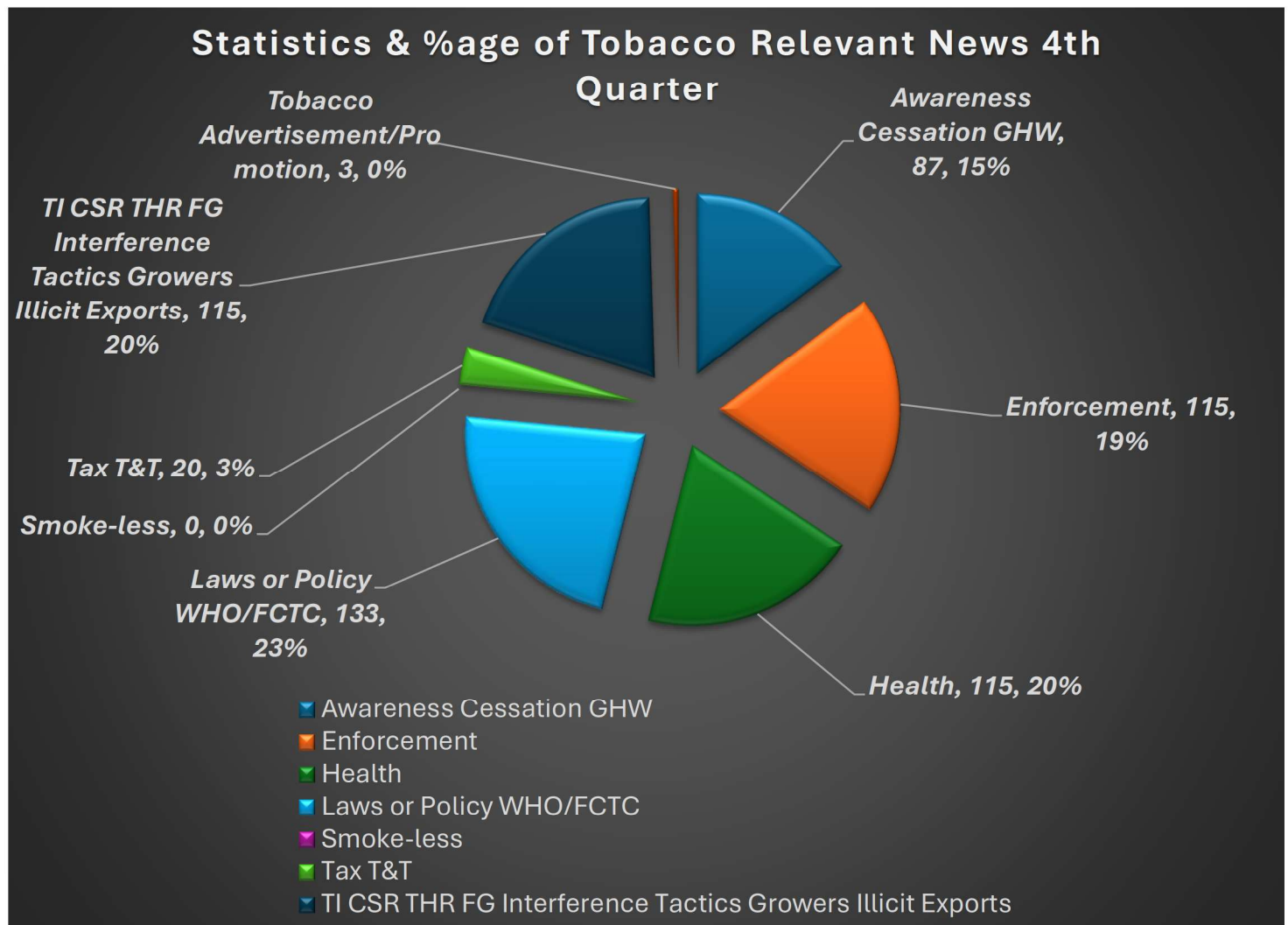


National Print & Digital Media Monitoring Report
Quarter 4 of December 2024-February 2025
Prepared by Society for Alternative Media and Research
(SAMAR)

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During Quarter 4 (December 2024–February 2025), a total of **619 news items** were monitored, of which **115 were directly relevant to the tobacco industry**. These included **11 TI, 25 Tobacco Harm Reduction, 2 CSR, 5 Industry Front Group, 1 Industry Interference, 52 Tobacco Tactics, 6 Exports, 11 Growers, and 2 Smuggling/Illicit Trade** news. Beyond industry-specific topics, there were **133 items on Laws or Policy (WHO/FCTC)** and **115 items on Enforcement**. Taxation-related coverage totaled **20 news items** (14 on tobacco tax and price, 6 on track & trace). Awareness and cessation generated **52 and 28** items respectively. Health-related reporting remained strong with **115 items** (91 Tobacco & Health, 20 Vaping & Health, and 4 Nicotine & Health). Additionally, **3 items** covered **Tobacco Advertisement/Promotion**, while **31 items** fell under **Other Tobacco News**.

Key category summaries (categories with ≥10 items)

Laws or Policy / WHO-FCTC (133)

Policy-related coverage emphasized federal and provincial initiatives to strengthen tobacco control, including proposals for stricter regulations on manufacturing, marketing, and availability of nicotine products. Numerous articles referenced WHO-FCTC guidelines, debates on legislative amendments, compliance challenges, and administrative enforcement of smoke-free and sale-restriction policies. The quarter saw sustained calls from health bodies and civil society groups urging the government to fully align with international standards.

Enforcement (115)

Enforcement reporting covered a wide range of operations targeting illicit cigarettes, gutka, naswar, betel nut, and non-duty-paid tobacco. Police, custom officials, food authorities, and district administrations conducted raids on shops, warehouses, and manufacturing units. Many stories detailed seizures of large quantities of illegal products and arrests of traders involved in smuggling networks. Destruction of confiscated goods, factory sealing, and heightened monitoring were also routinely highlighted.

Health (115) – Tobacco & Health / Vaping & Health / Nicotine & Health

Health coverage focused heavily on the disease burden linked to tobacco consumption. Articles highlighted cancer statistics, cardiovascular risks, youth addiction concerns, and warnings from health experts about rising consumption of newer nicotine products. Multiple items emphasized the growing public health cost associated with tobacco-related illnesses. Coverage of vaping-related harms also increased, with medical professionals urging stricter regulation and public education.

Tobacco Tactics (52)

Media reported extensively on strategic communication by the tobacco industry and affiliated groups. Stories documented repeated efforts to frame illicit trade as the main policy problem, attempts to portray tax increases as harmful to farmers or the economy, and the use of third-party voices to influence public discourse. Several items highlighted the industry's lobbying activities, public relations statements, and efforts to shape regulatory debates.

Awareness (52)

Awareness coverage in this quarter primarily consisted of **public awareness activities by anti-tobacco advocates**, including health officials, district administrations, medical professionals, NGOs, and community groups. Items highlighted anti-tobacco rallies, awareness drives, youth-led initiatives, public seminars, and campaigns educating citizens about the dangers of smoking and emerging nicotine products. Activities emphasized prevention, youth protection, and the promotion of smoke-free public

spaces.

(No awareness items appear to be industry-sponsored; if detected in future datasets, those will be reported as “Public awareness activities by the tobacco industry.”)

Cessation (28)

Cessation-related content emphasized the need for accessible quitting services, reporting on hospitals, clinics, and public institutions encouraging smokers to seek help. Many articles highlighted awareness sessions about quitting methods, health department guidance, and supportive messages from medical experts. Several news items tied cessation to broader public health initiatives.

Tobacco Harm Reduction (25)

Coverage reflected mixed narratives—some items showcased promotional arguments claiming lower harm or technological benefits of new nicotine devices, while others raised concerns about misleading messaging and insufficient regulation. Debate persisted between public health experts and industry-aligned commentators regarding the safety and long-term effects of alternative products.

Others Tobacco News (31)

This category featured diverse items, including agriculture-related updates, business mentions, community disputes, administrative notices, and miscellaneous tobacco-related developments that did not fall under core categories.

Tobacco Industry (TI) (11)

Though fewer in number, TI-related stories addressed company statements on production trends, export concerns, agricultural challenges, and responses to policy developments. Some items referenced supply chain issues and the industry’s engagement with regulators.