

## Tobacco Companies Invited to Formulate Tobacco Control Guidelines!

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### Summary of the Report:

The Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Co-operatives (MoLGRDC) has recently arranged a meeting on 15 November to advance the implementation of the tobacco control guidelines by local government bodies. However, such initiative has caused a controversy as the Ministry invited the President of the Bangladesh Cigarette Manufacturer's Association (BCMA), as one of the stakeholders of the implementation process.

Sources from the Ministry confirmed that anti-tobacco activists have issued a letter addressed to the Senior Secretary of the MoLGRDC, urging him to cancel the meeting with representatives of tobacco industries as it would be a violation of FCTC.

Senior Secretary Helal Uddin Ahmed, on the other hand, commented in his interview that, *“We stand against tobacco. We want to reduce the use of tobacco. The meeting is to be held as scheduled and it cannot be cancelled. Leaders of the BCMA proposed for a meeting with us where they could provide their opinions on the Guidelines. Instead of holding a separate meeting with BCMA, we asked them to join at the scheduled meeting with the rest of the stakeholders. We will receive their comments but the final decision is yet to come.”* The Senior Secretary further opined that, *“This meeting is by no way a violation of any act of law or the FCTC. Tobacco companies are a major part of the society and they are big tax payers. We will take their comments if they have any.”*

The original report published in Bengali:

<https://www.banglatribune.com/712476/তামাক-নিয়ন্ত্রণ-গাইডলাইন-বিষয়ক-সভায়-কোম্পানির>