

# Tobacco Industry Interference (TII) Monitoring Report

August-September, 2020

Report Prepared  
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## Summary: (Key issue of the report)

Throughout the year, tobacco companies try to disrupt tobacco control through various interventions. They have continued their activities since before the announcement of the 2020-21 budgets. We have identified a total of 15 company interferences in recent times. The most notable of which was the BAT to provide Tk 9 crore 17 lakh to Bangladesh Workers Welfare Foundation, Provide 1 lakh saplings to the Dhaka North City Corporation and human chain demanding withdrawal of increased duty on bidis.

With the technical assistance of The Union, WBB Trust has collected all the information about the interferences done by the tobacco companies. A brief report on the activities of tobacco companies has been prepared in recent times.

TII on Tax		
Date	News and source	Evidence
25 August 20	<p>Bidi workers in Sirajganj, Pabna and Rangpur areas have mobilized to withdraw the increased price of bidi in the budget of 2020-21. They cordoned off the house of NBR chairman Abu Hena Md. RahmatulMunim at SirajganjSadar for two hours at 12 noon on Tuesday. Representatives of Bangladesh Bidi Sramik Federation, Pabna District Bidi Majdoor Union, Narayanganj District Bidi Sramik Federation, Sirajganj District Bidi Sramik Union were present in the human chain campaign.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://sharebiz.net">sharebiz.net</a> online news</p>	<p>এনবিআর চেয়ারম্যানের বাড়িতে বিড়ি শ্রমিকদের মানববন্ধন</p> 
1 September 20	<p>In the budget of 2020-21 financial year, the price of per packet bidi has been increased by Tk 4 and the price of low quality cigarettes has been increased by only Tk 2. In protest of the price hike, the bidi workers have held a press conference demanding 5 points for the protection of the bidi industry including withdrawal of the increased price of bidi by Tk 4 in the current budget, withdrawal of advance income tax on bidi &amp; guarantee of work six days a week. Their claim is that foreign cigarette companies are smuggling a lot of money from this country by doing exclusive business. Fake bidis is also booming in the market due to the increase in</p>	<p>ডাকবন্দ বৈধন্যে বন্ধ হচ্ছে বিড়ি কারখানা, বেকার হচ্ছেন কর্মীরা</p> <p>খণ্ডিত ডাকবন্দ প্রত্যাহারের দাবি</p>  <p>টাকা পাচার করছে</p> 

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	tariffs on bidis. As a result, the government is losing huge amount of money in revenue.  Source: <a href="http://sharebiz.net">sharebiz.net</a> , <a href="http://barta24.com">barta24.com</a> , <a href="http://rtvonline.com">rtvonline.com</a> online news	
7 September 20	Tobacco growers and traders in the greater Rangpur region have held a press conference demanding six points including tobacco farmers protection policy, withdrawal of increased tariff on bidi in current budget, abolition of advance income tax on bidi, protection of indigenous industry, declaration of bidi as cottage industry.  Source: <a href="http://newszonebd.com">newszonebd.com</a> online news	<p>৬ দফা দাবিতে জাতীয় প্রেস ক্লাবে আমাক চাষী ও ব্যবসায়ীদের সংবাদ সম্মেলন</p> 
17 September 20	The price of one thousand low-slabled cigarette stick is Rs 3,900, so that the company has all the costs, profits and revenue including production. But it is being sold at Tk 3,500 with a discount of Tk 400. The multinational tobacco company British American Tobacco Limited (BAT) and Japan Tobacco International (JTI) have been accused of manipulating the sale of cigarettes.  Source: <a href="http://sharebiz.net">sharebiz.net</a> online news	<p>নিম্নম্যানেবের সিগারেট বিক্রিতে বিএটি-জেটিআই'র কারসাজি</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ সুপী বহুজাতিক কোম্পানি ৩৯০০ টাকার সিগারেট বিক্রি করেছে ৩৫০০ টাকায়</li> <li>■ বাজারের দখল ধরে রাখতে দেশীয় কোম্পানির তুলনায় হাত দিচ্ছে ৬০০ টকা</li> <li>■ কখনোই একবিচার চেয়ারম্যান করার অভিযোগ</li> </ul>
<b>TII on CSR</b>		
25 August 20	Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Mohammad Atiqul Islam has inaugurated a program to plant 1 lakh trees in the Dhaka North City Corporation area with the slogan 'Green Decorate Dhaka'. To expedite this program, British American Tobacco Bangladesh (BATB) has assisted Dhaka North City Corporation with 1 lakh saplings. MubinaAsaf, Head of Legal and External Affairs (BATB) said BAT Bangladesh's afforestation project has also completed 40 years in Muzib year. She also added that BATB is working with the Government to achieve the sustainable development goals through afforestation.  Source: <a href="http://barta24.com">barta24.com</a> online news	<p>ছাদ বাগান করলে ১০ শতাংশ কর রেয়াত: মেয়র আতিক</p>  <p>সর্বশেষ সবারই হাতে এই প্রোগ্রামকে সামনে নিয়ে ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি করপোরেশনে একেবারে ১ লাখ গাছ লাগানোর কর্মসূচির উদ্বোধন করছেন ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি করপোরেশনের মেয়র মো. আতিকুল ইসলাম। তিনি বলেন, ঢাকাকে পঁচাত্তর</p>

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<p>6 September 20</p>	<p>British American Tobacco Bangladesh has donated about Tk 9 crore 16 lakh to the Bangladesh Workers Welfare Foundation fund under the Ministry of Labor and Employment. In the last 10 years, BAT Bangladesh has contributed a total of Tk 58.1541170 to this fund. So far, BAT Bangladesh has single-handedly provided about 15 percent of the total donations to the fund.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://jagonews24.com">jagonews24.com</a>, online news</p>	
<p>23 September 20</p>	<p>On the occasion of Mujib Year, Hon'ble Prime Minister has announced to plant one crore trees across the country. Following this, the British American Tobacco (BAT) Bangladesh's 'Forestry' project is working with the aim of planting 5 million saplings across the country this year. They are cooperating in greening with a total of one lakh saplings in Dhaka city. As part of which, British American Tobacco recently handed over 5,000 saplings to 14no. ward Councilor Humayun Rashid Johnny in East Shewrapara.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://bangladeshtimes.com">bangladeshtimes.com</a> online news</p>	
<p><b>TII on Smuggling</b></p>		
<p>20 August 20</p>	<p>Cigarettes from a well-known English company were brought across the international border to Siliguri. The consignment crossed the Indo-Myanmar border and crossed the borders of several eastern states to Assam. It then crossed the Assam-Bengal border and reaches Siliguri via Cooch Behar on the national highway. There were 50 cartons of cigarettes hidden in the driver's cabin and the estimated market price of this consignment is about 50 lakh Taka.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://bengali.news18.com">bengali.news18.com</a> online news</p>	
<p>6 September 20</p>	<p>Huge quantities of cigarettes were seized from the depot of Shantinagar, SA Paribahan in the capital on suspicion of evading revenue through the use of fakebandoles. Apart from VAT invoices, 350,000 sticks of 'Caesar' in 14 sacks from Kushtia and 40,000 sticks of</p>	

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	<p>Senor Gold cigarettes from Bogra entered the Dhaka depot in SA transport vehicles. The destination of both the consignments was Chaumuhani, Noakhali. VAT detectives checked the banderole used in the cigarette packets of the consignment and confirmed that it was fake.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://newspapers71.com">newspapers71.com</a>, online news</p>	
23 August 20	<p>Monir Bidi maker was arrested with 10 sticks for using fake banderole and falsifying Gopal Bidi's brand by evading government customs.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://diptonews24.com">diptonews24.com</a> online news</p>	<p>পাইকপাহাড় কপিলমুণিতে নকল বিড়িসম্বন্ধিত আটক ভ্রাম্যমান আদালতে ২০ হাজার টাকা জরিমানা আদায়</p> 
7 September 20	<p>Idris Miah, owner of Rashida Bidi Factory in Jamalpur and Sherpur, has been accused of embezzling crores of Taka from the Govt. by using old banderoles and showing low production.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://banglatribune.com">banglatribune.com</a> online news</p>	<p>দেখি টাকা হস্তান্তর করিয়ে এদেশি বিড়ি উৎপাদন থেকে</p> 
<b>TII on Misleading</b>		
30 August 20	<p>Researchers in Thailand have claimed that a vaccine made from tobacco leaves has been successful in the first step in preventing Corona virus. According to Al Jazeera, the vaccine made from tobacco leaves, was applied to monkeys by Thai researchers.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://eyenews.news">eyenews.news</a>, online news</p>	<p>ভ্যাকসিন পরীক্ষা থেকে তৈরি ভ্যাকসিন প্রথম ধাপে সফল!</p> 
<b>Others</b>		
7 September 20	<p>The Akij Group is being redistributed. The group's two dozen companies are being divided among Akij Uddin's five sons. It is known that the legal and finance department of the group is working on this. Sheikh Akij Uddin's business was amplified mainly based on tobacco business. Sheikh Akij Uddin established a company called Dhaka Tobacco in the continuation of business expansion in the tobacco sector. Among the cigarettes produced by Dhaka Tobacco, Navy and Sheikh cigarettes have gained wide popularity.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://sharebiz.net">sharebiz.net</a>, online news</p>	<p>আবার ভাগ হচ্ছে আকিয়া গ্রুপ</p> 

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<p>17 September 20</p>	<p>The Abdullah Tobacco Company in Rangpur is selling unscrupulous tobacco waste (canceled tobacco and tobacco stalks) for making bidis, cigarettes and jorda which they collected to make organic fertilizer. BATB has a tobacco waste management agreement with the company. According to the agreement, they will be permitted to make only organic fertilizer from tobacco waste.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://jugantor.com">jugantor.com</a> news paper</p>	
<p>21 September 20</p>	<p>One of the main causes of fires in the country is the burning of discarded cigarette butts. From January 1 to December 31 last year, there were a total of 24,074 fire incidents in the country. Of these, 4,153 fires were occurred from cigarette butts, which is 15% of the total fires. The damage caused by the fire from the cigarette fire is about 18 crore 19 lakh Taka. This information comes from last year's annual statistics of the Fire Service and the Department of Civil Defense.</p> <p>Source: <a href="http://sharebiz.net">sharebiz.net</a> online news</p>	