



Anil Rajput

Chairman, FICCI CASCADE

I am pleased to present the latest edition of the FICCI CASCADE newsletter, which captures key developments across our initiatives and reflects the breadth and depth of our sustained efforts to combat the growing menace of illicit trade.

FICCI CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy) continues to play a pivotal role in strengthening India's response to counterfeiting and smuggling. From addressing the proliferation of counterfeit goods to drawing national attention to the serious economic and societal risks posed by smuggling, our work remains firmly focused on promoting awareness, accountability, and respect for the rule of law. Central to CASCADE's approach is close and sustained collaboration with policymakers, industry leaders, enforcement agencies, and civil society to drive effective and impactful action.

Over the past months, CASCADE has significantly expanded its outreach through a series of seminars, capacity-building programmes for law enforcement, and public awareness initiatives across the country. At a recent engagement in West Bengal, we received strong support from Mr Biplab Mitra, Minister-in-Charge, Consumer Affairs Department; Mr Tirthankar Halder, Special Secretary, Consumer Affairs Department; Mr K. Ramakrishnan, Additional Director General, DRI (Kolkata Zonal Unit); and Mr Vidit Raj Bhundesh, Deputy Commissioner, Kolkata Police. Emphasising the

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

importance of consumer protection in ensuring a fair and transparent marketplace, Mr Mitra highlighted the need for a well-coordinated approach involving government, industry, and civil society.

Strengthening frontline enforcement remains a key priority for CASCADE. In line with this objective, we conducted focused capacity-building programmes for police officers in West Bengal and Delhi, sensitising over 200 officers across ranks, including SIs, ASIs, DSPs, ACPs, and DCPs. These interactive sessions enabled officers to exchange experiences and gain practical insights to enhance enforcement against smuggling and counterfeiting offences.

Recognising the growing importance of digital engagement, CASCADE has further strengthened its presence on Twitter (X Spaces) to facilitate informed discussions on emerging enforcement challenges. Our recent Twitter Podcast on "Disrupting Organized Crime: Enforcement Strategies for a Borderless Threat", featuring Mr Ajai Sahni, Executive Director, Institute for Conflict Management, Delhi, offered valuable perspectives on tackling organised crime and witnessed strong engagement, with participation exceeding 25,000 listeners.

Enhancing visibility for public outreach, FICCI CASCADE organised the third edition of its Annual Auto Rally, which saw the enthusiastic participation of over 300 auto-rickshaws prominently displaying anti-smuggling and anti-counterfeiting messages. The rally was flagged off by Mr Manoj Tiwari, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, North East Delhi, who aptly observed that rejecting smuggled goods is a powerful act of patriotism, one that protects citizens, strengthens the economy, and weakens criminal networks that fuel illegal trade and terrorism.

To underscore the scale and persistence of the illicit trade challenge, our monthly Media Monitor continues to document major seizures of smuggled, counterfeit,

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and tax-evaded goods across the country. These insights not only raise awareness but also highlight the dedication and vigilance of enforcement agencies. CASCADE remains committed to recognising these efforts through official statements and letters of appreciation to officers at the forefront of this fight.

As Mahatma Gandhi wisely said, 'The future depends on what you do today.' This timeless wisdom reinforces our belief that sustained and collective action against smuggling and illicit trade is essential to building a stronger, fairer, and more secure future.

I am confident that you will find this edition of the newsletter both informative and engaging. I look forward to your continued support and partnership in our ongoing efforts to combat smuggling and counterfeiting.

Jai Hind



Anil Rajput
Chairman
FICCI CASCADE



NEWS FLASH

ANI

South Asia's Leading Multimedia News Agency

DRI busts major e-cigarette smuggling racket at Tuticorin, seizes goods worth Rs 10.42 crore; 3 held

New Delhi, 2 December 2025: The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized 45,984 prohibited e-cigarettes worth Rs 10.42 crore at Tuticorin Port, uncovering a major smuggling racket and arresting three people linked to the operation. According to information from the Ministry of Finance, the goods were found hidden behind cartons of umbrellas inside an imported container.

"Based on specific intelligence that a gang involved in smuggling of e-cigarettes had planned to import a container containing e-cigarettes from China into India through Tuticorin Port in the guise of umbrella," the ministry said. Acting on the alert, the officers intercepted the container on November 27, 2025, soon after it arrived at the port. The team decided to closely examine the shipment because the import of e-cigarettes is banned in India under the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2019, and related rules under the Directorate General of Foreign Trade.

<https://www.aninews.in/news/business/dri-busts-major-e-cigarette-smuggling-racket-at-tuticorin-seizes-goods-worth-rs-1042-crore-3-held20251202151836/?amp=1>



Assam Rifles, DRI seize foreign cigarettes worth Rs 7 crore in NE



The Assam Rifles, in close coordination with the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), successfully executed two significant operations against trans-border smuggling this week, recovering large quantities of foreign-origin cigarettes with an estimated market value exceeding Rs. 7 crore. There were back-to-back operations in Assam and Mizoram on November 21 and 23 to curb illegal activities in the North East region.

First Operation in Assam

The first action took place on November 21 in Karmiganj, Assam. Acting on specific intelligence, a joint team intercepted a Bolero pickup vehicle. A detailed search of the vehicle revealed 165 cartons of foreign-origin cigarettes from various brands, valued at approximately Rs. 3.5 crore. Two individuals involved in transporting the contraband were apprehended at the scene. One was identified to be Lalrinsanga, 35, a resident of Mamit, Mizoram. The other was determined to be Lallungawia, 29, a resident of Rengdil, Mamit, Mizoram.

Second Operation in Mizoram

In a separate operation later on November 23, the joint forces operated in the general area of Kanhnum, Mamit District, Mizoram. This operation resulted in the recovery of 197 cartons of unclaimed foreign-origin cigarettes. The seized consignment from the Mizoram operation is assessed to be worth approximately Rs 4 crore.

<https://www.msn.com/en-in/news/India/assam-rifles-dri-seize-foreign-cigarettes-worth-rs-7-crore-in-ne/ar-AA1Ra76Q?apiversion=v2&domshim=1&noservercache=1&noservertelemetry=1&batchservertelemetry=1&renderwebcomponents=1&wcseo=1>



RECENT INITIATIVES

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR POLICE OFFICERS ON PREVENTION OF COUNTERFEITING AND SMUGGLING

12th November 2025 | Kolkata



FICCI CASCADE organised a Capacity Building Programme for police officers in Kolkata on 12th November 2025, focusing on the theme 'Prevention of Counterfeiting and Smuggling'. The programme brought together over 80 senior police officials and industry representatives to deliberate on enforcement challenges, share real-world case experiences, and explore collaborative strategies to strengthen anti-smuggling and anti-counterfeiting operations. The initiative aimed to enhance investigative capabilities and promote closer coordination between law enforcement agencies and industry stakeholders in tackling economic offences.

Addressing the programme, **Mr. Amit Verma**, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Kolkata, emphasized the critical role of law enforcement in safeguarding society and ensuring fair trade. He noted that illicit trade not only undermines legitimate businesses but also erodes public trust, threatens consumer safety, and weakens the social and economic fabric of the nation. Mr Verma also commended FICCI CASCADE for creating a platform that enables meaningful dialogue between law enforcement, industry, and civil society, thereby fostering greater awareness and proactive engagement. He stressed that tackling this complex challenge

requires a multi-pronged approach, combining stringent enforcement, intelligence-led operations, community awareness, and collaborative partnerships. By working together, he mentioned, stakeholders can not only curb the spread of counterfeit and smuggled goods but also strengthen market integrity, protect consumers, and bolster economic resilience against illicit trade.

Mr. Deep Chand IPS, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, outlined key drivers of illicit trade in India, including price differentials with neighbouring countries, high tax arbitrage, high-margin and portable nature of certain





products, organised crime networks, weak enforcement mechanisms, and widespread consumer unawareness that normalizes such trade. He mentioned that high taxation creates opportunities for illegal operators to exploit gaps and evade compliance.

Mr. Ashish Paul, Vice President- Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd., highlighted corporate strategies to mitigate illicit trade. These include empowering consumers as the first line of defence, enhancing supply chain monitoring, collaborating with enforcement agencies, incentivising vigilance, and leveraging technology for product traceability and early detection of counterfeits.

According to FICCI estimates, illicit cigarette trade resulted in revenue losses exceeding Rs. 13,331 crores in 2019-20, while international estimates place the figure at over Rs. 21,000 crores, he added.

Mr. Shahid Ali Khan, Brand Protection Manager (Legal), Marico Ltd. talked about the growing challenges posed by counterfeiting and illicit trade for consumer-facing industries. He accentuated that protecting brand integrity goes beyond legal enforcement, it requires proactive monitoring of the market, collaboration with law enforcement agencies, and consumer awareness initiatives. Mr. Khan discussed the critical role of legal





frameworks in combating counterfeiting and smuggling, the importance of timely action against infringers, and the value of leveraging technology to track and trace products across the supply chain

The programme concluded with an engaging discussion where officers exchanged insights on real-world

enforcement challenges, shared best practices, and explored collaborative strategies to combat counterfeiting and smuggling. The interactive dialogue enabled law enforcement officers and industry representatives to identify gaps, deliberate on innovative solutions, and reinforce the importance of coordinated action.



Minister Biplab Mitra calls for stronger enforcement collaboration

EOI CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA, NOV 13/-/Biplab Mitra, Minister-in-Charge, Consumer Affairs Department, Government of West Bengal, today said, "Counterfeiting and smuggling not



only harm legitimate businesses but also exploit consumers by exposing them to unsafe and substandard products."

Addressing the FICCI-CASCADE seminar on 'Strengthening Security: Strategies to Combat Counterfeiting and Smuggling', Mr. Mitra emphasized government of West Bengal's strong commitment to safeguarding consumer interests through coordinated efforts with law enforcement, industry stakeholders, and the community. The state, he noted, is leveraging technology and intelligence-based surveillance to detect and deter illicit activities, particularly along border and coastal areas.

Trithankar Halder, Special Secretary, Consumer Affairs Department, Government of West Bengal was also present at the programme.

P.C. Jha, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Chairman, CBIC, added, "Illicit trade directly undermines India's tax system and deprives the government of critical revenue needed for nation-building. Counterfeiting and smuggling distort fair competition, erode the tax base, and weaken the formal economy."

Illicit mkt in 5 key sectors valued at ₹7.9L cr: Study

Vedanta Dasgupta

Kolkata: The size of the illicit market in five key sectors — packaged FMCG, including personal and household care, alcohol, tobacco, textiles and apparel — was valued at Rs 7.9 lakh crore, according to a Ficci-Cascade study.

The study highlighted that the apparel and textiles segment, valued at around Rs 4.03 lakh crore, makes up for over 50% of illicit trade. The illicit market for packaged FMCG was estimated to be valued at above Rs 2.23 lakh crore and for personal and household care at Rs 73,813 crore.

Sonali Ghoshal, co-chair of Ficci West Bengal State Council, said India's rapid economic growth has invited new vulnerabilities.

Protecting consumers: State steps up fight against illicit trade, calls for collective action

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: State Consumer Affairs minister Biplab Mitra on Thursday urged for tighter coordination among enforcement agencies, industry bodies and civil society to protect consumers and safeguard legitimate businesses.

Speaking at a FICCI CASCADE seminar on "Strengthening Security: Strategies to Combat Counterfeiting and Smuggling", Mitra said illicit trade exposes consumers to unsafe products and weakens the market ecosystem. "Protecting consumer rights requires a united effort from government agencies, industry and the community. Awareness and vigilance are our strongest tools," he said. The minister noted that the state is increasingly using technology and intelligence-based surveillance to track

Closer Look

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Special Secretary of the Consumer Affairs department Trithankar Halder and senior industry representatives also attended the programme. Mitra commended FICCI CASCADE for driving consumer awareness and fostering collaboration across sectors.

Industry leaders and enforcement officials highlighted the economic and security challenges posed by counterfeit and smuggled goods. Sonali Ghoshal, Co-Chair

of FICCI West Bengal State Council, said illicit trade undermines manufacturing ecosystems and diverts benefits meant for legitimate stakeholders. Former CBIC chairman and FICCI CASCADE advisor PC Jha warned that revenue leakages weaken the formal economy and called for stronger compliance and GST mechanisms.

DRI Kolkata additional director general K. Ramakrishnan said intelligence-driven enforcement remains central to protecting India's economic security, while Kolkata Police

Deputy Commissioner (Detective Department) Vinit Raj Bhundesh stressed improved intelligence-sharing and inter-agency coordination.

FICCI CASCADE also held a capacity-building programme for police officers on November 12 to strengthen investigative skills and enforcement responses. Addressing the session, Kolkata DCP Amit Verma said counterfeiting and smuggling "endanger the very fabric of our society" and praised the initiative for promoting joint strategies.

A FICCI CASCADE report estimated the illicit market across five key sectors—FMCG packaged goods, personal and household care, alcohol, tobacco and textiles and apparel—at about Rs 7.97 lakh crore, with textiles and apparel alone accounting for over half of the total.

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Vedanta Dasgupta / Nov 17, 2025, 01:51 IST



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FICCI Organizes Seminar to Spread Awareness and Sensitize Stakeholders on Counterfeiting and Smuggling Menace



Kolkata: On November 13, 2025, at the FICCI CASCADE Seminar on "Strengthening Security: Strategies to Combat Counterfeiting and Smuggling", West Bengal Consumer Affairs Minister Biplab Mitra warned that illicit trade harms legitimate businesses, exposes consumers to unsafe products, and erodes trust in markets. "Awareness and vigilance are our strongest tools," he stated, stressing a united front involving government, industry, and civil society. The state is deploying technology and intelligence-driven surveillance, especially along borders and coasts, to curb these threats. Mitra praised FICCI CASCADE's role in empowering consumers and fostering collaborations. Co-Chair Sonali Ghoshal highlighted structural challenges in manufacturing and the role of law joined by illicit activities. Mitra mentioned that, supported by West Bengal Chief Minister Sanu, Mamata Banerjee, the West Bengal Government is initiating all relevant steps to economic countermeasures and smuggling activities. FICCI CASCADE Advisor PC Jha noted revenue losses amounting India's \$5 trillion GDP ambitions, calling for tighter GST compliance and inter-agency coordination. DRI's K. Ramakrishnan and Kolkata Police's Vinit Raj Bhundesh emphasized economic security, public safety, and dismantling cross-border networks through intelligence sharing. Other key speakers included Mr. Deep Choud, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE; Mr. Harsh

V. Agarwal, Member, FICCI; Mr. Ashish Paul, ITC Ltd.; Mr. Sandeep Sengupta, ISHOB; and Mr. Sanyog Ghosh, Garib Chad Ghosh & GGS. On November 12, 2025, FICCI CASCADE's Capacity Building Programme for police officers, addressed by DCP Amit Verma, focused on enforcement challenges, investigative skills, and joint strategies, including tech-driven intelligence, awareness, and reforms against organized illicit networks. A FICCI CASCADE report revealed the illicit market in FMCG, personal care, alcohol, tobacco, and textiles/apparel at Rs. 7.97 lakh crore, with textiles alone at Rs. 4.04 lakh crore—over 50% of the total. It warned of distorted competition, tax erosion, and punitive taxes fueling 40% of alcohol's illicit share. Stakeholders across West Bengal showed strong commitment to these countermeasures.

पश्चिम बंगाल में अवैध कारोबार रोकने के लिए कसी कसर, मंत्री विप्लव मित्रा ने प्रवर्तन एजेंसियों में समन्वय की अपील

कोलकाता: पश्चिम बंगाल में अवैध कारोबार को रोकने के लिए कसी कसर, मंत्री विप्लव मित्रा ने प्रवर्तन एजेंसियों में समन्वय की अपील की।

कोलकाता, 13 नवंबर: पश्चिम बंगाल सरकार ने राज्य में अवैध कारोबार को रोकने के लिए कसी कसर, मंत्री विप्लव मित्रा ने प्रवर्तन एजेंसियों में समन्वय की अपील की। मित्रा ने कहा कि अवैध कारोबार न केवल वैध कारोबार को नुकसान पहुंचाता है, बल्कि गलत जानकारी वाले और अनुचित प्रचार के माध्यम से लोगों को भ्रम में डालता है। उन्होंने कहा कि अवैध कारोबार को रोकने के लिए कसी कसर, मंत्री विप्लव मित्रा ने प्रवर्तन एजेंसियों में समन्वय की अपील की।



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Seminar on

STRENGTHENING SECURITY: STRATEGIES TO COMBAT COUNTERFEITING AND SMUGGLING

13th November 2025 | The Park Hotel, Kolkata



FICCI CASCADE has consistently played a catalytic role in spotlighting the multifaceted risks posed by illicit trade and galvanising collective action against it. With counterfeiting and smuggling increasingly impacting public health, consumer safety, and economic stability, CASCADE has been driving nationwide engagement through a series of pan-India awareness and capacity-building seminars. Continuing this sustained outreach, FICCI CASCADE organised a seminar titled **"Strengthening Security: Strategies to Combat Counterfeiting and Smuggling"** on **13th November 2025 in Kolkata**, bringing together key stakeholders to deliberate on effective countermeasures.

Mr. Biplab Mitra, Minister-in-Charge, Consumer Affairs Department, Government of West Bengal, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. He highlighted that counterfeiting and smuggling not only undermine legitimate businesses but also exploit consumers by exposing them to unsafe and substandard products. Emphasising that the protection of consumer rights is fundamental to building a fair and transparent marketplace, he called for a collective and coordinated effort involving government agencies, industry, and civil society. He noted that awareness and vigilance remain the most effective tools to ensure that consumers are not victimised by illicit trade.

Mr. Mitra further underscored the Government of West Bengal's strong commitment to safeguarding consumer interests through close coordination with law enforcement agencies, industry stakeholders, and local communities. He opined that the state is increasingly leveraging technology and intelligence-led surveillance to detect and deter illicit activities, particularly in border and coastal regions. He also commended FICCI CASCADE for its sustained efforts in empowering consumers and fostering collaboration to counter the growing threats posed by counterfeit and smuggled goods.

Highlighting the importance of robust governance in tackling illicit trade, **Mr. Tirthankar Halder**, Special Secretary, Consumer Affairs Department, Government



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of West Bengal, while addressing the seminar, reiterated the state's commitment to strengthening consumer protection and enhancing enforcement coordination to curb illicit trade in the region.

Ms. Sonali Ghosal, Co-Chair, FICCI West Bengal State Council and Managing Director, Nightingale Group of Companies, accentuated that illicit activities such as counterfeiting and smuggling are not merely regulatory or legal violations, but reflect deeper structural challenges that disrupt manufacturing ecosystems, undermine the rule of law, and divert the benefits of economic development away from legitimate stakeholders.

Mr. P.C. Jha, Advisor, FICCI CASCADe and Former Chairman, CBIC, delivered an in-depth presentation outlining the landscape of illicit trade practices, their analysis, and broader implications. He highlighted that illicit trade poses a direct threat to India's tax framework by depriving the government of vital revenues required for nation-building. He stated that counterfeiting and smuggling distort fair competition, erode the tax base, and weaken the formal economy. Emphasising India's ambition to achieve a \$5 trillion economy, he underscored the need to strengthen compliance, reinforce GST enforcement mechanisms, and plug revenue leakages. He further stressed that sustained coordination among tax authorities, enforcement agencies, and industry stakeholders is essential to protect both consumers and the public exchequer.

The panel discussion on the theme "Policies to Prevent Counterfeiting and Smuggling" explored key regulatory,

enforcement, and collaborative measures needed to curb illicit trade and protect legitimate markets. Addressing the session, **Mr. K. Ramakrishnan**, Additional Director General, Kolkata Zonal Unit, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), emphasised that combating counterfeiting and smuggling is central to DRI's mandate of protecting India's economic security. He shed light on the fact that such illicit activities result in significant revenue losses for the government, distort fair trade, and pose serious risks to consumer safety. Highlighting the role of intelligence-led enforcement and coordinated action, he reaffirmed DRI's commitment to dismantling organised smuggling networks, intercepting counterfeit goods, and strengthening collaboration and public awareness to preserve the integrity of India's markets.

Mr. Vidit Raj Bhundesh, Deputy Commissioner (Detective Department), Kolkata Police, highlighted that the growing menace of counterfeiting and smuggling poses a serious threat not only to the economy but also to public safety and national security. He emphasised





that the police play an important frontline role in detecting, investigating, and dismantling illicit networks that often operate across state boundaries and international borders. He further underscored the need to strengthen intelligence-sharing mechanisms, enhance inter-agency coordination, and build specialised capacities within law enforcement to effectively respond to the evolving nature of these crimes. He added that sustained collaboration with industry and other stakeholders is equally essential to disrupt supply chains and curb illicit trade at its source.

Mr. Ashish Paul, Vice President- Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd., highlighted that every smuggled cigarette sold not only deprives the nation of vital revenue but also fuels organised crime. He stressed the need to change prevailing mindsets, strengthen enforcement, and support a fair and lawful industry. He further mentioned that the legal cigarette industry in India is under significant pressure from illicit and counterfeit trade. Despite being a highly regulated product, factors such as high taxation and misinformation about legal products are pushing consumers towards illegal alternatives, adversely affecting public health and the economy.

Other key panellists included **Mr. Deep Chand**, Advisor,

FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police; **Mr. Harsh V. Agarwal**, Executive Director, Oriplast and Member, FICCI; **Mr. Sandeep Sengupta**, Director, Indian School of Ethical Hacking (ISOEH) and **Mr. Supriyo Ghosh**, Partner, Girish Chandra Ghosh & G.G.S.

The programme witnessed an enthusiastic participation from over 200 stakeholders, including industry experts, government officials, enforcement agencies, and informed consumers. Their active engagement contributed to meaningful dialogue and knowledge sharing, while also benefiting from insights on the emerging developments, challenges, and collaborative strategies to combat illicit trade.





Disrupting Organized Crime: Enforcement Strategies for a Borderless Threat

with **Mr. Ajai Sahni**, Executive Director, Institute for Conflict Management, Delhi

26th November 2025 | New Delhi

"Organized crime and illicit trade are deeply interconnected, forming a mutually reinforcing ecosystem that causes severe economic damage," asserted **Mr. Ajai Sahni**, Executive Director, Institute for Conflict Management, Delhi, during an insightful FICCI CASCADE Twitter Space session. Speaking on the theme **"Disrupting Organized Crime: Enforcement Strategies for a Borderless Threat,"** Mr. Sahni highlighted that illicit trade ranging from counterfeit goods and smuggling to trafficking in narcotics, wildlife, and substandard products, provides organized crime networks with enormous, low-risk and high-profit revenue streams. These proceeds are often laundered and reinvested into other criminal activities, strengthening syndicates and enabling them to corrupt institutions and evade law enforcement. The economic consequences are far-reaching: legitimate industries suffer revenue losses, governments are deprived of critical tax income, innovation is stifled, and job losses mount. Sectors such as pharmaceuticals, FMCG, tobacco, electronics, textiles, and e-commerce are particularly vulnerable due to complex supply chains, high consumer demand, price sensitivity, and regulatory gaps that criminals exploit with ease.

In recent years, organized crime has evolved rapidly in response to globalization, digital trade, and expanding online marketplaces. Criminal networks now operate across borders with remarkable agility, leveraging anonymized online platforms, social media, dark web marketplaces, and sophisticated logistics to distribute illicit goods at scale. The rise of small-parcel shipping, digital payments, and cryptocurrencies has further complicated detection and enforcement. At the same time, gaps persist in tackling illicit trade, particularly in uneven policy frameworks, limited awareness among consumers and businesses, and enforcement challenges such as capacity constraints, jurisdictional overlaps, and inadequate use of intelligence-driven tools. These weaknesses allow criminal networks to stay ahead of traditional enforcement mechanisms, underscoring the need for coordinated and adaptive responses.

To effectively disrupt illicit trade and organized crime, policymakers must prioritise three key enforcement strategies: strengthening regulatory and legal frameworks with deterrent penalties; leveraging technology such as artificial intelligence, data analytics, and supply-chain tracking to detect and prevent illicit flows; and fostering robust public-private partnerships.

Collaboration between governments, industry, and civil society, through initiatives such as those led by FICCI CASCADE plays a pivotal role in intelligence sharing, capacity building, and awareness generation. By combining enforcement with preventive measures, technological innovation, and collective action, stakeholders can build greater resilience against the economic and social impact of organized crime and illicit trade, ensuring that markets remain transparent, competitive, and secure.

The session concluded with a strong message: combating organized crime and illicit trade demands sustained vigilance, mutual responsibility, and coordinated action across borders and sectors. Only through robust enforcement, intelligent use of technology, informed consumer choices, and effective public-private collaboration can the economic and social harms of illicit trade be meaningfully reduced and the integrity of legitimate markets safeguarded.

The strong interest in the session was reflected in the overwhelming participation of over 25,000 attendees.



AUTO RALLY

FIGHT SMUGGLING AND COUNTERFEITING

6th December 2025 | New Delhi



FICCI CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy) organised the third edition of its Annual Auto Rally on 6th December 2025, which was flagged off by **Mr. Manoj Tiwari**, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, Northeast Delhi. The rally aimed to generate widespread awareness about the adverse impact of smuggled and counterfeit goods on India's economy, public health, and national security.

Mr. Manoj Tiwari, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, Northeast Delhi, emphasised that smuggling is not merely an economic offence but a silent and dangerous threat that fuels organised crime and even terrorism. He noted that while a bomb blast shocks the nation in an instant, the financing for such acts often begins quietly through the sale of smuggled and illegal goods. He further cautioned that many citizens remain unaware that purchasing products without a bill or opting for cheaper, smuggled items inadvertently strengthens the very forces that undermine India's safety and stability.

Mr. Tiwari appealed to every Indian to take a clear and conscious pledge to never purchase goods that enter the market through illegal channels. Emphasising that even if legitimate products cost slightly more, consumers should always choose tax-paid and bill-certified goods, he noted that such choices go beyond supporting honest businesses. He underscored that rejecting smuggled goods is a powerful act of patriotism, one that protects the nation, safeguards citizens, strengthens the economy, and weakens the criminal networks that misuse public money to fuel illegal trade and terrorism.





Mr. Tiwari commended FICCI CASCADE for highlighting the issue and mobilising communities in such an impactful manner. He stated that the rally should serve as a strong and unequivocal message that illegal trade will not be allowed to flourish in the country. Urging citizens to act as vigilant partners in this collective mission, he expressed confidence that sustained public participation would help build a safer, stronger, and truly Viksit India.

Mr. Anil Rajput, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE, highlighted that illicit trade remains one of the most serious threats to the nation's economic stability and social well-being. He opined that the substantial tax losses resulting from smuggling and counterfeiting deprive the government of crucial resources that should otherwise support essential public services such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure, thereby directly impeding national development.

He further emphasised that smuggling exploits consumers by flooding markets with unsafe,

substandard, and unregulated products that pose significant risks to public health and safety. Through initiatives such as the Auto Rally, FICCI CASCADE seeks to raise public awareness, encourage collective action, and strengthen the resolve to combat this menace. He expressed his appreciation to all auto pullers for their support and reiterated the need for strong enforcement, heightened consumer awareness, and a unified societal commitment to curb illicit trade in all its forms.

Mr. Deep Chand, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner, Delhi Police emphasised that illicit trade extends far beyond an economic offence and poses a serious threat to national security. He pointed out that proceeds from smuggling are often diverted to finance organised crime and terrorist activities, making every smuggled product in the market a setback for legitimate businesses, a loss to the public exchequer, and a potential risk to public health. He added that this rally was aimed at empowering citizens and encouraging their active participation as crucial





partners in the collective fight against illicit trade.

The rally witnessed the participation of over 300 auto-rickshaws, vibrantly branded with anti-smuggling and anti-counterfeiting messages, moving in a coordinated convoy from FICCI House, Tansen Marg, through prominent locations including Connaught Place and

Barakhamba Road, ensuring wide public visibility and engagement. Auto drivers, commuters, and passers-by were actively encouraged to support lawful trade practices, refrain from purchasing counterfeit goods, and spread awareness about the detrimental impact of illicit trade on livelihoods and the broader economy.



CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR POLICE OFFICERS ON **“ILLICIT TRADE: ENFORCEMENT CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS”**

16th December 2025 | Specialized Training Centre, Rajendra Nagar, Delhi



The role of police department in combating illicit trade requires a comprehensive approach involving enforcement, intelligence, collaboration, public awareness, and technology utilization. In an effort, to tackle the escalating problem of counterfeiting and smuggling, FICCI CASCADE organized an extensive training program benefiting over 60 police officers from the Delhi Police. The programme underscored the pressing importance for law enforcement agencies to remain proactive in addressing the ever-evolving challenges posed by counterfeiting and smuggling, given their far-reaching global implications.

Mr. Yogesh Malhotra, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Specialized Training Centre, Delhi Police was the chief guest at the programme. He emphasised that it is imperative for police officers to recognise the deep penetration of counterfeit and smuggled goods in the marketplace, noting that such unlawful practices not only undermine the economy but also erode the social fabric, endanger public health, and adversely affect the overall well-being of citizens.

He expressed his support for the initiative and highlighted that capacity-building programmes of this nature are critical in strengthening the skills, preparedness, and operational effectiveness of police personnel in addressing the complex challenges posed by illicit trade.

Highlighting the pivotal role of law enforcement in society, **Mr. O P Thakur**, Inspector, Delhi Police, emphasized that police officers must understand crimes from the perspective of victims to fully appreciate the impact on their lives. He stressed the importance of recognizing every cognizable offence, upholding the highest ethical and legal standards, and taking timely, decisive action against those who breach the law. By combining vigilance with empathy and professionalism, law enforcement cannot only enforce the law effectively but also strengthen the social fabric, deter illicit activities, and contribute to building safer and more resilient communities, he added.

Mr. Deep Chand, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, highlighted the multifaceted impact of counterfeiting and smuggling. He noted that these illicit activities cause substantial losses to legitimate businesses, undermine consumer confidence, and deprive the nation of critical revenue, thereby impeding overall economic growth and development. In addition, he pointed out that the health risks posed by such unregulated products are a serious concern, directly threatening the well-being of the public.

A key highlight of the programme was the **'Interactive Session on Industry Issues and Collaborative Actions Needed with Enforcement Agencies to Counter Economic Offences'**, **Mr. Ashish Paul**, Vice President-Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd., stated that illicit trade has



emerged as a new form of economic warfare. He explained that unauthorized products evade taxes, violate legal standards, and infiltrate sectors, including pharmaceuticals, FMCG, automobiles, and agrochemicals, posing significant risks to consumers, industries, and the broader economy. He further added that the tobacco industry is a major contributor to India's economic growth, supporting livelihoods for nearly 46 million people while generating substantial tax and foreign exchange revenues. However, the expansion of illicit and smuggled tobacco severely undermines these contributions, threatening both public revenue and lawful business operations.

Dr. Rishi Kulshresth, Advocate, High Court of Delhi, emphasized that brand value is sustained only through effective brand protection. Once such protection is weakened, brand value diminishes, making vigilance against illicit trade essential for both industry and enforcement agencies. He highlighted that, for enforcement authorities, the initial challenges in combating illicit trade include evaluating cases, identifying lookalike products, and scrutinizing raid requests with proper documentation tasks that require



clear legal guidance and close cooperation with industry stakeholders.

The programme concluded with a reaffirmation of the urgent need for sustained collaboration between industry and law enforcement to effectively combat illicit trade. It was discussed that tackling counterfeiting and smuggling requires not only robust enforcement and legal frameworks but also proactive intelligence, technology adoption, and continuous capacity building initiatives.





Mr. P C Jha
Advisor, FICCI CASCADE
& Former Chairman,
Central Board of Indirect
Taxes and Customs

TOWARDS BALANCED CIGARETTE TAXATION



As the compensation cess nears its end, India's debate on cigarette taxation must balance revenue, health goals and enforcement realities-drawing on decades of domestic experience and global best practices

The 56th GST Council meeting marked a significant moment in India's indirect tax administration, bringing, inter alia, the structure of cigarette taxation back into the policy focus, especially with the compensation cess nearing its end. Given that cigarettes are a highly regulated and socially sensitive product, the choice of tax structures must rest on the reality of past experience, striking a right balance among fiscal, administrative, and public health considerations. India's own fiscal journey with tobacco and past reforms offer sound lessons on what is effective and what should perhaps be avoided.

Before 1983, cigarettes were taxed under an ad-valorem excise regime. This system led to frequent disputes between the government and assesseees, particularly regarding the inclusion of Post-Manufacturing Expenses (PME) in the assessable value, resulting in protracted litigation and blocking of revenue for long periods. The ad-valorem system soon proved ineffective. In theory, ad-valorem taxes linked collections to product pricing. However, in practice, they created scope for disagreement, valuation disputes, and administrative complexity. After the resolution of the PME disputes, the government introduced an MRP-based levy on cigarettes, which led to widespread undervaluation and duty evasion. However, this system also turned out to be counterproductive on two counts. First, it created a spiralling effect on taxation, where even a small increase in tax rates resulted in a disproportionately higher increase in retail prices. Second, in order to avoid paying tax based on a higher MRP, some unscrupulous operators would show a lower MRP, while the amount charged to the consumer was transacted in cash. The regime, therefore, became distortionary, difficult

to enforce, and incentivised evasion of taxes.

Subsequently, a decisive shift came in the Union Budget of 1987, when the government moved from an ad-valorem system to a specific levy based on the physical length of the cigarette. Eminent economists such as Dr Raja Chelliah and Dr Vijay Kelkar also endorsed the specific levy model as being transparent, predictable, and resistant to manipulation. The structure was simple, easy to administer and resulted in higher tax collection. Excise duty collections from cigarettes grew more than twenty-fold over the next three decades, enabling both the government and the cigarette industry to operate in a more predictable fiscal environment. During this period, the Indian cigarette industry also evolved from a purely commoditised market into one offering differentiated, consumer-centric products catering to varied consumer needs.

However, with the introduction of VAT in 2007 and GST in 2017, the share of ad valorem taxation has become much larger again. The VAT regime coincided with a phase of strong anti-tobacco activism that resulted in several policy changes, leading to measures such as the enactment of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), restrictions on public smoking, and steep increases in overall tax incidence. In fact, India took the lead in this regulatory approach through COTPA, even before formally signing the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), which was adopted later. While these measures advanced the much-needed health objectives, they also produced some unintended retarding effects. Regulatory overreach, such as large pictorial warnings and high taxes, led to a significant surge in the availability of

illicit cigarettes in the country, fuelling the growth of both smuggled and domestically manufactured unaccounted and tax-evaded products, including look-alike packs sold at deep discounts by fly-by-night operators. These products entered the market at price points barely covering the cost of the cigarette, further undermining the legal industry. The widening gap between legal and illicit products, a rise in ultra-low-priced alternatives, and greater enforcement challenges became visible trends.

Further, the rise of illicit cigarettes resulted in huge losses of tax revenue and posed much more serious health hazards than the legal ones. This is because the cigarettes available in the grey market are made in unhygienic conditions without any concern for the quality of tobacco and other ingredients. Today, the rapid proliferation of multiple illicit brands across varied price points has posed serious challenges for the legal cigarette industry. A range of differentiated products offered by international players now commands a notable share of the market. For instance, products such as ESSE, positioned in slim and lower-priced formats, have gained popularity among younger consumers by creating an impression of containing less nicotine and therefore, being less harmful. It is pertinent to note the history and growth of illicit trade in the country. With the enactment of COTPA and ratification of the FCTC treaty, anti-tobacco activism in India, led by NGO's, gained significant momentum. The NGO's were at the forefront, influencing taxation and regulations. With overactive anti-tobacco activism leading to a substantial change in taxation policy, raising the burden of tax beyond the affordability of the common citizen, coupled with gory imagery on Indian cigarette packaging, this has given a huge boost to the cheaper, tax-not-paid cigarettes, which do not carry the excessive warnings required under the law of the land. According to Euromonitor International, until 2004, the illicit trade of cigarettes stood at 11.1 billion cigarettes, forming approximately 10.3 per cent of the Indian market. With the massive increases in taxation, starting from 2005-06 to 2017-18, the illicit trade of cigarettes has grown over threefold to more than 36 billion cigarettes. Illicit trade now stands at 26.1 per cent of the total cigarette trade, i.e. over one-fourth of the market size. This has led to the market today resting in the hands of trade mafias. It is established in several international studies that antisocial elements use this money to fund ulterior motives, including destabilising countries and engaging in terrorist activities.

It is also estimated that revenue loss to the exchequer on account of illicit cigarettes is to the tune of about Rs 21,000 crore per annum. Against this backdrop, the recent decision of the GST Council to tax tobacco at the retail sales price appears to revisit the pre-1987 model. It may be relevant to mention here that globally, taking a leaf out of India's over three-decade-long cigarette taxation policy,

several countries have now adopted specific-duty structures with a view to avoiding manipulation, reducing valuation disputes, and simplifying tax administration. In fact, as of 2024, 137 out of 178 countries have adopted a blend of ad-valorem and specific structures -historically, a model that India itself had adopted in its early stages. In 2008, this number was 101, reflecting a clear global shift towards this framework. Today, India stands at an important juncture in its economic journey, with the goal of becoming a Viksit Bharat by 2047. A stable tax framework is indispensable to fulfil this ambition since it encourages investment, reduces compliance frictions and supports long-term economic planning. As India debates the next steps in tax design under the GST for tobacco, the choice is not between change and continuity but between time-tested stability and avoidable uncertainty. It is hoped that on cessation of compensation cess, the final fiscal policy will take cognisance of the historical facts, perspectives and international experiences to adopt a balanced approach - learning from India's own history of tobacco taxation while aiming to disincentivise illicit trade without making major structural changes in the tax system and keep the tax incidence stable. Such a framework will result in a robust policy for the law-abiding industry. A policy measure of this kind, as in the process of development, is compromise not as a pretense, but as the foundation for sustainable long-term growth.

Such an approach is worth consideration since, at the same time, it would serve the revenue and health concerns. Also, being easier, it would be conducive to tax compliance and would address enforcement challenges. Not giving due weightage to these important points would not be advisable, as the same would work contrary to the interests of both the public and the government.



Towards Balanced Cigarette Taxation

As the compensation cess nears its end, India's debate on cigarette taxation must balance revenue, health goals and enforcement realities—drawing on decades of domestic experience and global best practices



India's long experiment with self-revenue offers clear lessons on what works, protects revenue and avoids market distortions

The GST Council's decision to phase out the 9% health cess on cigarettes is a landmark move. It marks the end of a policy that, while well-intentioned, has become increasingly complex and difficult to enforce. The health cess, introduced in 2008, was meant to protect the ex-manufacturer price of cigarettes from being eroded by the rampant growth of the illicit trade. However, over the years, the health cess has become a major source of revenue for the government, accounting for over 10% of the total cigarette tax revenue. The GST Council's decision to phase out the health cess is a significant step towards simplifying the cigarette tax structure and reducing the burden on the legal industry. It is a move that is long overdue, and it is hoped that it will lead to a more stable and sustainable cigarette tax framework for India.

The health cess was introduced in 2008 as a 9% ad-valorem tax on the ex-manufacturer price of cigarettes. It was meant to protect the ex-manufacturer price from being eroded by the rampant growth of the illicit trade. However, over the years, the health cess has become a major source of revenue for the government, accounting for over 10% of the total cigarette tax revenue. The GST Council's decision to phase out the health cess is a significant step towards simplifying the cigarette tax structure and reducing the burden on the legal industry. It is a move that is long overdue, and it is hoped that it will lead to a more stable and sustainable cigarette tax framework for India.

MEDIA COVERAGE



West Bengal Gears Up to Tackle Illicit Trade: Minister Biplab Mitra Calls for Stronger Enforcement Collaboration

5 days ago · 53 minutes ago



Mr. Biplab Mitra, Minister-in-Charge, Consumer Affairs Department, Government of West Bengal, today said, "Counterfeiting and smuggling not only harm legitimate businesses but also exploit consumers by exposing them to unsafe and substandard products. Protecting consumer rights is central to building a fair and transparent marketplace, and this requires a united effort from government agencies, industry, and civil society. Awareness and vigilance are our strongest tools in ensuring that consumers are not victims of illicit trade."

Illicit trade enforcement focus at FICCI CASCADE workshop

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: FICCI's Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE) organised a capacity-building programme for police officers on 'Illicit Trade: Enforcement Challenges and Solutions' at the Delhi Police's Specialised Training Centre in Rajendra Nagar.

The programme was attended by over 60 senior police officers and industry representatives. Addressing the gathering, ACP Yogesh Malhotra said counterfeiting and smuggling severely harm the economy, public health and social fabric, and stressed the need to strengthen enforcement capabilities. Inspector O P Thakur underlined the importance of victim-centric policing and strict action against economic offences.

FICCI CASCADE advisor and former Special Commissioner of Police Deep Chand warned of revenue losses and health risks linked to illicit goods. Citing a CASCADE report, officials said illicit trade across five key sectors was estimated at Rs 7.97 lakh crore, with textiles and apparel accounting for over 50 per cent.

Illicit trade poses serious threat to economy and national security: Experts at FICCI CASCADE

By IPI | Updated December 17, 2025 10:28 AM

New Delhi, [India] December 17 : Illicit trade, including counterfeiting and smuggling, poses a serious transnational threat to economic growth, consumer safety and national security, noted experts and law enforcement officials at a capacity-building programme organised by FICCI CASCADE in the national capital.



FICCI CASCADE workshop on illicit trade, including counterfeiting and smuggling, poses a serious transnational threat to economic growth, consumer safety and national security, noted experts and law enforcement officials at a capacity-building programme organised by FICCI CASCADE in the national capital.

FICCI's Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE) organised a Capacity Building Programme for Police Officers on 'Illicit Trade: Enforcement Challenges & Solutions' at the Specialised Training Centre in Delhi. The programme brought together over 60 senior police

officers and industry representatives to deliberate on the growing challenge posed by counterfeiting, smuggling and other illicit trade activities.

बंगाल में अवैध कारोबार पर नकेल कसने की तैयारी

आगरा संवाददाता, दुर्गापुर :

जलखानी और तस्करी पर रोक लगाने के लिए पश्चिम बंगाल सरकार ने प्रवर्तन एजेंसियों के बीच मजबूत समन्वय की आवश्यकता पर जोर दिया है। उपभोक्ता मामले के प्रवर्तक श्री विप्लव मिश्रा ने बिजली कारखाने द्वारा आयोजित एक सेमिनार में कहा कि अवैध व्यापार न केवल वैध कारोबार को नुकसान पहुंचाए है, बल्कि उपभोक्ताओं की सुरक्षा के लिए भी बड़ा खतरा है। उन्होंने बताया कि राज्य सरकार सेमई और लंदीय इलाकों में टेक्स्टाइल और फैब्रिक कारखानों को सुदृढ़ कर रही है। फिक्री कारखानों की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार एकाधमसीनी, अन्वेलन, लेवकु और एकाधमसीनी बांध प्रमुख क्षेत्रों में अवैध

बाजार का अंदाजा 7.97 लाख करोड़ रुपये है। रिपोर्ट में परिचय क्षेत्र में 4.03 लाख करोड़ रुपये के अवैध कारोबार का उल्लेख किया गया है, जो कुल अवैध व्यापार के 50 प्रतिशत से अधिक है। इसके अनिवार्य, एकाधमसीनी (पर्सनल एवं हाउसहोल्ड केयर गूड्स) के अवैध बाजार अनुमानित तौर पर क्रमशः 2,23,875 करोड़ रुपये और 73,813 करोड़ रुपये है। कार्यक्रम में बीआरआई, कोलकाता पुलिस और उद्योग जगत के प्रतिनिधियों ने अवैध नेटवर्क के खिलाफ इंटरनेशनल ऑपरेशन करवाई, जन आसुरक और एमएसडी के बीच तालमेल बढ़ाने पर जोर दिया।

संयुक्त प्रयासों से थमेगा अवैध कारोबार : विप्लव

कोलकाता, निष्पक्ष और पारदर्शी बाजार व्यवस्था तैयार करने के लिए उपभोक्ताओं के अधिकारों की रक्षा करना अत्यंत आवश्यक है, इसके लिए सरकारी एजेंसियों, उद्योग जगत और समाज के बीच संयुक्त प्रयासों की जरूरत है, उपभोक्ताओं की अवैध व्यापार का शिकार होने से बचाने के लिए जागरूकता और तस्करी सबसे मजबूत रणनीति है, राज्य के उपभोक्ता मंत्रालय के प्रवर्तक मंत्री विप्लव मिश्रा ने ये बातें बुरुवा की फिक्री कारखाने द्वारा आयोजित सेमिनार 'सुरक्षा की मजबूती: जलखानी एवं तस्करी से



निपटने की रणनीति' को संबोधित करते हुए कही। मंत्री ने कहा कि जलखानी और तस्करी से न केवल वैध व्यापार को नुकसान होता है, बल्कि असुरक्षित और निम्न-गुणवत्ता वाले उत्पादों के कारण उपभोक्ताओं के स्वास्थ्य और सुरक्षा पर भी खतरा उत्पन्न होता है, उन्होंने कानून प्रवर्तन एजेंसियों, उद्योग जगत और समाज के साथ मिलकर उपभोक्ताओं के हितों की रक्षा के लिए राज्य सरकार की प्रतिबद्धता और कार्यक्रम में पश्चिम बंगाल सरकार के उपभोक्ता मामलों के विभाग के विशेष सचिव तीर्थकर हलदर सहित कई अन्य वक्ताओं ने भी अपने विचार साझा किये।

FICCI CASCADE Flags Transnational Risks Of Illicit Economies, Seeks Stronger Enforcement

Updated: Dec 17, 2025 10:32:51pm

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FICCI CASCADE Flags Transnational Risks Of Illicit Economies, Seeks Stronger Enforcement

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New Delhi, Dec 17 (KNN) Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)-Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE) on Tuesday organised a capacity-building programme for police officers on 'Illicit Trade: Enforcement Challenges & Solutions' at the Specialised Training Centre, Rajendra Nagar, Delhi.

The programme brought together over 60 senior police officials and industry representatives to deliberate on the growing challenge posed by counterfeiting, smuggling and other illicit trade activities.

अवैध कारोबार पर लगातार के लिए पश्चिम बंगाल ने कड़ी कसर मंत्री विप्लव मिश्रा ने प्रवर्तन एजेंसियों के बीच मजबूत गठजोड़ की अपील की

कोलकाता, 17 दिसंबर : निष्पक्ष और पारदर्शी बाजार व्यवस्था तैयार करने के लिए उपभोक्ताओं के अधिकारों की रक्षा करना अत्यंत आवश्यक है, इसके लिए सरकारी एजेंसियों, उद्योग जगत और समाज के बीच संयुक्त प्रयासों की जरूरत है, उपभोक्ताओं की अवैध व्यापार का शिकार होने से बचाने के लिए जागरूकता और तस्करी सबसे मजबूत रणनीति है, राज्य के उपभोक्ता मंत्रालय के प्रवर्तक मंत्री विप्लव मिश्रा ने ये बातें बुरुवा की फिक्री कारखाने द्वारा आयोजित सेमिनार 'सुरक्षा की मजबूती: जलखानी एवं तस्करी से निपटने की रणनीति' को संबोधित करते हुए कही। मंत्री ने कहा कि जलखानी और तस्करी से न केवल वैध व्यापार को नुकसान होता है, बल्कि असुरक्षित और निम्न-गुणवत्ता वाले उत्पादों के कारण उपभोक्ताओं के स्वास्थ्य और सुरक्षा पर भी खतरा उत्पन्न होता है, उन्होंने कानून प्रवर्तन एजेंसियों, उद्योग जगत और समाज के साथ मिलकर उपभोक्ताओं के हितों की रक्षा के लिए राज्य सरकार की प्रतिबद्धता और कार्यक्रम में पश्चिम बंगाल सरकार के उपभोक्ता मामलों के विभाग के विशेष सचिव तीर्थकर हलदर सहित कई अन्य वक्ताओं ने भी अपने विचार साझा किये।

फिक्री'र उद्योग

■ **एई समझ:** असाधु व्यवसायीयों के द्वारा जाल पेशोंर बावसार पाशापाशि ठौराचालानेर फले शुध ये मार्केटिंग्लेस थाका बाकि सध बावसायीरई आर्थिक भावे क्षतिग्रस्त हन भाई नय, ग्राहक-स्वाधं छुड़ाछ भावे व्याहत हय। ये असध बावसा रूढाते तहंपर हलो पश्चिमबज सरकार। वृहस्पतिवार एई उपलक्षे बसिकसठा फिक्री आघोजित फिक्री-कासकेड सेमिनारे बाजारो उपभोक्ता विषयक मधुरेर मंत्री विप्लव मिश्रा दबि करेन, एई सब असाधु पदक्षेप रूढाते सार्विक सचेतनता बाढ़ानोर पाशापाशि प्रशासन-शिक्ष सहा असध नागरिक समाजके एकाधगे काज कराते हवे। एई उपलक्षे ए दिनेर आलोचनासभाय एकाटि रिपोर्ट प्रकाश करा हय।

MEDIA COVERAGE



MP Manoj Tiwari flags off FICCI-CASCADE anti-smuggling auto rally

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

FICCI-CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Destroying the Economy), on Saturday organised the third edition of its Annual Auto Rally. The event was flagged off by Lok Sabha Member of Parliament Manoj Tiwari. The aim of the rally was to raise large scale awareness on the impact of smuggled and counterfeit goods on India's economy, public health and national security.

On the occasion Tiwari made a passionate appeal during the flag-off ceremony and urged citizens to act as informed consumers and join the nation's collective crusade against smuggling, which continues to drain Government revenue and undermine legitimate industry.

"Smuggling is not just an economic offence, it is a silent threat that fuels criminal networks and even terrorism. A bomb blast shocks the nation in a single moment, but the funding for such acts often begins quietly through the sale of smuggled and illegal goods. Many citizens do not realise that when



Manoj Tiwari, Member of Parliament and Anil Rajput, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE, flagging off the Anti-Smuggling Auto Rally in Delhi, with over 300 auto-rickshaws participating to raise awareness on the rising threat of smuggling and counterfeiting. Pioneer photo

they buy products without a bill or choose cheaper, smuggled items, they unintentionally strengthen the very forces that work against India's safety and stability.

Today, I appeal to every Indian: let us take a clear and conscious pledge that we will never purchase goods that come through illegal channels.

Even if it costs a little more, let us always choose rightful, tax-paid, bill-certified products.

This is not only about supporting honest businesses—it is about protecting our nation, safeguarding our people, and weakening the networks that misuse our hard-earned money against us," he said.

अवैध कारोबार पर लगाम के लिए
पश्चिम बंगाल ने करीबी कामर
मंत्री विजय मिश्र ने परमज एजेंसियों के बीच
मजबूत गठजोड़ की अपील की



FICCI-CASCADE AUTO RALLY



FICCI-CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Destroying the Economy), on Saturday organised the third edition of its Annual Auto Rally. The event was flagged off by Member of Parliament Manoj Tiwari in the presence of Anil Rajput, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE. The aim of the rally was to raise large scale awareness on the impact of smuggled and counterfeit goods on India's economy, public health, and national security. MPOST

IANS
@ians_india

Delhi: BJP MP Manoj Tiwari says, "Today, an auto-rally was organized by the FICCI-CASCADE forum to raise awareness among people that counterfeit goods should neither be bought nor sold. This initiative will help make our country self-reliant and curb activities against the nation, such as terrorism and drug trafficking. By ensuring that counterfeit goods are neither purchased nor sold, we strengthen national security. I highly appreciate the efforts of the FICCI-CASCADE forum in organizing this initiative..."

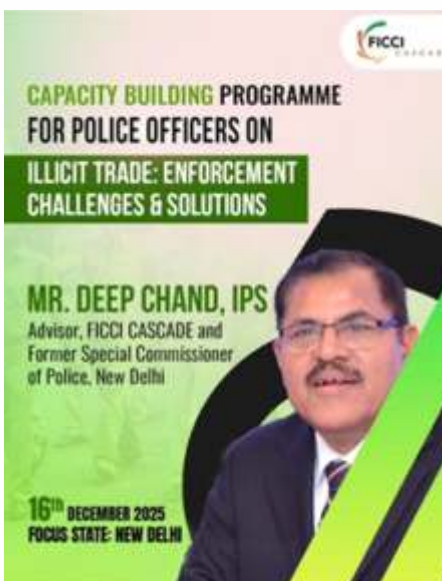
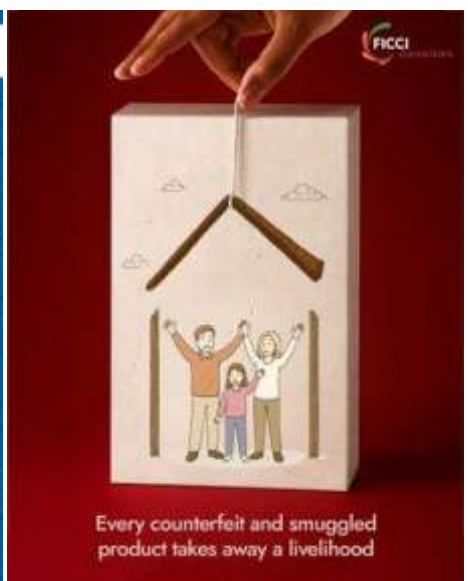
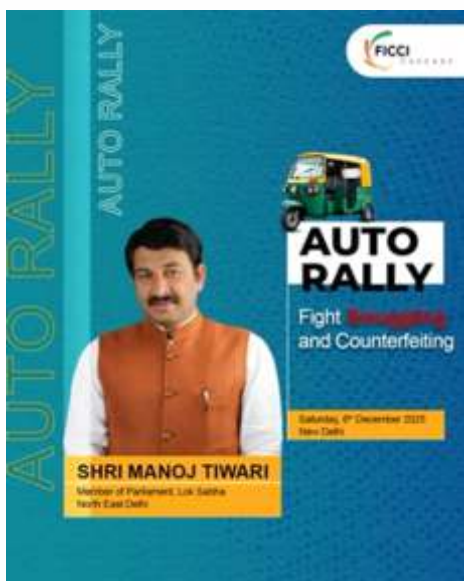
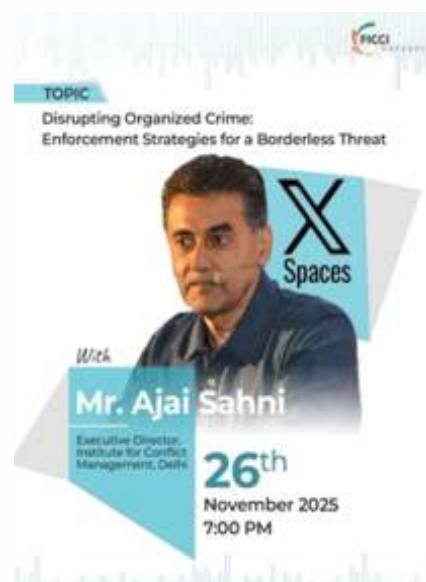
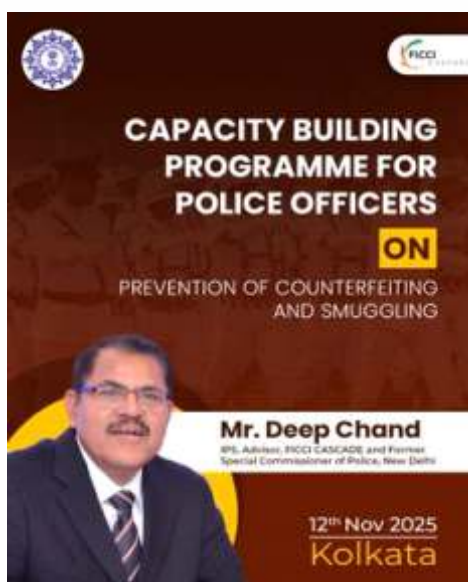


4:18 PM Dec 6, 2025 - 809 Views



MEDIA COVERAGE

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS



“ Illicit trade accounts for 3% of global GDP, resulting in losses worth ₹278.5 lakh crore worldwide, a threat that extends beyond borders and economies. ”



P. C. Jha
Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)

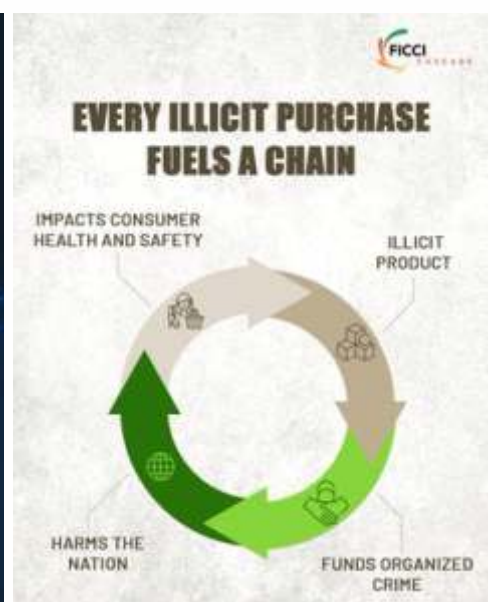
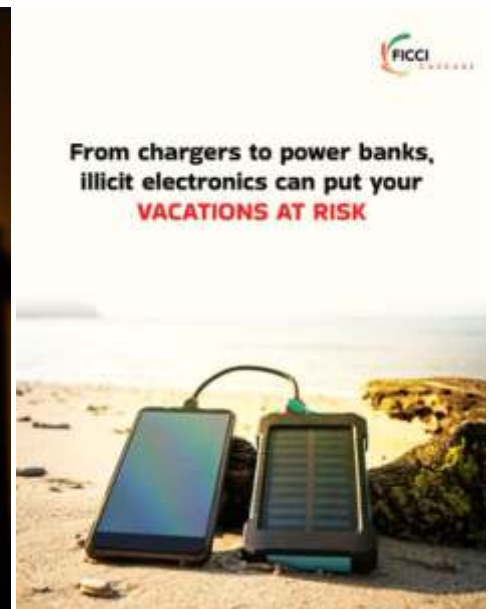
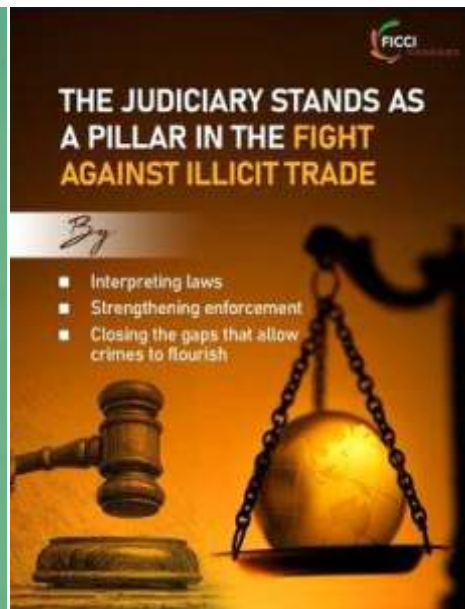
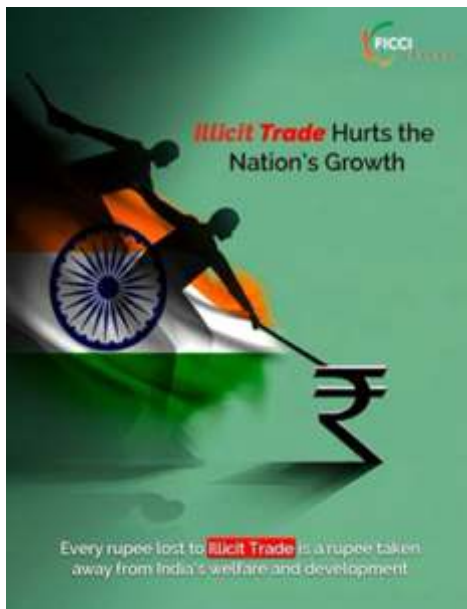


“ At a time when India is emerging as one of the fastest-growing economies, safeguarding the integrity of our markets and the trust of our people becomes even more vital. ”



Biplab Mitra
Hon'ble Minister-in-Charge, Consumer Affairs Department, Government of West Bengal

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

1. €3.8 billion worth of counterfeit goods seized across the EU in 2024. Two out of three by Italian authorities

01 October 2025 | EU News

Brussels - Clothing, accessories, CDs and DVDs, toys, cosmetics, cigarettes. In the 112 million counterfeit products seized by authorities in EU countries in 2024, there is everything-even some new entries, such as electronic cigarettes and vaping devices. The estimated retail value of €3.8 billion is a record, the highest ever recorded.

<https://www.eunews.it/en/2025/10/01/e3-8-billion-worth-of-counterfeit-goods-seized-across-the-eu-in-2024-two-out-of-three-by-italian-authorities/>

2. Cigarettes, laptops worth over 28 lakh seized from three air passengers in Coimbatore

06 October 2025 | Times Of India

Coimbatore: Officials at the Coimbatore international airport seized cigarettes and six laptops valued at 28.5 lakh, which were being smuggled by three passengers who arrived from Abu Dhabi on Sunday. They were apprehended by a team of air customs and air intelligence unit officials.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/coimbatore/cigarettes-laptops-worth-over-28-lakh-seized-from-three-air-passengers-in-coimbatore/articleshow/124325666.cms>

3. HPG: P20M worth of 'smuggled' cigarettes seized, 3 suspects nabbed in Negros, Lanao ops

13 October 2025 | GMA News

The Highway Patrol Group (HPG) on Monday said suspected smuggled cigarettes worth over P20 million were seized while three suspects, including a cop, were nabbed in two separate operations in Negros Oriental and Lanao del Norte.

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/regions/962306/hpg-smuggled-cigarettes-suspects-nabbed-negros-lanao-ops/story/>

4. Major Lancashire operation sees £200,000 illicit cigarettes and vapes seized from stores

29 October 2025 | Talking Retail

Lancashire Police and Trading Standards seized illicit cigarettes and vapes valued at nearly £200,000 as part of its proactive operations to target businesses flouting the law across the county. As part of Operation Wanderstar, the team closed three businesses linked to the sale of illicit cigarettes and vapes

<https://www.talkingretail.com/news/industry-news/major-lancashire-operation-sees-200000-illicit-cigarettes-and-vapes-seized-from-stores-29-10-2025/>

5. Fake vehicle parts worth over £100,000 seized in major operation

30 October 2025 | Gov.UK

More than 3,600 potentially dangerous fake vehicle parts worth more than £100,000 seized by officials in South Gloucestershire self-storage raid - including spark plugs, oil filters and sensors counterfeit parts bypass safety testing and are more likely to fail - putting road users at serious risk

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fake-vehicle-parts-worth-over-100000-seized-in-major-operation>

6. Illegal chinese cosmetics, cigarettes worth millions seized in Bangkok

30 October 2025 | Khaosod English

BANGKOK — Thai authorities seized more than 13 million baht (\$401,090) worth of illegal Chinese cosmetics and contraband cigarettes in separate raids across Bangkok, dismantling two foreign-backed operations accused of distributing unlicensed beauty products and smuggled tobacco online.

<https://www.khaosodenglish.com/news/2025/10/30/illegal-chinese-cosmetics-cigarettes-worth-millions-seized-in-bangkok/>

7. EPPO seizes over 2.2 million meters of smuggled fabric from China in customs fraud investigation

6 November 2025 | EPPO

(Luxembourg, 6 November 2025) – At the request of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) in Bologna (Italy), the Italian Financial Police (Guardia di Finanza) of Prato carried out searches and seized over 2.2 million meters of fabric, documentation and various electronic devices, as part of a customs fraud investigation involving the smuggling of raw material and textile products.

<https://www.epppo.europa.eu/en/media/news/italy-eppo-seizes-over-22-million-meters-smuggled-fabric-china-customs-fraud>

8. \$2.5 million in counterfeit Rolex watches seized by CBP officers in Louisville

20 November 2025 | CBP

LOUISVILLE, Ky — U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers in Louisville seized a shipment of 160 counterfeit watches from Taiwan on November 17. Had these goods been genuine, the shipment would have had a combined Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price of \$2.57 million. The shipment was heading to a residence in Houston when officers intercepted the parcel for inspection.

<https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/local-media-release/25-million-counterfeit-rolex-watches-seized-cbp-officers-louisville>

9. Hong Kong seizes fake Gucci, Hermes, other goods worth HK\$65 million during major sale

21 November 2025 | MyNews

Hong Kong: Hong Kong customs has seized 120,000 suspected counterfeit items in a month-long operation that targeted cross-border transshipments during a major online shopping festival in mainland China, confiscating goods including fake Gucci handbags, Hermes shoes and latest iPhone models.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/law-and-crime/article/3333719/hong-kong-seizes-fake-gucci-hermes-other-goods-worth-hk65-million-during-major-sale>

10. US customs seizes USD 775K worth of counterfeit toys from China; parents alerted of holiday risks

01 December 2025 | The Tribune

Washington, DC: US customs officials are alerting parents about the risks associated with counterfeit toys after confiscating over USD 775,000 worth of fake products from China, as stated in a November 25 announcement, which included imitations of well-known characters like Mickey Mouse and Labubu, according to a report by The Epoch Times (TET).

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/world/us-customs-seizes-usd-775k-worth-of-counterfeit-toys-from-china-parents-alerted-of-holiday-risks/>

NATIONAL NEWS

1. DRI seize consignments worth Rs 23 crore at e-waste smuggling attempt in Mumbai

5 October 2025 | DH

Mumbai: In a major action against the smuggling of environmentally hazardous e-waste into India, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has busted an international racket of illegal import of used electronic goods. In a targeted operation codenamed Operation DigiScrap, the team of DRI in Mumbai seized consignments valued at approximately Rs. 23 crore and arrested the Surat-based mastermind behind the smuggling attempt.

<https://www.deccanherald.com/india/maharashtra/dri-seize-consignments-worth-rs-23-crore-at-e-waste-smuggling-attempt-in-mumbai-3753195>

3. Mumbai airport staffer among 4 arrested in Rs 4.6 crore gold smuggling case

13 October 2025 | India Today

Continuing its "Operation Golden Sweep", the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) Mumbai has busted another gold smuggling syndicate operating through Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International (CSMI) Airport and seized 4 kg of foreign-origin gold valued at Rs. 4.64 crore. The operation led to the arrest of four persons, including an airport staffer, two handlers, and a passenger who had smuggled the gold.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/mumbai-airport-staffer-among-4-arrested-in-rs-46-crore-gold-smuggling-case-2802614-2025-10-13>

5. Delhi HC Denies Anticipatory Bail in ₹2.4 Cr Foreign Cigarette Smuggling Case: SC Admits SLP Challenging Rejection

17 November 2025 | Taxscan

The case involves alleged smuggling of foreign-origin cigarettes without statutory pictorial warnings, raising serious concerns under the Customs Act and allied tobacco control laws. The Supreme Court of India has admitted the Special Leave Petition filed by the appellant in a high-stakes smuggling case involving foreign-origin cigarettes worth Rs. 2.4 crore.

<https://www.taxscan.in/top-stories/delhi-hc-denies-anticipatory-bail-foreign-cigarette-smuggling-case-sc-admits-slp-challenging-rejection-1437437>

7. BSF, Customs seize goods worth Rs 73.89 lakh in Tripura anti-smuggling operation

22 November 2025 | ANI

Agartala (Tripura) [India], November 22 (ANI): In a major anti-smuggling operation, the Border Security Force (BSF) and Customs Sabroom jointly apprehended one smuggler and seized a large consignment of goods worth Rs. 73.89 lakhs on Thursday, said the release.

<https://www.aninews.in/news/national/general-news/bsf-customs-seize-goods-worth-rs-7389-lakh-in-tripura-anti-smuggling-operation20251122031326/>

9. Liquor worth Rs 1.2cr seized hidden under animal hair in truck

3 December 2025 | The Times of India

Ahmedabad: A state monitoring cell (SMC) team seized 53,369 bottles of Indian-made foreign liquor worth Rs 1,20,08,025, along with 196 bags of sheep and goat hair, from a parked truck on SP Ring Road near Bakarol on Monday. The FIR was filed with Sarkhej police by ASI Kailashkumar Yadav of the SMC.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/liquor-worth-rs-1-2cr-seized-hidden-under-animal-hair-in-truck/articleshow/125725924.cms>

2. Sandalwood worth Rs 50 lakh seized in Tamil Nadu's Erode; two arrested

09 October 2025 | DH

Erode: Police seized 400 kg of sandalwood logs worth Rs. 50 lakh that were allegedly being smuggled to Kerala, and arrested two persons in connection with the case here. According to the Thooka Naicken Palayam police in Erode district, a goods van with a Kerala registration number was stopped during a routine vehicle check at Kemma Naicken Palayam area on Wednesday evening.

<https://www.deccanherald.com/india/tamil-nadu/sandalwood-worth-rs-50-lakh-seized-in-tamil-nadus-erode-two-arrested-3758204>

4. Foreign cigarettes worth Rs 50L seized

12 November 2025 | Millennium Post

Jalpaiguri: Acting on a tip-off, a team from Jalpaiguri Police conducted naka checks at Paharpur More, Balapara, and Jora Petrol Pump on Tuesday night. During the operation, officers intercepted a truck (registration number WB-57E-4901) coming from the Maynaguri side, which was identified by the source.

Upon inspection, police discovered a large quantity of foreign-made cigarettes concealed beneath bags of tea leaves.

<https://www.millenniumpost.in/bengal/foreign-cigarettes-worth-rs-50l-seized-635202>

6. Amritsar emerges as a hotspot for counterfeit cigarette smuggling

20 November 2025 | Times of India

Amritsar: The holy city of Amritsar is rapidly emerging as a preferred destination for counterfeit cigarette smugglers, who choose to arrive at Amritsar via its International Airport. Counterfeit cigarettes of various Indian as well as international brands command high demand not only in Punjab, but also in neighbouring Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir, said a source. The back-to-back seizures of more than 225,000 sticks of counterfeit cigarettes valued at approximately Rs. 38 lakh on Nov 17 and 18 at Sri Guru Ram Dass Ji International Airport.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/amritsar-emerges-as-a-hotspot-for-counterfeit-cigarette-smuggling/articleshow/125444046.cms>

8. Cough Syrup Smuggling: Case Filed Against 12 More Pharmaceutical Firms In UP

29 November 2025 | NDTV

Varanasi: The food and drugs department of the Uttar Pradesh government filed a case on Friday against 12 more pharmaceutical firms in connection with the codeine-containing cough syrup-smuggling case in Varanasi. Previously, the department had filed a case against 26 firms. Inspector Janab Ali of the department said the case against the 26 firms was filed on November 15. At that time, 12 suspicious firms were also found.

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/cough-syrup-smuggling-case-filed-against-12-more-pharmaceutical-firms-in-up-9719212>

10. In 2025, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence has seized 321 kg of gold worth Rs 406 crore, 65 cases registered

13 December 2025 | The New India Express

NEW DELHI: Exposing increasingly sophisticated smuggling operations that span continents, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has intercepted and seized around 321 kilograms of smuggled gold worth Rs 406.35 crore between January and October this year. The seizures and interception data 65 cases show a disturbing picture of an organised syndicate gang that operates with military precision.

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2025/Oct/23/in-2025-directorate-of-revenue-intelligence-has-seized-321-kg-of-gold-worth-rs-406-crore-65-cases-registered>



CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR POLICE OFFICERS

January 2026 | Goa
February 2026 | Delhi

DIGITAL ART COMPETITION

THEME: STAND AGAINST SMUGGLING

January 2026 | New Delhi

5th Edition of Anti-Smuggling Day

11 February 2026 | Le- Meridien , New Delhi

Seminar on Proactive Approaches to Combat Smuggling and Counterfeiting

March 2026 | Hyderabad



In the recent past India's economic growth story has attracted world's attention bringing new challenges for the domestic economy. One of the challenges currently faced is the growing illicit trade in counterfeits, pass offs and smuggled goods. These activities are also threatening brands not only in every region of the country but across the globe. Contraband and counterfeit products hurt the integrity of the brand, further diluting the brand owner's reputation. This not only results in erosion of sales of the legitimate product but further [CASCADE]s onto affect the consumers in the form of health and safety hazards. With the above insight the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) took the initiative to dedicate a forum by establishing the Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy - CASCADE on 18th January, 2011.

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