

Nepal

Overall score:

41

I. Industry participation in policy development:

The government does not accept or endorse any policies or legislation drafted by or in collaboration with the tobacco industry. The government does not invite the tobacco industry to sit in the government interagency/ multi-sectoral committee/ advisory group body that sets public health policy.

The tobacco industry has not been included in the government delegations to the sessions of the WHO FCTC COP or any of its related meetings.

II. Tobacco industry-related CSR activities:

There is no formal agreement between the government and tobacco industry to conduct any CSR activities. More recently, the main tobacco company, Surya Nepal Private Ltd, has aligned its CSR activities with the government's promotion of small- and medium-sized enterprises as the mainstay of the country's socio-economic development.

Furthermore, some tobacco companies were informally involved in relief operations after incidents of natural disasters (such as the earthquake in 2015).

III. Benefits given to the tobacco industry:

No privileges, incentives or tax exemptions are given to the tobacco industry.

International travellers are allowed to bring 200 cigarettes, or no more than 500 grams of smoking tobacco into Nepal.

IV. Unnecessary interaction with the tobacco industry:

Surya Nepal has been awarded twice as the top taxpayer in an awards event organized by the government.

The Industry, Commerce and Supplies Minister expressed support to re-start the state-owned "Janakpur Cigarette Factory".

V. Procedure for transparency measures:

There is no system to require the disclosure or registration of tobacco industry entities, affiliated organizations, and individuals acting on their behalf including lobbyists. There was no formal meeting with tobacco industry in the last two years, but one-to-one informal meetings between government and Industry representatives may have taken place.

VI. Avoiding conflicts of interest:

Political parties receive donations from the private sector especially during Party meetings and election campaigns. Political parties are not required to disclose their sources of income.

There has been, so far, no evidence of retired senior government officials joining the tobacco industry.

VII. Preventive measures:

While the government has formulated a policy to protect government officials, a code of conduct has not been implemented yet. There is no system in place for the government to regularly monitor the tobacco industry's dealings with the government.

The tobacco industry is not required to submit any periodic report to the government information about its business.



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Recommendations

1. Government must expedite the adoption of a code of conduct for all government officials in dealing with the tobacco industry.
2. Tobacco industry-related CSR activities must be banned.
3. There must be a registry to provide a record of representatives of the tobacco industry.
4. The tobacco industry must be required to provide information on tobacco production, manufacture, market share, marketing expenditures, revenues and other activities, including lobbying, philanthropy, political contributions.