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To  
News Editor

**Press Release**

**Consultative Workshop on Tobacco Taxation Was Held  
Formulation of a Tobacco Tax Policy was Emphasized for Protecting Public  
Health and the Environment**

Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina promised to eliminate tobacco use completely from Bangladesh by 2040 at the South Asia Speaker's Summit held in 2016. To achieve this goal, she urged formulate a strong tobacco tax policy. The formulation of a strong tobacco tax policy according to the Prime Minister's announcement is crucial for the protection of public health and the environment. This was stated by the speakers at a consultative workshop titled "Importance of Tobacco Tax Policy in Protecting Public Health and Environment" organized on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day 2022 on Sunday, May 29, 2022, at 10.30 am.

The Health Economics Unit, Bureau of Economic Research, Bangladesh Network for Tobacco Tax Policy and AID Foundation jointly organized this workshop in the conference room of Health Economics Unit.

The main content and keynote points of the workshop was presented by Professor of Economics at the University of Dhaka and the convener of the BNTTP, Dr. Rumana Haque. Honorable Member of Parliament for Gaibandha-1, Barrister Shamim Haider Patwary and Coordinator (Additional Secretary) of National Tobacco Control Cell, Hossain Ali Khondakar were present on the occasion as distinguished guests.

Director General of the Health Economics Unit. Md. Shahadat Hossain Mahmud presided over the workshop and moderated the discussion. Director of Research (Deputy Secretary) of Health Economics Unit, Md. Nurul Amin; former chairman of the National Board of Revenue, Nasiruddin Ahmed, the Head of Program of Vital Strategies and former Additional Secretary Shafiqul Islam; President of the National Press Club, Farida Yasmin; Technical Advisor of The Union, Advocate Syed Mahbubul Alam Tahin; Technical Consultant of The Union, Md. Hamidur Rahman Khan; Coordinator of Bangladesh Anti-Tobacco Alliance (BATA), Saifuddin Ahmed; Head of Programs of Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Iqbal Masud; representatives of various government and non-government organizations, and journalists took part in the discussion.

Speakers at the event said that tobacco has a huge negative impact on the environment and public health. In 2019, 1 lakh 62 thousand people died due to tobacco use in Bangladesh. In order to reduce this death rate and economic losses, the price of tobacco products has to be taken beyond the purchasing power of common people.

If a tobacco tax policy is formulated in the country, taxation of tobacco products will come under a general regulation. A modern and effective taxation system and tax collection system will be introduced through this which will reduce the complexity of tobacco tax system. Implementing a comprehensive tobacco tax policy will make tax administration more effective and efficient, prevent

the interference of tobacco companies and also prevent tax evasion. All the tobacco products, tobacco production and sales chain, tobacco cultivation and processing, tobacco export, etc. can be brought under the tax net through this. This will increase revenue collection and reduce tobacco use at a significant rate which will lead to a tobacco free Bangladesh by 2040 as announced by the Honorable Prime Minister.

The president of today's workshop, Director General of the Health Economics Unit, Md. Shahadat Hossain Mahmud said in his statement that BER and BNTTP have jointly formulated an outline of tobacco tax policy following a systematic process. The cooperation from all levels is needed to formulate a comprehensive draft of the national tobacco tax policy following this outline.

He hoped that a comprehensive national tobacco tax policy would be formulated in the country as soon as possible as announced by the Honorable Prime Minister.

Prepared and sent by-

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