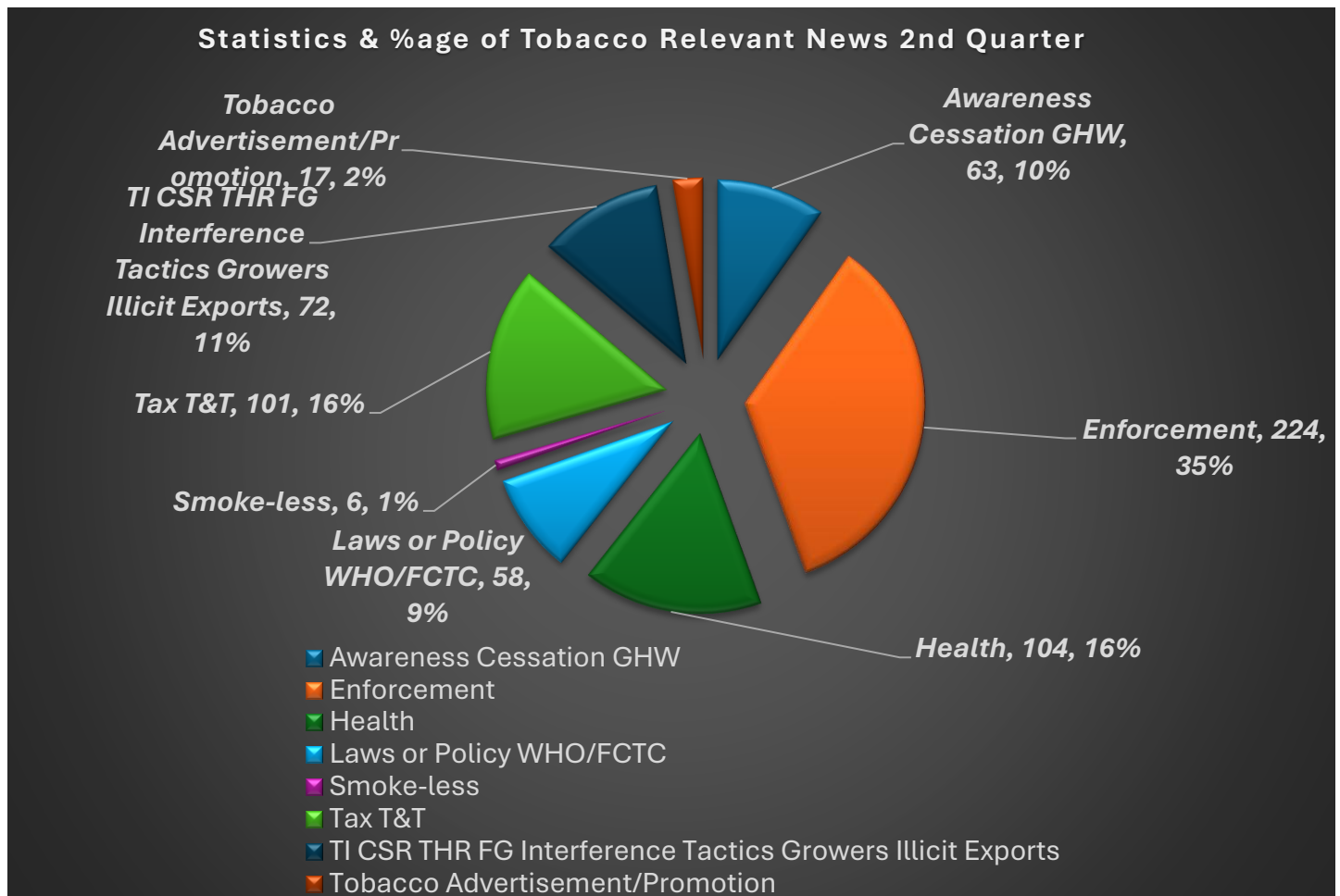


**National Print & Digital Media Monitoring Report
Quarter 2 of June-August 2024**

**Prepared by Society for Alternative Media and Research
(SAMAR)**

SAMAR National Print & Digital Media Monitoring Report Quarter 2 of June-August 2024



During Quarter 2 (June–August 2024), a total of **653 news items** were monitored, of which **72 were directly relevant to the tobacco industry**. Among these were **9 TI**, **17 Tobacco Harm Reduction**, **7 CSR**, **1 Industry Front Group**, **0 Industry Interference**, **24 Tobacco Tactics**, **1 Exports**, **11 Growers**, and **2 Smuggling/Illicit Trade** news. Beyond industry-specific content, **58 items** covered **Laws or Policy (WHO/FCTC)**, while **Enforcement** dominated with **224 news**. Taxation and pricing remained highly visible with **101 items** (96 on tobacco tax & price, 5 on track & trace). Awareness and cessation topics gathered **52** and **11** items respectively. In health coverage (**104 items**), tobacco and health accounted for the majority, followed by vaping and health news. Advertisement/Promotion (**17**) and Other Tobacco News (**8**) also contributed to the overall media landscape for the quarter.

Key category summaries (most frequent themes observed for categories with ≥10 items):

Enforcement (224):

Media coverage was heavily focused on enforcement actions, with widespread reporting of raids, arrests, and seizures involving illicit cigarettes, gutka, betel nut, naswar, and non-duty-paid tobacco. Stories frequently

highlighted coordination among police, customs, and coast guards, as well as factory closures and confiscation of machinery used in illegal production. Many articles underscored the risks of unregulated products and the government's efforts to curb tax evasion and illegal supply chains.

Tobacco Tax & Price (96):

Reporting centered on public and institutional reactions to tobacco taxation, with repeated emphasis on the need for stronger tax measures, projected revenue gains, and claims linking high taxes to illicit trade. Several articles featured commentary from policymakers and health advocates supporting increased taxation to reduce consumption, while industry-aligned voices continued to argue that tax hikes could escalate smuggling.

Health – Tobacco & Health (85):

Media highlighted the ongoing health burden of smoking, including increased disease risk, economic cost, and impacts on youth initiation. Many items referenced new studies, expert warnings, and medical commentary stressing the urgent need for stronger tobacco control to reduce preventable deaths and long-term healthcare pressure.

Awareness (52):

Public awareness activities by anti-tobacco advocates. Coverage concentrated on awareness drives, community outreach, educational activities, and advocacy campaigns aimed at discouraging tobacco use. Various organizations and government entities were featured promoting anti-smoking messages, especially youth-focused initiatives and school-based sensitization.

Laws or Policy / WHO-FCTC (58):

Stories in this category reported on legislative discussions, regulatory adjustments, court-related developments, and references to WHO-FCTC commitments. Articles frequently discussed government obligations, calls for policy tightening, and debates around compliance with global standards on tobacco control.

Tobacco Tactics (24):

Media documented industry messaging strategies, including narratives promoting harm reduction, claims about supporting farmers, and framing illicit trade as a justification for policy relaxation. Several items reported on attempts to influence public opinion or shape regulatory conversations through targeted communication.

Tobacco Industry (TI) (9 – below threshold but still notable):

Although fewer in number, TI-related stories primarily covered corporate announcements, cultivation issues, supply chain statements, and reactions to regulatory measures, offering insight into the industry's public positioning during the quarter.