modasser Ali	Every institution should be made non-smoking zones.	Anti
Ittefaq	1/6/2009	Abul Kalam Azad, Minister of Information	Pictures showing harmful effects of tobacco should be posted on tobacco products to save the young generations. He will request the Prime Minister to take action at the soonest.	Anti
Ittefaq	1/6/2009	Professor Mozzafar Ahmed	Tax can be a way to control tobacco. Pictures showing harmful effects of tobacco should be posted on tobacco products, he demanded	Anti
Ittefaq	1/6/2009	Dr. Nurul Islam	Educational materials should also carry pictures of harmful effects of tobacco.	Anti
Ittefaq	21/6/2009	Professor M R Khan	Tobacco harms the smokers as well as the non-smokers.	Anti
Ittefaq	21/6/2009	Md. Humayun Kabir, Director, Head, National Tobacco Control Cell	To control tobacco we have started spreading awareness in 2000 schools at rural areas. In the campaign, the harmful effects of tobacco will be highlighted.	Anti
Prothom Alo	12/6/2009	A F M Ruhul Haque, Health Minister	Nations should unite to halt tobacco spread and Bangladesh can play vital role in it.	Anti
Prothom Alo	12/6/2009	Modasser Ali, Advisor, Health	International effort is needed in Bangladesh to halt tobacco spread.	Anti
New Age	01/11/2009	Barrister Shafique Ahmed, Law minister	The loop holes of the law would be removed by incorporating into if the necessary suggestions given by the	Anti

			ministry of health and family welfare.	
New Age	01/11/2009	Dr. Mostafa Zaman, WHO	The government should take proper steps to save the young generation from the thaw of cigarette companies that began providing cigarettes to the students of different halls of Dhaka University and BUET in the name of giving prizes for wining prizes.	Anti
Daily Star	07/11/2009	Md. Motahar Hossain, Primary & mass education minister	BAT Bangladesh's role for offering healthcare facilities to its registered farmers across the country.	Pro
Daily Star	07/11/2009	Alan Davy, Managing Director, BAT	My company has taken initiative to help its registered farmers and their families by providing them with primary health care services to complement development efforts made by the government.	Pro
Daily Star	23/12/2009	AFM Ruhul Haque, Health Minister	The government is thinking of making it mandatory to print pictorial health warnings on the packets of bidi/cigarettes. The government recently includes the messages of harmful affects of tobacco in the school text book curriculum to create awareness in the society.	Anti
Daily Star	26/12/2009	AFM Ruhul Haque, Health Minister	Government has a plan to increase tax on tobacco products, especially bidi, so that the supply and consumption of these harmful stuffs can be cut down significantly.	Anti
Daily Star	23/05/2010	Dr. Arup Ratan Chowdhury	Women and children are the worst victims of tobacco related health hazards. Many women and children are also involved in processing of tobacco and they face various health hazards in the tobacco factories. The government should take steps to raise awareness among the people to protect women from the sever impacts of tobacco use.	Anti
Daily Star	23/05/2010	Nasrin Mukti, senior asst. secretary of health ministry	The government has taken effective measures to strictly implement tobacco control act.	Anti
Daily Star	23/05/2010	Nasima Akter Jolly, Secretary, National Girl Child	Spending on tobacco by male members of a family also have an adverse impacts on women and children as they do not get enough money to spend on their education, healthcare and nutritional requirements.	Anti

Daily Star	27/06/2010	Ad. Qumrul Islam, state minister of law	He stressed the need for discouraging farmers to cultivate tobacco providing them with alternative options.	Anti
Financial Express	02/06/2010	Prof. Muzaffar Ahmed	He suggested government should raise corporate tax on profits of tobacco companies and tariff to be imposed on tobacco cultivation and proposed introduction of license system for tobacco cultivation.	Anti
Daily Star	02/06/2010	Zillur Rahman, President	He declared Bangabhaban as a smoking free zone. Smoking is a social problem and it also inspires people to many other bad practices.	Anti
New Age	02/06/2010	Zillur Rahman President	All Bangabhaban staff must stay away from smoking and if anyone is found smoking would have to face departmental punishment.	Anti
New Age	02/06/2010	Prof. Dr. Abdul Malik, NHF	He suggested increased tax on the tobacco related products along with creating awareness among the school children through incorporating it in their curriculum to keep the young generation away from this bad habit	Anti
Jankantha	29/6/2010	Dr. Abul Barakat, President, Bangladesh Economic Council	Government should pay attention to 'bidi' industry, as millions of peoples earn their bread through this.	Pro
Ittefaq	20/6/2010	Dr. Julfikar Ali, BIDS	If tax on tobacco is not increased, people are more prone to death from tobacco intake as supply will increase.	Anti
Samakal	8/6/2010	A H M Mostafa Kamal, MP	Increasing tax is not the only way-out. Creating awareness as well as government support to tobacco farmers should be given.	Anti