

NEPAL

2021

TOBACCO
INDUSTRY
INTERFERENCE
INDEX

Preface and Acknowledgement

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Global Centre for Good Governance in Tobacco Control (GGTC), a joint Initiative of the School of Global Studies, Thammasat University and South-East Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA) for providing opportunity to me to conduct this study. I am fortunate in involving in this global process since the last three years. For this I am indebted to Dr. Mary Assunta and Yodhim Dela Rosa for their technical support to get this report to the final shape.

The world is under Corona Pandemic. In this alarming situation the cooperation provided by the provincial representative of Health Rights and Tobacco Control Network are highly acknowledged. Mr. Padma Raj Joshi, General Secretary of the Health Journalist Society is worth mentioning. His contribution in generating necessary information for this report is highly acknowledged. Lastly my special thanks goes to my Secretary Miss Samridhi Newa for all her services to prepare this report.

The country like Nepal, where all policy implementation is determined by ruling political party could not improve Tobacco Control status due to very fragile bureaucratic system. The unstable government resulted into very weak law implementation. This has ultimately affected this TII Index report with low score.



Shanta Lall Mulmi
National Coordinator Health Rights and Tobacco Control Network, Nepal

Introduction

While Nepal is committed to tobacco control there still exists gaps especially in the implementation of policies. Tobacco control in Nepal is governed by the following acts, regulations, plan and policies such as: Tobacco (Control and Regulation) Act 2011, Tobacco Products (Control and Regulation) Regulation 2012, Tobacco Product Control and Regulatory Directive 2014, National Tobacco Control Strategic Plan 2013-2016, Multi Action Plan for Preventive and Control of Non- Communicable Disease (2014-2020), and Ministry of Health Public Note on Rules for Sale and Distribution of Tobacco Products 2017. Nepal became one of the top ten countries to sign the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) in March 2003.

Currently, there are three cigarette manufacturers in the country who dominate the bulk of the market share: Surya Nepal Private Limited, Gorkha Lahari and Perfect Blends (Nepal). Surya Nepal Private Limited is a subsidiary of ITC Ltd, India, is the largest private sector enterprise in Nepal. The balance shares are held by dispersed Nepalese shareholders and British American Tobacco¹. It also accounts for 85 percent share of country's cigarette market. The remaining 15% requirement has been covered by Gorkha Lahari, Nepal Tobacco Company, Perfect Blends Nepal and other small industries including Bidi and chewing Tobacco. Transnational tobacco companies entered the Nepalese market through joint ventures with Surya Nepal Private Limited (with Imperial Tobacco Company and British American Tobacco) in 1983 and Seti Cigarette Factory Limited (with Philip Morris International [PMI]) in 1985.²³

It has been almost a decade since Nepal implemented the Tobacco Products Control and Regulation Law. Over the past years, the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) developed the Three-Year Strategic Plan (2013-2016) and later created the Multi-sectorial Action Plan (2014) for the preparation and control of non-communicable disease. Despite all existing directives, plan and regulation, the agenda for tobacco control remain deeply lacking in Nepal:

- a) **Tobacco Tax:** The prevalence of tobacco use in Nepal remains persistently high in the last decade. The survey conducted by Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) reported that tobacco use was 30.8% between 2012/13 and 28.9% in 2019⁴. The survey showed, 20.1% of the tobacco users use smokeless tobacco and 15.6% use smoked tobacco, although a lower percentage smoked bidies (14.9%). Compared to all SAARC countries, Nepal has indicated lower tobacco tax (30%) whereas India levies 54.4% tax. Despite continuous advocacy of tobacco control network to raise

¹ <https://www.itcportal.com/businesses/group-companies/surya-nepal.aspx>

² <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31363061/>

³ <https://tobaccotactics.org/wiki/british-american-tobacco/>

⁴ https://ndri.org.np/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Final-English-Policy_Brief_Tobacco_Policy-1.pdf

tobacco tax to an optimum 75%, the government normally increased 2.5% tax every year.

- b) **Graphic Health Warning:** The MoHP endorsed a new directive to implement graphic health warning on tobacco products covering 90% of the total surface area of packs. It started with 50%, then increased to 75%, and in 2017 went up to 90% which puts Nepal to the top spot globally with the largest graphic health warning. This statutory requirement was conveyed to all producers of domestic and international brands but domestic tobacco product still carry the old 75% graphic health warning. The concerned government agency has not yet taken any action on producers of domestic products who are violating the directive.
- c) **Smoke Free Public Places:** As per the law, shops around 100 meters of any public place (schools, temples, sport complex, public auditorium, stadium, etc.) are prohibited to sell tobacco products. However, due to lack of enforcement measures, there are still shops selling tobacco products close to these places and strict implementation of No Smoke Zones have not been enforced in these areas.
- d) **Selling to Minors:** The Tobacco Products Control and Regulation (Section II) prohibits sales of tobacco products to minors below the age of 18 years. Currently, any age group can purchase tobacco products in any quantity, stick or package.

In 2019, the government of Nepal endorsed the 15th Five-Year Plan (2019/20-2023/24)⁵ with clear vision, goals, objectives and strategies for the country's social and economic development. This plan has long term vision on the health sector. The 15th Five-Year Plan has a goal to ensure access to quality health services for the people by developing and expanding a strong health system at all levels. However, it is silent on the implementation of stronger tobacco control policies to reduce tobacco-related deaths and tobacco industry interference in the country.

This is the third country report on tobacco industry interference in Nepal. In 2020, the country scored 41 points, reflecting a moderate level of tobacco industry meddling. This year, Nepal garnered an overall score of 44 points, which indicates a slight deterioration in efforts to protect public health policies and lawmaking from tobacco industry interference.

This report uses the questionnaire developed by the Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA) based on the Article 5.3 Guidelines. Information used in this report is obtained from the public domain. A scoring system is applied to make the assessment. The score ranges from 0 - 5, where 5 indicates highest level of industry interference, and 1 is low or no interference. Hence the lower the score, the better for the country. This report gathers evidence for the period January 2020 to April 2021.

⁵ <https://publichealthupdate.com/15th-five-year-development-plan-2019-20-2023-24-health-and-nutrition/>

Summary Findings

1. INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The government has not taken any kind of support from the tobacco industry in relation to the enforcement of the Tobacco Control Law. The government has not invited any representatives from the tobacco industry or anyone belonging to the tobacco industry in the government committee constituted for public health policy.

2. INDUSTRY CSR ACTIVITIES

The Tobacco Product Control and Regulatory Directives 2014 states that tobacco manufacturer and related parties are prohibited from providing any financial, technical, material, and structural assistance to educational seminaries, theatres, religious discourse, preaching or health facilities operated by the government, non-government or private sectors.

During the Covid-19, Chief Ministers of various provinces are found to be receiving donations from the tobacco industry for Corona fund and happy to publicise their endorsement by taking photos with tobacco companies when receiving the donation.

3. BENEFITS TO THE INDUSTRY

Experts have said that the tax levied on tobacco products in Nepal is very low. Nepal is also one of the countries in South Asia that imposes the lowest tax on tobacco products. Mr. Bahadur Basnet, Deputy Secretary at the Ministry of Health, said that the current 30 percent tax on tobacco products should be increased in Nepal. The World Health Organization has recommended to levy a minimum of 70% tax on tobacco products but Nepal has still not increased the tax rate since. International travelers are allowed to import tobacco products not exceeding 250 grams in total.

4. UNNECESSARY INTERACTION

The tobacco industry does not submit reports on the production and trade of tobacco every month to the government. No arrangements have been made to provide the details of the product. Authority has not been provided to the Ministry of Health to take action for not submitting. That right has been provided to the Assistant Chief District Officer and Supervisor.

Raising awareness for employees has been done from time to time. The government has no separate policy on support provided by the tobacco industry. However, the Tobacco Products Control and Regulation Directive prohibits acceptance of any kind

of presents or honors from the industry. This is the policy of the government. Rule 48 of Article 5 of Tobacco Products Control and Regulation Directive 2071 has prohibited receiving presents or free items and cash from any tobacco industry.

5. TRANSPARENCY

The government has not had any meetings with the tobacco industry for the last three years. However, there is also no mechanism to verify or disclose these meetings, if they happened. There is no statutory requirement for the disclosure. The government has no record of meeting with affiliated organizations and individual lobbyists or representatives of the tobacco industry.

6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Tobacco Control and Regulation has prohibited the government from taking any kind of assistance or contribution from the tobacco industry. The government does not prohibit contributions from the tobacco industry or any entity working to further its interests, to political parties, candidates, or campaigns or to require full disclosure of such contributions.

7. PREVENTIVE MEASURES

No disclosure of interaction or related systems is in place. There is a policy prohibiting the acceptance of gifts or rewards from the tobacco industry. However, the lack of proper monitoring from the government provides a conducive environment for the tobacco industry to target groups and interfere.

There is no code of conduct for public officials which sets standards when dealing with the tobacco industry. However, the government regularly organizes orientation trainings to government employees on the Tobacco Control and Regulation Law as well as the moral ethics for civil servants. Article 48 (Chapter 5) of the Tobacco Control and Regulation Law prohibits government officials and employees from receiving any gifts in terms of objects or money from the tobacco industry or its representatives.

The Nepal Health Education, Information and Communication Centre of the Ministry of Health is responsible for providing trainings to government officers and raising public awareness through print, TV, radio and social media. There is sufficient budget allocated for this purpose.

Recommendations

1. Adopt a code of conduct for all government officials when interacting with the tobacco industry, limited to only when strictly necessary.
2. Require the tobacco industry to submit reports on its production, revenue, expenditure on marketing and philanthropy.

- Implement government directive requiring 90% pictorial health warning on all tobacco packages, including chewing tobacco.

2021 Tobacco Industry Interference Index Results and Findings

	0	1	2	3	4	5
INDICATOR 1: Level of Industry Participation in Policy-Development						
1. The government ⁶ accepts, supports or endorses any offer for assistance by or in collaboration with the tobacco industry ⁷ in setting or implementing public health policies in relation to tobacco control ⁸ (Rec 3.1)		1				
<p>The Tobacco Control and Regulations Act (Rule 48 of Article 5) prohibits the government from receiving any kind of help or contribution from the tobacco industry while formulating any rules regarding tobacco control and its implementation.</p> <p>In April 2019, when the Social Development Ministry of Gandaki Province was about to draft a tobacco control related policy, two people from Surya came two pressurize them but unsuccessful.</p>						
2. The government accepts, supports or endorses <u>policies or legislation drafted</u> by or in collaboration with the tobacco industry. (Rec 3.4)		1				
<p>The government does not accept any legislation drafted by the tobacco industry or related company. The government has issued the Acts for Tobacco Products (Control and Regulation) after discussing it with concerned stakeholders except the tobacco industry. The tobacco industry has been applying pressure on the government and mobilizing tobacco farmers to delay the issuance and implementation of the tobacco control directives since 2012 A.D.</p>						
3. The government allows/invites the tobacco industry to sit in government interagency/ multi-sectoral committee/ advisory group body that sets public health policy. (Rec 4.8)		1				
<p>The government does not invite representatives from the tobacco industry to sit in any committee that formulates public health policies. The Health and Population Ministry and the other concerned officials are aware of the Tobacco Product, Control and Regulation Act, Laws and Directives to prohibit any representatives of tobacco industry to any committee meetings on tobacco control.</p>						

⁶ The term “government” refers to any public official whether or not acting within the scope of authority as long as cloaked with such authority or holding out to another as having such authority

⁷ The term, “tobacco industry’ includes those representing its interests or working to further its interests, including the State-owned tobacco industry.

⁸ “Offer of assistance” may include draft legislation, technical input, recommendations, oversees study tour

	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. The government nominates or allows representatives from the tobacco industry (including State-owned) in the delegation to the COP or other subsidiary bodies or accepts their sponsorship for delegates. (i.e. COP 4 & 5, INB 4 5, WG) ⁹ (Rec 4.9 & 8.3)		1				

The government does not nominate or allow representatives from the tobacco industry (including State-owned) in the delegation to the COP or other subsidiary bodies or accept their sponsorship for delegates. In the last COP, Mr S.R. Sharma Director, Non-Communicable Diseases and Mental Health, Ministry of Health and Population Delegate, Dr. T.S. Bam Adviser, International Union Against TB and Lung Disease, Singapore, and Mr K. Rai Advisor, Permanent Mission, Geneva represented Nepal. ¹⁰

INDICATOR 2: Industry CSR activities

5. A. The government agencies or its officials endorses, supports, forms partnerships with or participates in so-called CSR activities organized by the tobacco industry. (Rec 6.2)						
B. The government (its agencies and officials) receives contributions ¹¹ (monetary or otherwise) from the tobacco industry (including so-called CSR contributions). (Rec 6.4)				3		

Although the Tobacco Product Control and Regulatory Directives 2014 prohibits tobacco manufacturer and related parties from providing any financial, and structural assistance to educational, religious and other activities, during the Covid-19, Chief Ministers of different Provinces are found to be taking donations from the tobacco industry. They were found taking photos with tobacco companies receiving the donation for Corona fund.

Mr. Prithivi Shubba Gurung, Chief Minister of Gandaki Province, Mr. Dormanni Paudel, Chief Minister of Bagmati Province, and Mr. Shankar Pokhrel , Chief Minister of Province 5 , received one crore each on June last year from Surya Nepal. Surya Nepal has donated this money in the name of corporate social responsibility.¹²



Mr. Prithivi Subba Gurung, Chief Minister, Gandaki Province receiving donation from Surya Nepal



Mr. Shankar Pokhrel, Chief Minister of Province 5 receiving donation from Surya Nepal

⁹ Please annex a list since 2009 so that the respondent can quantify the frequency, <http://www.who.int/fctc/cop/en/>

¹⁰ https://www.who.int/fctc/cop/sessions/cop8/LOP_Final.pdf

¹¹ political, social financial, educations, community, technical expertise or training to counter smuggling or any other forms of contributions

¹² Shrawan 2nd 2077 in www.healthtodaynepal.com

In April 2021, Surya Nepal sponsored a Rs 50 million memorandum of understanding with state-owned Kathmandu Institute of Child Health (KIOCH) headed by Prof Dr Bhagawan Koirala, founding Chairman, for the construction of a children's hospital as part of its corporate social responsibility.

Six civil society organizations including, Resource Centre for Primary Health Care, Cancer Council Nepal and Nepal Development Research Institute, rallied against the acceptance of proposed financial assistance from Surya Nepal stating that this is a business strategy that directly contradicts the WHO FCTC Article 5.3.¹³ After protest from the local advocates, Prof Dr Bhagawan Koirala rejected the money offered by tobacco industry.¹⁴



MoU Signing between Surya CSR and Kathmandu Institute of Child Health.
Photo courtesy of Descanchar (24 April 2021)

The Tobacco Control and Regulatory Directive 2014 states that tobacco manufacturer and related parties are prohibited from providing any financial, technical, material, and structural assistance to educational seminars, theatres, religious discourse, preaching or health facilities operated by the government, non-government or private sectors.

¹³ Call to shun financial assistance from tobacco factory. Himalayan News Service. 24 April 2021
<https://bit.ly/3aQMkCO>

¹⁴ N. Bhatta. Nepal rejects attempts by tobacco industry to clean its dirty image. 24 April 2021. Health News.
<https://bit.ly/2QMtIDH>



Press Meeting about Surya CSR and Kathmandu Institute of Child Health.
Photo courtesy of Action Nepal (23 April)

Surya Nepal publicly aligns its corporate business with the stated priorities of the government.

- SNPL Asha
- SNPL Khelparyatan
- SNPL Prakriti
- SNPL Suswasthya
- Other CSR activities

CSR

THE SNPL INTEGRATED COMMUNITY VISION AND CSR STRATEGY

SNPL's Integrated Community Vision and CSR Strategy is woven around and is in alignment with the stated priorities of the Government of Nepal. Under this the Government of Nepal has identified promotion of Small and Medium size Enterprises as the mainstay of the country's socio-economic development and the main engine for employment generation, maximizing the revenue potential from Tourism and the strengthening of Social and Community Forestry programmes that have already won the country international acclaim.

Drawing upon this approach, SNPL pursues an Integrated CSR Strategy with the stated objective of Creating Enduring Value for the Society that it operates in through 4 Distinct Platforms:

1. SNPL ASHA
2. SNPL KHELPAKYATAN
3. SNPL PRAKRITI
4. SNPL SUSWASTHYA

To make a meaningful impact in the field of CSR, SNPL's effort will be to reinforce and engineer convergence between shareholder value and social good as a robust model for sustainable development. In the same vein, SNPL will continue to align its CSR initiatives with national priorities and work towards creating socio-economic development of the underprivileged sections of society.

INDICATOR 3: Benefits to the Tobacco Industry

<p>6. The government accommodates requests from the tobacco industry for a longer time frame for implementation or postponement of tobacco control law. (e.g. 180 days is common for PHW, Tax increase can be implemented within 1 month) (Rec 7.1)</p>						4
---	--	--	--	--	--	---

	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>The MoHP endorsed new directives to implement graphic health warning of tobacco products covering 90% of the total area. This statutory requirement was conveyed to all domestic and international brands but domestic tobacco product still bear 75% graphic health warning. The concerned government agency has not yet taken any action on domestic producers who are violating the directives.</p> <p>Experts have said that the tax levied on tobacco products in Nepal is very low. Nepal has among the lowest tax on tobacco products in South Asia. The Deputy Secretary at the Ministry of Health has said that the current 30 percent tax on tobacco products should be increased in Nepal.¹⁵ The World Health Organization has suggested the government to levy minimum of 70% tax on tobacco products but Nepal has still not increased the tax rate.</p> <p>Minister for Federal Affairs and General Administration Ganesh Thagunna said that the government should increase the tax on tobacco products. He said that the consumption would reduce as it would be more expensive by increasing the tax as tobacco is available cheaply.^{16 17}</p>						
<p>7. The government gives privileges, incentives, exemptions or benefits to the tobacco industry (Rec 7.3)</p>			2			
<p>International travelers are allowed to import tobacco products not exceeding 250 grams in total.¹⁸</p>						
INDICATOR 4: Forms of Unnecessary Interaction						
<p>8. Top level government officials (such as President/ Prime Minister or Minister¹⁹) meet with/ foster relations with the tobacco companies such as attending social functions and other events sponsored or organized by the tobacco companies or those furthering its interests. (Rec 2.1)</p>			2			
<p>Government officials are prohibited from participating in any event conducted by the tobacco industry following the implementation of the Tobacco Control and Regulation Act. However, on 24th March 2020, tobacco industries helped government to raise fund for financial support to aid people during the pandemic.</p> <p>The show called Jogindar ko Paan Pasal broadcasted in The Himalayan Television every week indirectly advertise tobacco products and paan. In this TV show Chief District Officer and Chief District Police have participated several times.²⁰</p>						

¹⁵ Bhagirathi Pandit. Cigarettes are cheaper than tea in Nepal, tax increase to control. MahilaSwasthya <https://bit.ly/3xDTJPo>

¹⁶ <https://bit.ly/2PErz5W>

¹⁷ Experts say there is no alternative to raising taxes for tobacco products. Meronews. <https://bit.ly/3aNVoyT>

¹⁸ <http://www.taxfreetravel.com/Nepal-Duty-Free-Allowances/>

¹⁹ Includes immediate members of the families of the high-level officials

²⁰ Website for The Himalayan Television : <https://www.himalayatv.com/>

	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. The government accepts assistance/ offers of assistance from the tobacco industry on enforcement such as conducting raids on tobacco smuggling or enforcing smoke free policies or no sales to minors. (including monetary contribution for these activities) (Rec 4.3)	0					
There is no record of the government accepting any assistance/ offers of assistance from the tobacco industry on enforcement such as conducting raids on tobacco smuggling or enforcing smoke free policies.						
10. The government accepts, supports, endorses, or enters into partnerships or agreements with the tobacco industry. (Rec 3.1) NOTE: This must <u>not</u> involve CSR, enforcement activity, or tobacco control policy development since these are already covered in the previous questions.		1				
No support or assistance was seen to be received from tobacco industries other than the amount from Surya Nepal i.e. One Crore (US dollar 85,470) each to all the seven provinces. According to the Health and Population Ministry and National Health Education Information and Communication Center the government has no collaboration or compromises with the tobacco industry. ²¹						
INDICATOR 5: Transparency						
11. The government does not publicly disclose meetings/ interactions with the tobacco industry in cases where such interactions are strictly necessary for regulation. (Rec 2.2)						5
The government does not publicly disclose meetings/ interactions with the tobacco industry.						
12. The government requires rules for the disclosure or registration of tobacco industry entities, affiliated organizations, and individuals acting on their behalf including lobbyists (Rec 5.3)						5
The government does not require rules for the disclosure or registration of tobacco industry entities, affiliated organizations and individuals acting on their behalf including lobbyists. Similarly, no information about the relations with tobacco industries and about the federations who work for tobacco industries are given and accessible to the general public.						
INDICATOR 6: Conflict of Interest						
13. The government does not prohibit contributions from the tobacco industry or any entity working to further its interests to political parties, candidates, or campaigns or to require full disclosure of such contributions. (Rec 4.11)		1				

²¹ <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/surya-nepal-provides-rs-10-million-to-each-province-to-fight-covid-19/>

	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>The government does not prohibit contributions from the tobacco industry or any entity working to further its interests to political parties, candidates, or campaigns or to require full disclosure of such contributions.</p> <p>The Tobacco Control and Regulation has prohibited the government from taking any kind of help or contribution from the tobacco industry. Rule 48 of Article 5 of Tobacco Control and Regulation prohibits the act of giving and receiving gifts, free items or cash from the tobacco industry. The concerned officers of the government are well aware of this legal issue. Therefore, in relation to law enforcement on Tobacco Control, the government has not taken any support from any of the tobacco industries.</p>						
14. Retired senior government officials form part of the tobacco industry (former Prime Minister, Minister, Attorney General) (Rec 4.4)				3		
<p>According to media interview on 7th March 2020, retired Under Secretary of Finance Ministry joined Gorkha Tobacco Company.²²</p>						
15. <u>Current government officials</u> and relatives hold positions in the tobacco business including consultancy positions. (Rec 4.5, 4.8, 4.10)	0					
<p>There is no record of current government officials and relatives holding any position in the tobacco industry.</p>						
INDICATOR 7: Preventive Measures						
16. The government has put in place a procedure for disclosing the records of the interaction (such as agenda, attendees, minutes and outcome) with the tobacco industry and its representatives. (Rec 5.1)				3		
<p>Directive for controlling tobacco industry interference is being developed and is in the approval stage.²³</p>						
17. The government has formulated, adopted or implemented a code of conduct for public officials, prescribing the standards with which they should comply in their dealings with the tobacco industry. (Rec 4.2)			2			
<p>As per Tobacco Product Control and Regulation (Article 5, Rule 48), government officials cannot accept any gifts from the tobacco industry. The Regulation states that any nominated member of the Committee “found to be involved directly or indirectly in the manufacture, import, export or sales and marketing of tobacco products” may be removed from his or her post.</p>						

²² My Republica 17th July, 2020, The Himalayan Times 15th July 2020.

²³ Nepal's 2020 report to the COP <https://bit.ly/2SbmVVRz>

	0	1	2	3	4	5
There is no Code of Conduct covering all civil servants specifically on tobacco control.						
18. The government requires the tobacco industry to periodically submit information on tobacco production, manufacture, market share, marketing expenditures, revenues and any other activity, including lobbying, philanthropy, political contributions and all other activities. (5.2)				3		
The tobacco industry does not submit information on tobacco production, manufacture, market share, marketing expenditures, revenues and any other activity, including lobbying, philanthropy, political contributions and all other activities. The MoHP does not have the authority to ask them why they have not submitted.						
19. The government has a program / system/ plan to consistently ²⁴ raise awareness within its departments on policies relating to FCTC Article 5.3 Guidelines. (Rec 1.1, 1.2)		2				
Government conducts awareness programs for its officer on timely basis. Various consultation programs are being organized at provincial and local municipality level. The focal agency of the Ministry of Health and Population National Health Education Information and Communication Centre (NHEICC) organized training programs to all seven provincial government offices.						
20. The government has put in place a policy to disallow the acceptance of all forms of contributions/ gifts from the tobacco industry (monetary or otherwise) including offers of assistance, policy drafts, or study visit invitations given or offered to the government, its agencies, officials and their relatives. (3.4)					4	
Government officials are prohibited from participating in any event conducted by the tobacco industry following the implementation of the Tobacco Control and Regulation Act. However, on 24 th March 2020, tobacco industries helped government to raise fund for financial support to aid people during the pandemic.						
TOTAL					44	

²⁴ For purposes of this question, “consistently” means: a. Each time the FCTC is discussed, 5.3 is explained. AND b. Whenever the opportunity arises such when the tobacco industry intervention is discovered or reported.

Annex I

Personnel who contributed in preparing the report

1. Man Bahadur Basnet, Under Secretary MOHP
2. Sunil Sharma, Direct, NHEICC
3. Jyoti Baniya, Consumer Protection Forum
4. Dr. Dipendra Raman Singh, Director General Department of Health Services.
5. Rameshwor Duwadi, Inland Revenue Department
6. Mrs. Nara Devi Pun Social Development Minister Gandaki Province
7. Atul Mishra Sub Editor Kantipur
8. Ram Chandra Adhikari, Advocate, MOL
9. Lek Raj Bhatt, MP
10. Bhakta KC Focal Person NHICC
11. Dr. Ganga Shrestha, Professor. Tribhuvan University
12. Focal persons of Health Rights and Tobacco Control District Network.
13. Dr. Pravin Mishra, Former Secretary MOHP

References:

1. National News Agency
2. Nepal Health Research Council Research Reports
3. Action Nepal Reports
4. TI Nepal Report
5. SAAPE Inequality Report
6. NDRI Research Reports

Abbreviations:

MOHP	: Ministry of Health and Population
MOL	: Ministry of Law
NHEICC	: National Health Education Information and Communication Center.
NHRC	: National Health Research Council
TI	: Transparency International
SAAPE	: South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication
NDRI	: National Development Research Institute