



# Smuggling & Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy

**Annual Report**

APRIL 2025 - MARCH 2026



A large circular graphic with a dark background and a glowing orange and yellow fire effect. The text is centered within this circle.

**Smuggling  
& Counterfeiting  
Activities Destroying  
the Economy**

**Annual Report**  
APRIL 2025 - MARCH 2026

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# CASCADE

Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting  
Activities Destroying the Economy

# Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy



**I**llicit Trade in terms of smuggling and counterfeiting is considered as one of the world's fastest growing industry. It is an enduring problem that escalates each day in scope and magnitude and thus impacts industries, consumers, governments, and economies. Smuggling and counterfeiting can have broad economy-wide effects on trade, foreign investment, employment, innovation, criminality, environment and most importantly on the health of the consumers.

8%-15% of global GDP is impacted due to illicit trade and criminal activities. It is estimated that the total economic and social costs globally due to counterfeiting and piracy world-wide stood between USD 737 to USD 898 billion in 2013 and this is expected to go up to USD 1.54 to USD 1.87 trillion by 2022, suggesting an increase of 108 per cent. In-addition the total employment losses globally due to counterfeit and piracy stood at 2 to 2.6 million jobs in 2013 and is expected to rise to 4.2 to 5.4 million jobs in 2022, suggesting an approximate increase of 110 per cent.

For some time now illicit trade is also known to provide the fuel that energizes the terror machine. Many prominent terrorist organisations like the Hezbollah, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Al-Qaida, ISIS, Irish Republican Army rely on illicit trade for financing 20 per cent of their operations. In Italy, the mafia are also known to run illicit trade supply chains and at times the foreign organized crime groups manage day-to-day operations with mafia authorization and oversight. The perpetrators of the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris were found to have actively indulged in the illicit trade of cigarettes. The list goes on and we are racing against time to effectively counter this multi-dimensional evil force that is going from strength to strength and has total disregard for human life.

With a growing economy, India also faces the challenge of countering illicit trade in smuggled & counterfeit goods. In India, the size of illicit market is estimated at Rs. 7,97,726 crore in 2022-23, as per the FICCI CASCADE study titled “**Challenging Landscape of Illicit Trade: How Changing Factors of Consumption Affect Illicit Market in 5 key industries in India**”. Considering 5 key industries—FMCG (packaged goods), FMGC (personal and household care), alcohol, tobacco, and textiles & apparel, where illicit trade is undermining legitimate businesses, distorting competition, and significantly eating into government tax revenues. It is notable here that average increase in these loses have been as much as 45 %, and in just two years!!

Given the emphasis on India's economic development and the much anticipated growth trajectory; technology, invention, and innovation will play a key role in charting out India's growth strategy. However, illegal trade practices will prove to hinder this progression. India today has the potential to become a global manufacturing hub. However, in the absence of an adequate enforcement mechanism to stop counterfeiting and smuggling, can act as a dampener in achieving this goal.

Despite several efforts undertaken to curb smuggling, counterfeiting and piracy, the illicit markets continue to thrive across all industry segments. Hence, a proactive strategy should be in place to fight this serious menace to public health and safety, and to the national exchequer. Cooperation amongst stakeholders (including international and domestic regulatory and investigative agencies), streamlining of complex tax structures, stringent governance practices and enforcement of existing laws are required to curb this tumorous threat.



# Major Issues/Concerns

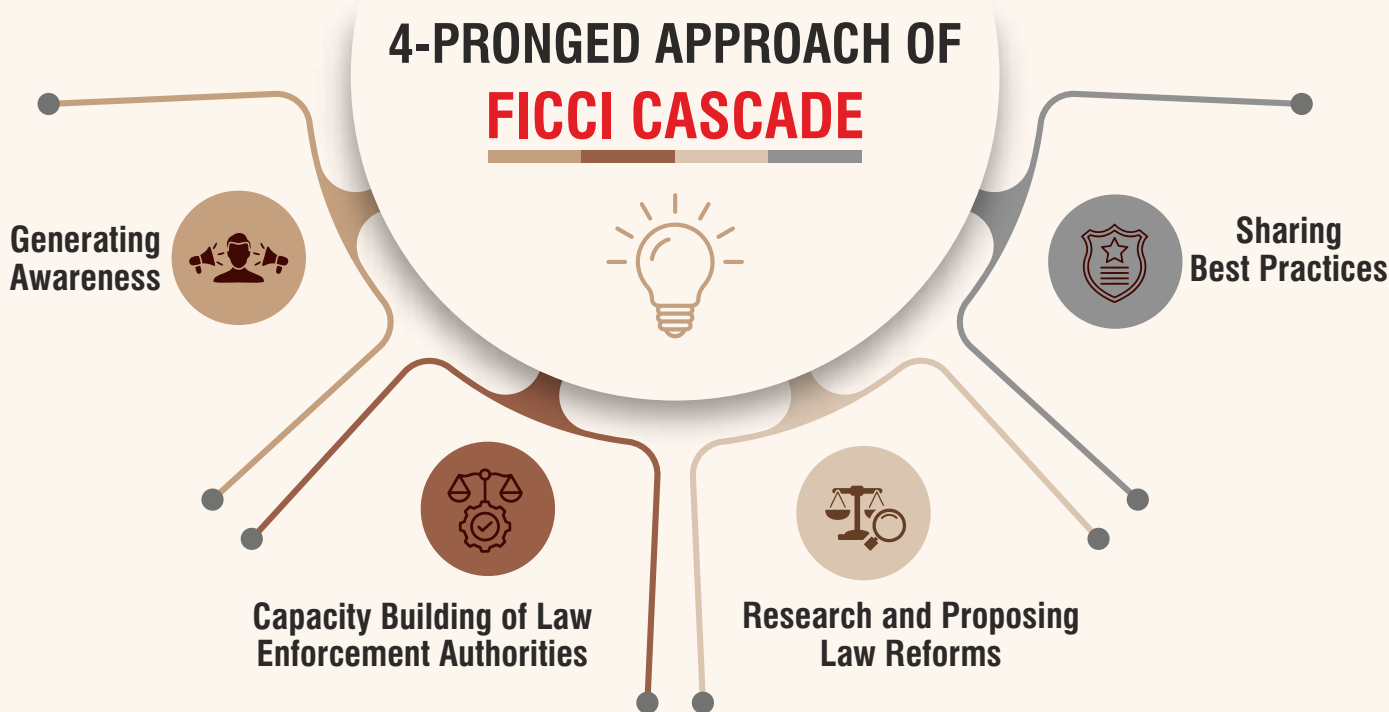
- » The challenge of counterfeited and smuggled goods has emerged as a global problem
- » With low barriers to the market entry and infiltration, no country is immune from the impact of counterfeiting and smuggling and no single sector can be said to be an exception
- » The market for fake or counterfeit or smuggled products is one of the biggest challenges faced by Indian industry, impacting 'Brand India' globally
- » Consumers receive poorer quality products that are unregulated and unsafe
- » Businesses suffer lower income and damaged brands, they may have to cut jobs and reduce investment leading in turn to lower economic growth

Set up on 18th January 2011, '**Committee Against**

**Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy' (CASCADE)** by FICCI is a unique forum working towards facing and countering the challenge of growing illicit trade in counterfeits, pass offs and smuggled goods in the domestic economy.

**FICCI CASCADE continues to highlight the following key issues:**

- » Legitimate industry is adversely affected
- » Consumers' health and safety is being jeopardized
- » Illegitimate industry is flourishing
- » Loss to the exchequer
- » Burden on welfare costs and enforcement cost
- » Black money being generated
- » Increased criminalization



# Mandate

## Awareness Generation



- » To put the issue of smuggled, contraband and counterfeit products high on the social agenda
- » To generate and spread awareness on the hazardous impact of smuggled, contraband and counterfeit products
- » To interact with the law enforcement authorities to emphasize on the importance of continued awareness and seriousness of the impact of smuggled and counterfeit goods
- » To achieve a high "issue recall" on anti-smuggling and anti-counterfeiting in the minds of consumers and to sensitize the supply chain personnel towards the harm that smuggled, contraband and counterfeit products cause and to emphasize the importance of their role in grappling with the social issue



## Knowledge Management



- » To engage in systematic assimilation and dissemination of enforcement techniques, procedures and strategies for the guidance of its members through various interactive events
- » To commission research and propose law and policy reforms to Government and other relevant stakeholders through knowledge papers, report, studies on issues related to counterfeiting and smuggling
- » To provide a platform for sharing the best practices followed globally for combating contraband, smuggled and counterfeit products

To engage in capacity building activities for the benefit of law enforcement agencies and other CASCADE stakeholders including Judicial, Police and Customs Officers

- » To tap into initiatives of various international fora such as ICC BASCAP, WIPO Advisory Committee on Enforcement, WCO and others to identify existing gaps in India and building synergies in collaborative mode
- » To study and have full appreciation of the enforcement initiatives of developed countries as well as developing countries



## Policy Advocacy



- » To assist the Government in formulating its response to regional and multilateral agreements and model laws being proposed by international organizations such as INTA, WIPO, WCO etc
- » To assist the Government of India in formulating its position in ongoing bilateral negotiations having an impact on enforcement issues related to counterfeiting and smuggling



## Networking



- » To work in synergy with other foreign institutions and bodies working in the realm of anti-counterfeiting and anti-smuggling
- » To identify and facilitate CASCADE stakeholders to network with legal services providers and investigators who have excellent relationships in the local law enforcement machinery and who have consistently delivered high yield counterfeiting raids across India







**11**  **MASCRADA 2025**  
MOVEMENT AGAINST SMUGGLED & COUNTERFEIT TRADE  
18-19 September 2025 **New Delhi**

**11**  
EDITION

# MASCRADE 2025

MOVEMENT AGAINST SMUGGLED & COUNTERFEIT TRADE

18-19 September 2025 New Delhi



## Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

In today's global landscape, rising geopolitical tensions, strained supply chains, and increasing environmental crises are creating conditions that enable the growth of illicit trade. These challenges are being actively exploited by criminal networks to expand their operations, ultimately leading to severe pressure on individual,

societal and national safety and security. The problem of smuggling, counterfeiting and other forms of illicit trade are enemies of progress and development, and their expansion is detrimental to civilization.

In response to this alarming reality, FICCI CASCADE has spearheaded the Movement



Against Smuggled and Counterfeit Trade (MASCRADE), a flagship initiative dedicated to combating the surge in illicit trade. FICCI CASCADE successfully hosted the 11th edition of MASCRADE, themed "**Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare**", on 18th-19th September 2025 at The Lalit, New Delhi. The conference served as a crucial platform to underscore the urgency of a united global response to the growing menace of illicit trade and its far-reaching consequences for economies, governance systems, and societies at large.



Addressing the inaugural session as the Chief Guest, **Mr. Arjun Ram Meghwal**, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, highlighted the transformative nature of GST 2.0, stating that it is "not just about taxation, it is about making life easier for households and businesses." He stated that the remarkable shift from 37 GST returns filed annually in 2017 to only 3 today, reflecting how governance can truly respond to industry's needs. Mr. Meghwal further emphasised the importance of clearly defining illicit trade and working collectively to eliminate it. He assured that the recommendations emerging from MASCRADE 2025 will be taken to the government and acted upon.

without proper safeguards, citing the 14th century token currency experiment as an example. Likewise, in today's context, he emphasized the need to

Addressing the gathering, **Dr. Rajiv Mani**, Secretary, Legislative Department, Ministry of Law & Justice, Government of India, underscored the importance of innovation alongside legal measures in tackling illicit trade. He remarked that history shows how even progressive ideas can falter





look beyond laws and adopt innovative solutions to effectively combat the growing menace of illicit trade.

In the video message, **Ms. Gael Grooby**, Director, Policy and Standards, World Customs Organization, highlighted the WCO's efforts to support legitimate trade while countering illicit flows. Citing Operation STOP, she shared how counterfeit medical supply chains were disrupted to protect consumers and economies. She underscored the evolving challenges posed by e-commerce, which enables the rapid spread of counterfeits, and outlined the WCO's investments in AI, real-time data sharing, and detection technologies to handle the surge in small packages. She also acknowledged India's support in enhancing the WCO's Customs Enforcement Network (CEN) with improved data visualization tools.

**Mr. Anil Rajput**, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE, congratulated the Hon'ble Prime Minister for

announcing the historic and bold GST 2.0 reforms, calling it a significant step towards Viksit Bharat. He stated that while GST 2017 transformed India's taxation landscape, GST 2.0 builds on that foundation with simplified rate structures and enhanced efficiency, truly embodying the vision of "One Nation, One Tax." He reiterated FICCI CASCADE's longstanding advocacy for rational tax structures to curb illicit trade, pointing out that high tax rates widen price gaps that fuel smuggling and counterfeiting. GST 2.0, he said, addresses these







issues effectively, and urged policymakers to maintain a balanced structure to discourage illicit markets.

Building on the spirit and success of Operation Sindoor, which showcased the power of clarity, precision, and coordination in dismantling entrenched threats, Mr. Rajput unveiled 'SHIELD', a strategic framework to combat illicit trade in India. S stands for Strategic Monitoring through tech-enabled surveillance across supply

chains; H for Harnessing Technology like AI, blockchain, and analytics; I for Industry Collaboration to share intelligence and support enforcement; E for Enforcement through swift action and deterrence; L for Legal Reforms to strengthen laws and expedite trials; and D for Demand Reduction through public awareness to curb the consumption of illicit goods at the source.

During the conference, FICCI CASCADE report titled, "Decoding the Journey of GST Reforms: GST and Its Effect on Economy, Business and Household Consumption" was released. The report acknowledges the government's significant role in advancing GST 2.0 as a transformative reform, underscoring its impact in simplifying taxation, enhancing fiscal strength, and shaping consumption behaviour.





**Mr. P K Malhotra**, Former Secretary, Ministry of Law & Justice, Government of India and Think Tank Member, FICCI CASCADE emphasized that this battle cannot be fought by governments alone, industry must invest in authenticity, citizens must stay vigilant, and stronger international collaboration is essential for joint investigations, intelligence sharing, and harmonized standards.

The Day-1 of the conference also

witnessed a Fireside Chat with **Dr. Ajay Shah**, Professor, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi, and **Mr. Kebharu Smith**, Director, Counterfeit Crimes Unit (CCU), Amazon. The discussion delved into the gravity of the illicit trade problem, exploring its economic, technological, and regulatory dimensions, and underscored the need for collaborative strategies to effectively address this growing challenge.

Day 2 of the conference brought together a distinguished panel of leaders and experts, featuring **Mr. Rahul Navin**, Director of Enforcement, Directorate of Enforcement; **Mr. Abhai Kumar Srivastav**, Director General, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence; **Hon'ble Mr. Justice Manmohan Singh**, Former Judge, High Court of Delhi; along with several other eminent voices from policy, industry, academia, enforcement agencies and among others. The discussions highlighted the need for stronger enforcement mechanisms, enhanced inter-agency coordination, and





robust legal frameworks to curb illicit trade and protect legitimate economic activity.

Delivering the valedictory address, **Hon'ble Mr. Justice Manmohan**, Judge, Supreme Court of India, underlined the importance of collective action by the judiciary, government, and civil society in tackling the growing menace of illicit trade. He highlighted that illicit trade is estimated at nearly \$3 trillion annually and cautioned that its impact extends far beyond revenue loss. The real cost manifests in job losses, stifling of innovation, empowerment of criminal networks, and the funding of terrorism, making it not only an economic issue but also a significant socio-economic and security challenge. He called for a multi-stakeholder approach, stressing the need for collaboration across sectors to effectively combat this pervasive threat.

In his special address, **Mr. Mohan Kumar Singh**, Member - Compliance Management, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, pointed out the enforcement and systemic

challenges posed by illicit trade. He noted, "Illicit trade not only undermines national security but also provides funding channels to organised crime networks. Vulnerabilities arise from factors such as weak border control, gaps in surveillance, lack of inter-agency coordination, and regulatory complexities. Combating this requires dynamic and adaptable solutions, stronger information-sharing across agencies, deployment of advanced surveillance technologies, and robust cross-border cooperation

**Hon'ble Mr. Justice Manmohan Sarin**, Former Lokayukta, NCT of Delhi, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir, Judge, High





Court of Delhi and Think Tank Member, FICCI CASCADIE mentioned that the industry should not view itself merely as a victim of counterfeit trade. Instead, it must actively engage as a key partner in combating illicit trade by fostering robust and resilient supply

chains, thereby safeguarding both business integrity and consumer trust.

The 11th edition of MASCRAD witnessed participation from senior functionaries of leading international organisations such as the WCO, WIPO, EUIPO, GITOC, TRACIT, DKPTO





and among others. Over the two-day conference, experts from India and abroad made insightful presentations and participated in plenaries, stressing the significance of empowering consumers to reject smuggled and counterfeit goods and contribute to the

fight against illicit trade.

As part of the closing ceremony, Anti-Counterfeiting and Anti-Smuggling Awards were presented to enforcement officers, school students and journalists for their role in creating awareness and strengthening the fight against illicit trade.







# SOCIAL Media



**11th MAZDAE 2025**  
MOVEMENT AGAINST SMUGGLERS & COUNTERFEIT TRADE  
10th-11th September 2025 | Virtual Event, New Delhi

Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

अवैध व्यापार की पहचान और उसके लिए सजाओं का निर्धारण करना ज़रूरी है, ताकि देश पर इस खतरे को जड़ से खत्म किया जा सके।

**ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL**  
Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India

**11th MAZDAE 2025**  
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Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

History shows us that without adequate safeguards, even progressive ideas can fail — as seen in the 19th century when currency experiments ultimately failed. In today's world, we must look beyond laws and adopt innovative solutions to curb the menace of illicit trade.

**RAJIV MANI**  
Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Ministry of Law & Justice, Government of India

**11th MAZDAE 2025**  
MOVEMENT AGAINST SMUGGLERS & COUNTERFEIT TRADE  
10th-11th September 2025 | Virtual Event, New Delhi

Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

Illicit trade is a hybridised, multi-sector involving environmental crime, IEDs, trafficking, counterfeiting, and financial crimes.

**RAJESH KUMAR CHATURVEDI**  
Deputy Director General of Police, Jaipur

**11th MAZDAE 2025**  
MOVEMENT AGAINST SMUGGLERS & COUNTERFEIT TRADE  
10th-11th September 2025 | Virtual Event, New Delhi

Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

To disrupt the reliance of illicit activities, intelligence and enforcement agencies, financial institutions and other service providers, through timely and collaborative approaches, are to create effective and resilient ecosystem.

**RAJESH KUMAR**  
Deputy Director General, Jaipur

**11th MAZDAE 2025**  
MOVEMENT AGAINST SMUGGLERS & COUNTERFEIT TRADE  
10th-11th September 2025 | Virtual Event, New Delhi

Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

The fight against illicit trade is not one about law enforcement but about safeguarding the nation's security. Government and industry must work together to curtail the menace and pave the way for a bright future.

**RAJESH KUMAR GOEL**  
Deputy Director General, Jaipur

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Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

Illicit trade is not just an economic challenge, it is a global threat. Valued at over USD 3 trillion globally, nearly two-thirds of terror groups rely on illicit trade for funding. The scale threatens not only businesses but also consumers and national security.

**ANIL RAJPUT**  
Chairman, FICCI CASCADE

**11th MAZDAE 2025**  
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Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

Counterfeiting has far-reaching implications beyond just the loss of revenue. It also puts our entire economy at risk by eroding trust in our financial institutions, consumer safety, and business integrity. It is crucial to effectively combat this issue and safeguard trade partners and the economy, a collaborative effort between government and private organisations is crucial.

**VIVEK MITTAL**  
Executive Director, Jaipur, Customs, Ministry of Finance, India

**11th MAZDAE 2025**  
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Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

Counterfeit goods may look attractive, but they are ultimately harmful in the short, medium, and long term. Consumers need greater awareness to identify and avoid such products, and to understand the risks they pose to health, safety, and the economy.

**RAMESH ABHISHEK**  
Deputy Director, Jaipur, Ministry of Finance, India

**11th MAZDAE 2025**  
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Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

MAZDAE over the years has consistently addressed the many facets of illicit trade, from its economic costs to the revenue it generates for some organisations. It'll have been long combated by illicit trade, but the recent GST 2.0 will help reduce the arbitrage incentive for evasion by ensuring stronger enforcement and a better system.

**NAJIB SHAH**  
Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs & Task Force Member, FICCI CASCADE

**11th MAZDAE 2025**  
MOVEMENT AGAINST SMUGGLERS & COUNTERFEIT TRADE  
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Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

Illicit trade, including counterfeiting, smuggling, and piracy is a global menace that endangers public safety and state sovereignty. This shadow economy threatens our financial systems, businesses, livelihoods, and social fabric. Trust in digital commerce.

**P K MALHOTRA**  
Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Law & Justice, Government of India (New Delhi, India)





**11th FICCI EAIET 2025**  
Growth & Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

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Risk trade is growing rapidly, fueled by technology, e-commerce, cryptocurrencies, and free trade zones. Given its global nature, only a unified multilateral response can effectively curb this menace that undermines global peace, economies, and businesses.

**RAMESH ABHISHEK**  
Former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

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Growth & Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

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The global challenge of illicit trade is massive, accounting for 4.7% of global trade in the EU and 2.3% globally. This scale is huge, and it must be addressed with strong enforcement and public-private collaboration.

**CLAIRE CASTEL**  
Head of the Customs & Knowledge of IP Section, European Union Intellectual Property Office

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According to the 'Mapping Global Trade in Fakes' report by OECD and IPRD, the scale of global trade in counterfeit goods is massive, valued at USD 467 billion, which accounts for 2.5% of global trade.

**PRAGYA CHATURVEDI**  
Legal Counsel, Building Support for IP Section, World Intellectual Property Organisation

**11th FICCI EAIET 2025**  
Growth & Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

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Since the introduction of USD, the registered taxpayer base has grown from 121 crore in 2005, when the registration and electronic base stood at 228 crore, to 192 crore in 2025.

**AJAY SHAH**  
Professor, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi

**11th FICCI EAIET 2025**  
Growth & Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

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Effective enforcement against illicit trade demands a unified front—corporations, customs authorities, and civil society must embrace shared responsibility and robust policy frameworks to dismantle illegal networks and safeguard legitimate commerce.

**GAEL GROOBY**  
Director, Policy and Technical, World Customs Organisation

**11th FICCI EAIET 2025**  
Growth & Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

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Counterfeit trade accounts for 2.5% of global commerce, nearly USD 110 billion, and its growth tracks with the rise of e-commerce, digitalisation, and technological innovation. The rising e-commerce does not support legitimate commerce but fuels illegal activities, making it much more than a lost revenue.

**VIVEK JOHRI**  
Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs

**11th FICCI EAIET 2025**  
Growth & Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

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Capacity building is important across the ecosystem—legislators, regulators, prosecutors, and judges, must all be trained and equipped to understand and address the complexities of illicit trade effectively.

**D. P. DASH**  
Former Member, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, Government of India

**11th FICCI EAIET 2025**  
Growth & Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

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Illicit trade doesn't stop at borders. Stronger coordination, data sharing, and international cooperation are essential to police criminals and build a global economy that is fair, transparent, and resilient.

**LOUISE BOISEN**  
Executive, Intellectual Property Rights, Ministry of Britain

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To fight illicit trade effectively, we need to build cooperation platforms, increase coordination, and bring together customs, technology providers, and governments to create practical solutions on the ground.

**ESTEBAN CIUDICI**  
Senior Policy Advisor, Transnational Institute on Border Trade

**11th FICCI EAIET 2025**  
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Illicit trade requires global vigilance, but it also gives us an opportunity to strengthen intellectual sharing, enhance cooperation, and work out regulatory frameworks together.

**ARUN SHINHA**  
Executive Director of Intellectual Property Rights, Government of India

**11th FICCI EAIET 2025**  
Growth & Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

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Counterfeit goods, such as pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and electronics, pose significant health and safety risks. Combating these threats requires robust enforcement, international intellectual property cooperation, and greater awareness among all stakeholders.

**ANITA KUMAR**  
Former Director, Intellectual Property Rights, Government of India

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Growth & Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

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Counterfeit goods are a global problem. Strong international cooperation is essential to police criminals and build a global economy that is fair, transparent, and resilient.

**ANITA KUMAR**  
Former Director, Intellectual Property Rights, Government of India

**11th FICCI EAIET 2025**  
Growth & Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

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Counterfeit goods pose a threat to global trade and intellectual property rights. Combating these threats requires robust enforcement, international intellectual property cooperation, and greater awareness among all stakeholders.

**SUNDEEP TRIVEDI**  
Former Director, Intellectual Property Rights, Government of India

**11th FICCI EAIET 2025**  
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Illicit trade is a growing concern due to the rise of counterfeit goods. Combating these threats requires robust enforcement, international intellectual property cooperation, and greater awareness among all stakeholders.

**SUVASNIS CHAUDHARY**  
Former Director, Intellectual Property Rights, Government of India

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**ANITA KUMAR**  
Former Director, Intellectual Property Rights, Government of India

# Media COVERAGE



## GST 2.0: Making life easier for households, businesses

**FINANCIAL NEWS REPORT:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday announced the GST 2.0 reforms, which will be implemented from September 23, 2025. The reforms aim to reduce the tax burden on households and businesses, while also simplifying the tax system. The GST 2.0 reforms include a 1% increase in the GST rate on most goods, but a 1% reduction on essential items like food grains, oil, and sugar. The reforms also include a 1% increase in the GST rate on services, but a 1% reduction on essential services like education and healthcare. The reforms are expected to generate an additional ₹1.5 lakh crore in revenue for the government, which will be used to fund various social welfare schemes. The reforms are also expected to simplify the tax system, making it easier for businesses to comply with the law. The reforms are a key part of the government's economic policy, aimed at stimulating growth and improving the living standards of the people.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and Union Minister for Revenue and Expenditure Anoop Singh presenting the GST 2.0 reforms.

The GST 2.0 reforms are a significant step towards simplifying the tax system and reducing the tax burden on households and businesses. The reforms are expected to generate an additional ₹1.5 lakh crore in revenue for the government, which will be used to fund various social welfare schemes. The reforms are also expected to simplify the tax system, making it easier for businesses to comply with the law. The reforms are a key part of the government's economic policy, aimed at stimulating growth and improving the living standards of the people.

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## व्यापार: जीएसटी सुधार से देश में नकली सामानों के व्यापार में कमी आएगी फिक्की कैकेड



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and Union Minister for Revenue and Expenditure Anoop Singh presenting the GST 2.0 reforms.

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## GST reforms, rate cut kick in from today

**From daily essentials to cars and electronics get cheaper**

**CHENNAI: NIRMALA SITHARAMAN**  
NEW DELHI, INDIA

The country's indirect tax structure will undergo a significant reform from Monday with the implementation of the GST 2.0 reforms. The reforms will reduce the tax burden on households and businesses, while also simplifying the tax system. The GST 2.0 reforms include a 1% increase in the GST rate on most goods, but a 1% reduction on essential items like food grains, oil, and sugar. The reforms also include a 1% increase in the GST rate on services, but a 1% reduction on essential services like education and healthcare. The reforms are expected to generate an additional ₹1.5 lakh crore in revenue for the government, which will be used to fund various social welfare schemes. The reforms are also expected to simplify the tax system, making it easier for businesses to comply with the law. The reforms are a key part of the government's economic policy, aimed at stimulating growth and improving the living standards of the people.

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## GST 2.0 cuts prices on ghee, jam and ice cream, PM Modi declares 'sabka muh meetha hoga'

Meat, dairy products, biscuits, oil, sugar, jam, ice cream, medicines, health care, dry fruits, coffee and tea products will be cheaper



Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaking at a podium.

## CBIC, other agencies vigilant on GST benefit transfer to the public

CBIC and other agencies are closely monitoring GST rate cuts to ensure businesses pass on benefits to consumers. Price checks, complaint portals, and industry coordination aim to safeguard consumer interest as GST rates are reduced, coinciding with the festive season demand push.

**Written by: Prasanna Saha**  
September 21, 2025 20:25:15



## New GST Rates: 22 सितंबर से 400 सामान सस्ते होने से पहले आई बड़ी रिपोर्ट, कंपनियों या जनता को होगा फायदा?

**By: CHENNAI: NIRMALA SITHARAMAN**  
NEW DELHI, INDIA

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## FMCG Price Cuts: GST 2.0 Benefits Consumers

FMCG companies have extended benefits of GST 2.0 rate reductions to consumers, leading to price cuts on various products. This move is expected to boost demand and support economic growth during the festive season.



A grocery store aisle with shelves full of FMCG products.

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## अवैध व्यापार पर अंकुश लगाने की जरूरत: जट्टिस मनमोहन

जट्टिस मनमोहन ने कहा कि देश में अवैध व्यापार का अंकुश लगाने की जरूरत है। उन्होंने कहा कि अवैध व्यापार, जो कि अवैध रूप से करों को बचाता है, देश की आर्थिक स्थिति को नुकसान पहुंचाता है। उन्होंने कहा कि सरकार को अवैध व्यापार को रोकने के लिए कड़े कानून बनाने और लागू करने की जरूरत है। उन्होंने कहा कि अवैध व्यापार को रोकने के लिए सरकार को जट्टिस मनमोहन के विचारों को ध्यान में रखना चाहिए।

**बिजनेस - इंडिया**  
21 September 2025 12:16



A large building, likely the Parliament building in Delhi.

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# Event Coverage

# Media COVERAGE

## India Commits To Combat Illegal Trade: Arjun Ram Meghwal



Union Minister of State for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal has said that India is committed to protecting its citizens against illegal and counterfeit trade.

## GST 2.0: A Leap Towards Tax Simplification and Market Formalisation

The government's introduction of GST 2.0 aims to ease business tax burdens, empower SMEs, and propel India closer to a unified tax region. It seeks to strip 0% taxed items and improve exports' share, boosting consumer purchasing power. Despite initial revenue loss, long-term benefits include expansion of the formal economy.



## जीएसटी सुधार से देश में नकली सामानों के व्यापार में कमी आएगी : अनिल राजपूत

नई दिल्ली, 18 सितम्बर (एबीपीएन)। जीएसटी सुधार से देश में बड़े स्तर पर गैरी सेक्टर में टैक्स में कटौती हुई है। इससे नकली सामानों के व्यापार में कमी देखने को मिलेगी। यह बयान फिक्की के चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत ने शुक्रवार को दिया। राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर ही आयोजित फिक्की के एक कार्यक्रम में अनिल राजपूत ने कहा कि फिक्की केबिनेट की ओर से हर साल सितम्बर में आयोजित किया जा रहा है। यह जो सम्मेलन और अंतरराष्ट्रीय गतिविधियों के अलावा एक अधिवेशन है। उन्होंने अगले बजट की सुझावों और नकली सामानों का व्यापार, अवैध व्यापार को नियंत्रित करने के लिए और अन्य द्वारा शामिल सभी लोगों को संबोधित



बचने को उभारने है, यहाँ से नीति निर्धारित है, उभारने या उपरोक्त से। जीएसटी 2.0 पर सफल पूरे जाने पर राजपूत ने कहा कि यह एक बड़ा बदलाव करने वाला सुधार है। जवाहर नरकरों सम्मेलन के व्यापार को एक बड़ा अधिक टैक्स का शोष भी होना है। ऐसे में सरकार को और से टैक्स को घटाना चाहिए। इससे ही बड़े सेक्टर में नकली सामानों के व्यापार में कमी आएगी। इस कार्यक्रम में फिक्की केबिनेट और थीट अर्बिट्रेज रिजर्व इंस्टीट्यूट

अधिक टैक्स का लेना है ज्यादातर नकली सामानों के व्यापार को दबाने (टीएनआईआई) ने एक न्यायपूर्ण बयान भी पेश की। रिपोर्ट में कहा गया कि जीएसटी सुधारों के तहत 5 प्रतिशत का बाली बेंचिंग को घटाना 54 से बढ़कर 140 हो गई, जिससे ग्रामीण परिवारों के लिए प्रथम जीएसटी पर 6.05 प्रतिशत से बढ़कर 4.27 प्रतिशत और सारी परिवारों के लिए 6.38 प्रतिशत से बढ़कर 4.38 प्रतिशत हो गई है। रिपोर्ट में बताया गया कि व्यवसायों, विशेष रूप से एग्जटिवों के लिए जीएसटी 2.0 सुविधाओं में प्रयुक्त करता है जो उन्हें शुल्क देने के कारण उभरने विद्युतों को दूर करता है।



## Maggi, Coffee, Ghee, Butter: Essentials Get Cheaper From Today As GST 2.0 Begins

The step comes ahead of the festive season, when demand typically spikes, and is expected to revive consumption after months of subdued growth.

By / ABP Live Business | Updated at : 22 Sep 2025 12:17 PM (IST)







**ANTI  
SMUGGLING DAY  
ANTI**

11<sup>th</sup> February

5<sup>TH</sup> EDITION

# ANTI SMUGGLING DAY

11<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2026 | NEW DELHI

**F**ICCI CASCADE organised its 5th edition of Anti-Smuggling Day on 11th February 2026 at Hotel Le-Meridien, New Delhi. The conference provided a platform to the stakeholders to engage in meaningful discussions on the evolving nature of smuggling and its impact on economies and societies.

Addressing the 5th Edition of Anti-Smuggling Day, the Chief Guest, **Mr. Mohan Kumar Singh**, Member - Compliance Management, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, underscored the growing complexity and scale of illicit trade in the country. He observed that smuggling has transformed into a highly organised, technology-driven economic crime with serious implications for national security, economic stability, and public safety.

Highlighting the robust enforcement measures undertaken by Customs formations and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Mr. Singh apprised that enforcement efforts have intensified significantly in recent years. In the first three quarters of the current financial year alone, authorities have seized approximately 500 kilograms of gold, nearly 150 million sticks of illicit cigarettes, over 20 metric

tonnes of red sanders, around 120 kilograms of cocaine, about 50 kilograms of heroin, nearly 350 kilograms of amphetamines, and close to 3,700 kilograms of hydroponic cannabis at airports. Additionally, more than 100 cases of wildlife trafficking have been detected, along with seizures involving dual-use goods, arms, ammunition, drones, and fake Indian currency notes, he added.



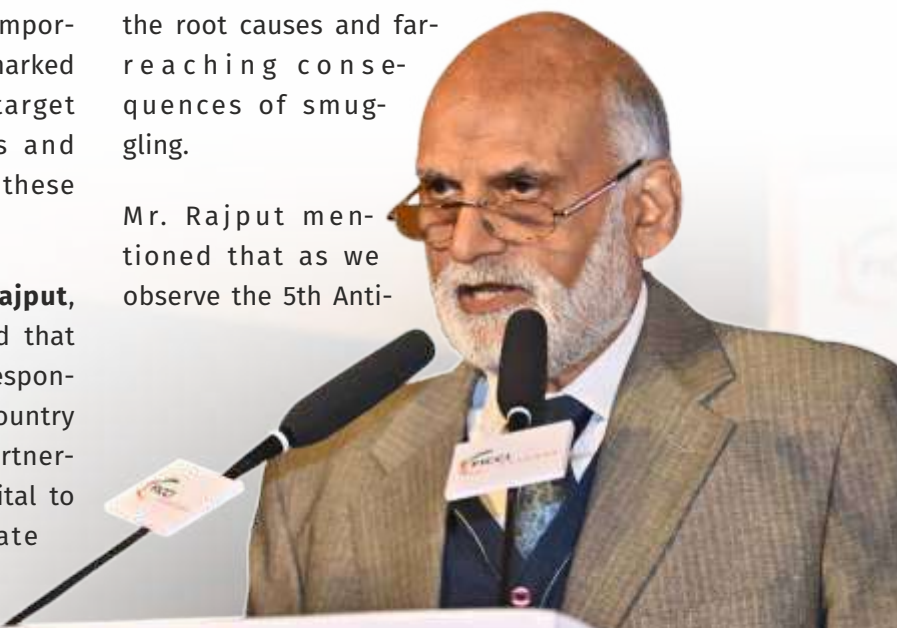


Mr. Singh further highlighted that India has significantly strengthened its international enforcement architecture, with 42 Mutual Customs Cooperation Agreements (MoUs) already signed and 21 more under negotiation with major trading partners. He underscored the need to shift from isolated, event-based seizures to a more holistic, network-centric approach aimed at dismantling entire smuggling syndicates. Stressing the importance of systemic intervention, he remarked that enforcement agencies must target financial flows, logistics enablers and international linkages that sustain these illicit networks.

In his welcome address, **Mr. Anil Rajput**, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE, accentuated that combating smuggling cannot be the responsibility of a single institution or a country alone. He mentioned that strong partnerships among compliant nations are vital to promote legitimate trade, facilitate intelligence sharing, and ensure decisive action against illicit

operators. He further informed that just as UN-designated observances such as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking have successfully mobilised global attention, the recognition of an International Anti-Smuggling Day by the United Nations would serve as a powerful platform to strengthen international cooperation and collectively address the root causes and far-reaching consequences of smuggling.

Mr. Rajput mentioned that as we observe the 5th Anti-





Smuggling Day, let us remind ourselves that this fight is ultimately about choices-policy choices, enforcement choices, business choices and consumer choices. If we choose legality over convenience, integrity over dishonesty and cooperation over complacency, we can ensure that smuggling finds no space to take root. While choices matter, they must translate into action. Mr. Rajput emphasized that right action at the right time by policymakers is essential, as any delay risks allowing illicit activity to deepen, leading to consequences that can be catastrophic for the economy and the nation.

The awards to the winners of the Digital Art Competition on the theme 'Stand Against Smuggling' were presented by Mr. M K Singh. The competition received an overwhelming response, with over 10,000 entries submitted from diverse regions of the country, reflecting widespread public engagement on the issue.

**Mr. P C Jha, IRS (Retd.),** Advisor, FICCI CASCADE & Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect

Taxes and Customs (CBIC), in his vote of thanks, remarked that Anti-Smuggling Day is "not a symbolic observance but a structural necessity." He opined that smuggling today is sustained by organised transnational networks, misuse of legitimate trade channels and digital platforms that enable rapid movement of illicit goods and proceeds. Mr. Jha mentioned that enforcement must not remain limited to intercepting consignments, it must disrupt networks, deter repeat offenders and dismantle the financial structures that sustain illicit trade.

The inaugural session was followed by a panel discussion on **"Strategic Enforcement Against Smuggling:**







**Protecting Economy, Borders, and Security,"** which brought together senior officers from leading enforcement agencies. The discussion focused on emerging trends in smuggling, evolving concealment techniques, and the growing use of technology by illicit networks.

**Mr. Najib Shah**, Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs and Think Tank Member, FICCI CASCADE, stated that smuggling has evolved into an increasingly complex and sophisticated challenge. He asserted that it endangers not only government revenue but also national security and the broader economic stability of the country. Highlighting the multifaceted nature of the threat, he underscored that no single agency could tackle it in isolation. The significant losses in revenue, employment, and security, he noted, call for robust coordination, seamless information-sharing, and concerted action among all enforcement agencies.

**Brigadier Puspendar Sorayan**, Commander 23

Sector, Assam Rifles, stated that while technology serves as a valuable force multiplier, human intelligence continues to remain the cornerstone of effective anti-smuggling operations. He shed light on the fact that it is actionable intelligence, combined with precise and coordinated execution, that ultimately dismantles smuggling networks. Sharing his perspective on border management, he observed that effective border control demands a unified and collaborative approach to curb the menace of smuggling. He further noted that strong cooperation from both Central and State agencies,





particularly in intelligence sharing and seamless on-ground coordination has significantly strengthened enforcement efforts.

**Mr. Mayank Pandey**, Additional Director, Guwahati Zonal Office-II, Enforcement Directorate, underscored the significant transformation in inter-agency coordination in tackling smuggling. He mentioned that earlier, information had to pass through multiple layers of the 'proper channel, often resulting in delays of weeks before any concrete action could be taken. In contrast, recent years have witnessed the establishment of direct and seamless cooperation among agencies, enabling real-time intelligence sharing and swifter action against smuggling networks. He further underlined that today, every enforcement agency maintains a dedicated open-source intelligence team to monitor

and curb smuggling activities.

**Mr. Varun Koundinya**, Additional Director, Delhi Zonal Unit, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence affirmed that credible, ground-based intelligence remains the decisive factor in building strong and sustainable cases against smuggling networks. He drew attention to the importance of direct engagement and real-time interaction among officers of different agencies, rather than relying



FICCI  
5<sup>TH</sup> EDITION  
**ANTI SMUGGLING DAY**  
Annual Report 2025-2026  
11<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2026 | NEW DELHI



solely on files moving through hierarchical channels.

The deliberations continued with an engaging panel discussion titled "**Cross-Border Synergy: Strengthening International Partnerships to Combat Smuggling**," which brought into focus the growing need for cohesive global action against increasingly sophisticated smuggling networks. The session explored how transnational cooperation, intelligence convergence, and policy alignment are critical to addressing the evolving dynamics of illicit trade.

**Dr. D P Dash**, Former Pr. Director-General, DRI, Former Chairman, Enforcement Committee, World Customs Organisation (WCO) and Think Tank Member, FICCI CASCADE observed that smuggling networks often exploit institutional and geographical divides to sustain their operations. He pointed out that enforcement agencies must counter this challenge with unity and strategic cohesion. Dr. Dash articulated that mutual trust, real-time intelligence sharing, and technology-

driven collaboration are indispensable in combating the new and complex landscape of smuggling.

The session was adeptly moderated by **Ms. Anuiya Yadav**, Executive Editor, Times Network, who steered the discussion towards practical strategies for strengthening international enforcement framework.

**Mr. Anil Sinha**, Former Director, CBI & Think Tank Member, FICCI CASCADE shared his perspective on the growing role of social





media in inadvertently normalising illicit products. He cautioned that when such content is glamorised online, it shapes public perception and indirectly fuels the demand that sustains smuggling networks. He stressed that greater public awareness and responsible digital engagement are essential components in the broader fight against illicit trade.

**Mr. Kristian Hölge**, Regional Representative, UNODC Regional Office for South Asia, mentioned that smuggling today is a deeply transnational crime that no single country can combat in isolation. He noted that it requires strong and sustained partnerships linking law enforcement agencies, governments, and communities across borders. He further remarked that as modern smuggling





networks exploit global trade routes and advanced technologies, enforcement responses must be equally sophisticated, anchored in coordination, intelligence-led operations, and technological innovation.

**Mr. Gagandeep Singh**, Regional CBP Attache, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Embassy opined that multi-agency and multinational task forces are demonstrating how collaborative teamwork can outpace even the most organised and technologically adept smuggling syndicates. He

emphasised that public-private partnerships are indispensable, as enforcement efforts alone are insufficient to curb the menace. By educating and actively engaging first points of contact in trade and travel ecosystems, he noted, agencies can significantly amplify their collective impact against illicit trade.

The conference witnessed an overwhelming response from more than 350 industry captains, representatives from consumer forums, enforcement agencies, government officials, legal experts, among others. The 5th Edition of Anti-Smuggling Day concluded with a renewed commitment from all stakeholders to strengthen coordinated action against illicit trade, reinforcing the need for sustained enforcement and global cooperation to safeguard the nation's economy and security.







# SOCIAL Media




“ The World Customs Organization has designated 2026 as the Year of Customs—Protecting Society through Vigilance and Commitment.

This theme powerfully underscores the critical role of customs authorities in acting with responsibility and resolve to safeguard society from the harmful impacts of smuggling.

”

**Mohan Kumar Singh**  
Member – Compliance Management, CBIC



“ No single agency can effectively counter the threats of smuggling, and the resulting loss of revenue, jobs, and security demands strong cooperation and coordination among all enforcement bodies.

”

**Najib Shah**  
Former Chairman, CBIC & Think Tank Member, FICCI CASCADe



“ The fight against smuggling is ultimately about choices—policy choices, enforcement choices, business choices, and consumer choices, supported by timely and decisive action. Both choices and timely action go hand in hand in effectively combating smuggling.

”

**Anil Rajput**  
Chairman, FICCI CASCADe



“ Effective border control requires joint effort to curb the menace of smuggling, and we are receiving strong cooperation from both central and state agencies in intelligence sharing and on-ground coordination.

”

**Brigadier Puspendra Sorayan**  
Commander 23 Sector, Assam Rifles



“  
Smuggling syndicates are no longer commodity-specific; the same network can move gold, wildlife or agricultural goods. This versatility is what makes illicit trade a national security concern, not just a customs violation.”

**Varun Kaundinya**  
Additional Director, Delhi Zonal Unit,  
Directorate of Revenue Intelligence

“  
Earlier, information on smuggling would move through layers of 'proper channel' and take weeks, but in recent years we have built direct cooperation where agencies share intelligence in real time, allowing faster action against smuggling networks.”

**Mayank Pandey**  
Additional Director, Guwahati Zonal  
Office - II, Enforcement Directorate

“  
To combat the menace of smuggling, we must move beyond fragmented efforts and embrace a unified inter-agency and international strategy built on robust cross-border partnerships.”

**D P Dash**  
Former Principal Director-General, DRI, Former Chairman,  
Enforcement Committee, World Customs  
Organisation and Think Tank Member, FICCI CASCADIA

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Smuggling today is a transnational crime that cannot be fought by any one country alone; it demands partnerships that connect law enforcement, governments, and communities across borders.”

**Kristian Hölge**  
Regional Representative, UNODC  
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# Media COVERAGE



## Anti-Smuggling Day: Major gains highlighted

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 11

On Anti-Smuggling Day, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) member Mohan Singh highlighted India's strengthened international enforcement framework, noting that 42 Mutual Customs Cooperation Agreements (MoUs) have been signed and 21 more are under negotiation with key trading partners.

Speaking at the event, Singh said smuggling has become an organised, technology-driven economic crime with direct implications for national security and economic stability.

"Our customs formations and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence have intensi-



Awards being given to winners of the Digital Art Competition - 'Stand Against Smuggling'.

fied enforcement efforts significantly. In the first three quarters of the current financial year alone, we have

seized around 500 kilograms of gold, nearly 150 million sticks of illicit cigarettes, over 20 metric tonnes of red sanders, approximately 130 kilograms of cocaine, around 50 kilograms of heroin, nearly 350 kilograms of amphetamines and close to 3,700 kilograms of hydroponic cannabis at airports," he said.

Singh added that over 100 wildlife trafficking cases were detected, along with seizures involving dual-use goods, arms, ammunition, drones, and Fake Indian Currency Notes.

The CBIC official emphasised that these measures reflect a comprehensive, technology-driven approach to combating smuggling while safeguarding India's economic and national security interests.

## India boosts global ties on 5th Anti-Smuggling Day

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

By Divyanshu

Introducing the organised and sophisticated transnational smuggling networks, Mohan Kumar Singh, Member, Compliance Management, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), on Wednesday highlighted the



role of technology in combating smuggling, noting that India has significantly strengthened its international enforcement framework, with 42 Mutual Customs Cooperation Agreements (MoUs) already signed and 21 more under negotiation with major trading partners.

Addressing the 5th Edition of Anti-Smuggling Day, Singh said that smuggling has evolved into an organised, technology-driven economic crime with direct implications for national security and economic stability.

"Our customs formations and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence have intensified enforcement efforts significantly. In the first three quarters of the current financial year alone, we have seized around 500 kilograms of gold, nearly 150 million sticks of illicit cigarettes, over 20 metric tonnes of red sanders, approximately 130 kilograms of cocaine, around 50 kilograms of heroin, nearly 350 kilograms of amphetamines and close to 3,700 kilograms of hydroponic cannabis at airports," Singh said.

He also highlighted the role of technology in combating smuggling, noting that India has significantly strengthened its international enforcement framework, with 42 Mutual Customs Cooperation Agreements (MoUs) already signed and 21 more under negotiation with major trading partners.

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## India strengthens international enforcement architecture with 42 MoUs signed, 21 under negotiation: CBIC Member

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, 11 February

India has significantly strengthened its international enforcement architecture with 42 Mutual Customs Cooperation Agreements (MoUs) already signed and 21 more under negotiation with major trading partners, said Mohan Kumar Singh, Member, Compliance Management, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) on Wednesday.

Addressing the 5th Edition of Anti-Smuggling Day organised by FICCI CASCADE, Singh said that smuggling has evolved into an organised, technology-driven economic crime with direct

implications for national security and economic stability.

"Our customs formations and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence have intensified enforcement efforts significantly. In the first three quarters of the current financial year alone, we have seized around 500 kilograms of gold, nearly 150 million sticks of illicit cigarettes, over 20 metric tonnes of red sanders, approximately 130 kilograms of cocaine, around 50 kilograms of heroin, nearly 350 kilograms of amphetamines and close to 3,700 kilograms of hydroponic cannabis at airports," Singh said.

"We have also detected over 100 wildlife trafficking cases, along with seizures involving dual-use goods, arms, ammunition, drones and Fake Indian Currency Notes," he added.

Singh emphasised that today's smuggling syndicates are commodity agnostic and technologically agile, combining traditional concealment techniques



with digital anonymity, complex financial layering and cross-border coordination.

"Enforcement must move beyond event-based seizures to network-based disruption. We need to target financial flows, logistics enablers and international linkages that sustain these illicit ecosystems," he said.

"Customs acts as the first line of defence at the country's borders. Through risk-based inspections, advanced cargo screening, non-intrusive examination systems and AI-driven analytics, we are identifying suspicious consignments before they enter the domestic market," he added.

Referring to recent Union Budget announcements, he noted that AI-powered image analytics and expanded compliance screening across major ports will further strengthen enforcement capabilities, while GST simplification and customs reforms continue to promote compliance and reduce incentives for illicit trade.

## India inks 42 MoUs to curb smuggling

New Delhi: Underscoring the expanding scale and sophistication of transnational smuggling networks, member, compliance management, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), Mohan Kumar Singh on Wednesday highlighted that India has significantly strengthened its international enforcement framework with 42 mutual customs cooperation agreements (MoUs) already signed and 21 more under negotiation with major trading partners. Addressing the 5th edition of Anti-Smuggling Day organised by FICCI CASCADE, Mr Singh said that smuggling has evolved into an organised and technology-driven economic crime with direct implications for national security and economic stability.

## 'India deepens capabilities to curb smuggling'

New Delhi: India has significantly enhanced its global enforcement capabilities to curb transnational smuggling networks through 42 Mutual Customs Cooperation Agreements with major trading partners, while 21 more such pacts are under negotiation, CBIC Member Mohan Kumar Singh said Wednesday at the 5th Edition of Anti-Smuggling Day organised by FICCI CASCADE. PTI

### India has strengthened its international enforcement network with multilateral agreements: Mohan Kumar Singh

Edited by: [Name], Published: 11 Feb, 2025, 10:10 AM



New Delhi/Team Digital: Mohan Kumar Singh, Member, Compliance Management, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), said today during the 5th edition of Anti-Smuggling Day that India has significantly strengthened its international enforcement framework. He informed that India has signed 42 mutual customs cooperation agreements (MoUs) and is also negotiating similar agreements with 21 other major trading partner countries. Referring to the growing problem of smuggling, Singh said that it has now become an organised and technologically advanced crime posing a threat to national security and economic stability. He informed that the country's Customs Department and Directorate of Revenue Intelligence have seized large quantities of illicit goods in the first three quarters of this year, including approximately 500 kilograms of gold, over 100 million illicit cigarettes, 20 tons of red sanders, 130 kilograms of cocaine, and 350 kilograms of amphetamines. Additionally, numerous seizures related to wildlife smuggling and dual-use goods have also been made.

# Event Coverage

# Media COVERAGE

**India expands global anti-smuggling network with 42 MoUs, massive seizures and AI-Powered border crackdown**

India strengthened its anti-smuggling framework by signing 42 International MoUs and intensifying AI-driven border enforcement. Major seizures of gold, narcotics, wildlife products, and illicit goods highlight the growing scale of transnational crime and the government's technology-led response.

**New Delhi:** India has significantly strengthened its fight against transnational smuggling by expanding its international enforcement partnerships and deploying advanced technology at its borders. Speaking at FICCI CASCADe's 5th Anti-Smuggling Day in New Delhi, Mohan Kumar Singh, Member – Compliance Management, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), outlined the country's evolving strategy to counter increasingly sophisticated smuggling networks.

**Experts Urge Network-based Crackdown On Tech-driven Smuggling**

Experts call for accelerated global enforcement to disrupt tech-driven networks.

**तस्करी नेटवर्क को रोकने के लिए भारत ने 42 एमओयू किए, 500 किलो जब्त**

नई दिल्ली | अंतरराष्ट्रीय तस्करी नेटवर्क के बढ़ते दायरे के मद्देनजर भारत ने 42 पारस्परिक सीमा शुल्क सहयोग समझौते (एमओयू) किए हैं। वहीं, प्रमुख व्यापारिक साझेदारों से 21 अन्य समझौतों पर बातचीत की जा रही है। फिक्की कास्केड के तस्करी विरोधी दिवस कार्यक्रम में केंद्रीय अप्रत्यक्ष कर एवं सीमा शुल्क बोर्ड के अनुपालन प्रबंधन सदस्य मोहन कुमार सिंह ने बताया कि तस्करी संगठित और टेक्नोलॉजी द्वारा संचालित आर्थिक अपराध बन गई है। इससे राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा और आर्थिक स्थिरता पर प्रभाव पड़ता है। उन्होंने बताया कि मौजूदा वित्त वर्ष की पहली तीन तिमाहों में जब्त अड्डों पर लगभग 500 किलोग्राम सोना, लगभग 15 करोड़ अकेष सिगरेट, 20

टन से अधिक लाल चंदन, लगभग 120 किलोग्राम कोकोन, लगभग 50 किलोग्राम हेरोइन, लगभग 3,700 किलोग्राम एम्फेटामिन और लगभग 3,700 किलोग्राम हाइड्रोमोनिक कैनिबिस की जब्त की गई है। हमने वन्यजीव तस्करी के 100 से अधिक मामलों का भी पता लगाया है। सोहरे उपयोग वाले (डुअल यूज) सस्मान, हथियार, गोला-बारूद, ड्रोन और नकली भारतीय करेंसी नोटों से संबंधित ज्वेली भी बर्त है। फिक्की कास्केड के अध्यक्ष अनिल राजपूत ने कहा कि वैध व्यापार को बढ़ावा देने, खुफिया जानकारीयों सहा करने और गैरकानूनी ऑपरेटर्स को निष्पक्ष रूप से दंडित करने के लिए देशों के बीच मजबूत साझेदारी आवश्यक है।

**संयुक्त राष्ट्र 11 फरवरी को 'इंटरनेशनल एंटी स्मगलिंग डे' घोषित करे: फिक्की केस्कैड के चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत**

संयुक्त राष्ट्र 11 फरवरी को 'इंटरनेशनल एंटी स्मगलिंग डे' घोषित करे: फिक्की केस्कैड के चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत

**विभिन्न देशों के साथ सीमा शुल्क साझेदारों को तस्करी रोकने की अपेक्षा बढ़ी: सीबीआईटीडी सदस्य**

**CENTRAL BOARD OF INDIRECT TAXES & CUSTOMS**

**FICCI CASCADe'S 5TH ANTI-SMUGGLING DAY**

**NewsX** **YouTube**

**BREAKING NEWS**

**42 MOUs SIGNED, 21 MORE UNDER NEGOTIATION**

**#BreakingNews**

**BIG DEVELOPMENT**

**5th EDITION ANTI-SMUGGLING DAY**

**11 FEBRUARY 2026 | NEW DELHI**



The central image shows a hand holding a glowing globe. The globe is covered in various digital icons such as a Wi-Fi symbol, a location pin, a play button, a search icon, and a mail icon. The background is dark with blue and orange light effects, suggesting a digital or network environment.

# TWITTER SPACE SESSIONS



TWITTER PODCAST ON

# Building Strategic Alliances for a Unified Global Response against Illicit Trade

with Mr. Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha, Former High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom

April 25, 2025 | New Delhi



**"Illicit trade is not merely an economic scourge- it is a multidimensional threat with global repercussions,"** asserted Mr. Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha, Former High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom, during an insightful FICCI CASCADE Twitter Space session. Speaking on the theme "Building Strategic Alliances for a Unified Global Response against Illicit Trade," Mr. Sinha unpacked the complex nature of illicit markets and their growing linkages to organized crime and terrorism.

Mr. Sinha highlighted that the rapid evolution

of criminal networks, leveraging shell companies, digital currencies, and global supply chains, has enabled illicit trade to flourish across borders. "What begins as counterfeit goods or smuggling operations often escalates into a broader threat, one that undermines national economies, endangers consumer safety, and erodes the rule of law," he said.

From counterfeit goods and smuggling to expansive black-market operations, illicit trade undermines economic stability, corrodes institutional trust, and weakens the rule of law. Enforcement agencies face mounting challenges due to the scale, complexity, and sophistication of these networks. "The sprawling nature of international supply chains, coupled with the immense volume of global trade, makes inspection and monitoring a formidable task," Mr. Sinha remarked.

He further noted that many enforcement bodies, particularly in developing countries, are constrained by limited resources, personnel shortages, and fragmented regulatory frameworks, these factors severely hamper their ability to track, disrupt, and prosecute illicit trade. "It's not just about identifying illegal goods; it's about navigating a maze of concealment and legal hurdles," he said. Mr. Sinha emphasized that specialized training programmes, such as those led by FICCI CASCADE, are essential to strengthening enforcement capabilities and bridging critical operational gaps.

Drawing attention to the security implications, Mr. Sinha stressed the nexus between illicit trade and terrorism financing. "Illicit trade isn't just draining public finances, but it is also empowering extremist groups with untraceable funds," he warned. Porous

## TWITTER PODCAST ON Mr. Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha

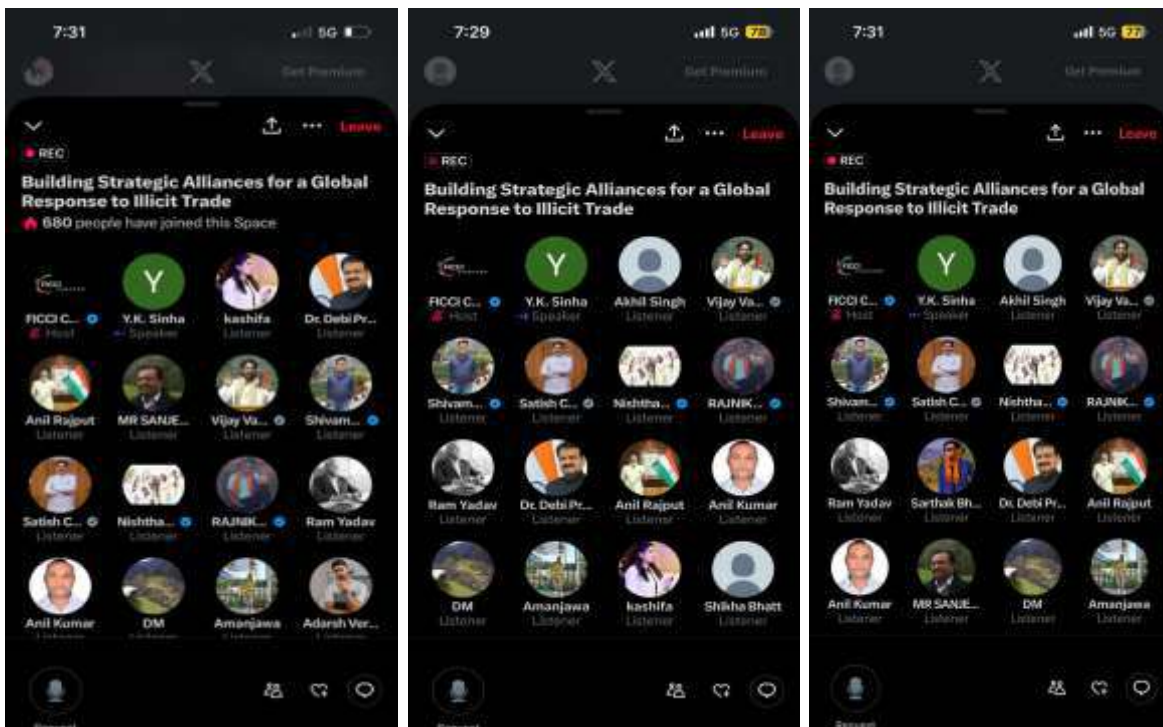
borders and weak surveillance mechanisms make it easier for smuggled goods and dirty money to move undetected, with devastating consequences for regional stability.

Mr. Sinha called for a globally synchronized response built on intelligence-sharing, technological integration, and policy harmonization. "A coordinated framework-rooted in trust, secure communications, and real-time access to actionable intelligence is essential," he said. "Standardized data formats and mutual legal assistance agreements can go a long way in turning fragmented efforts into unified action."

Commending FICCI CASCADE's proactive role, he stated, "Platforms like these are vital, not only for raising awareness, but also for translating concern into concrete enforcement and policy responses. By bringing together industry, law enforcement, and policymakers, FICCI CASCADE is building

the foundation for a stronger, more resilient fight against illicit trade."

The session concluded with a strong message: countering illicit trade requires not just reactive measures, but sustained global collaboration, consumer education, and a robust investment in institutional capacity. "Strategic alliances and shared responsibility are the keys to dismantling the economic and security threats posed by this shadow economy," Mr. Sinha affirmed.





TWITTER PODCAST ON

# Disrupting Organized Crime: Enforcement Strategies for a Borderless Threat

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

November 26, 2025 | New Delhi

TOPIC  
**Disrupting Organized Crime:  
Enforcement Strategies for a  
Borderless Threat**

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

WEDNESDAY NOV 26<sup>th</sup> 07:00 PM

"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;



# TWITTER PODCAST ON Mr. Ajai Sahni

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.







# SEMINARS

# SEMINAR ON PROACTIVE APPROACHES TO COMBAT COUNTERFEITING AND SMUGGLING

May 21, 2025 | Trivandrum, Kerala

**F**ICCI CASCADE organized a seminar titled "**Proactive Approaches to Combat Counterfeiting and Smuggling**" on 21st May, Trivandrum, Kerala aimed at addressing the growing threat posed by illicit trade. The seminar brought together policymakers, enforcement agencies, industry representatives, and civil society to discuss collaborative strategies to curb counterfeiting and smuggling, which have far-reaching implications for public safety, economic stability, and national security.

While speaking at the seminar, **Shri. P Rajeeve**, Hon'ble Minister for Law, Industries, and Coir, Government of Kerala, emphasized that the proliferation of counterfeit and smuggled goods poses significant risks to society. These illegal activities endanger public health, obstruct economic growth, and in certain cases, contribute to the funding of organized crime and terrorism. The Minister underscored the need for a coordinated,

multi-stakeholder approach that involves government entities, industry associations, and civil society working together to safeguard national interests and the welfare of citizens.

He further reaffirmed the Kerala government's strong commitment in addressing this issue through collaborative measures involving law enforcement, industry partners, and local communities. The Minister highlighted the adoption of advanced technologies such as drone-based surveillance for real-time monitoring, especially in vulnerable coastal and border regions. He also commended FICCI CASCADE for its ongoing efforts in raising awareness and mobilizing public support to reject and resist the circulation of counterfeit and smuggled products.

Sharing his perspective on the economic impact of illicit trade, **Shri. A P M Mohammed Hanish**, Principal Secretary, Department of Industries & Commerce, Government of





Kerala stated that illicit trade is not only harming legitimate businesses but also significantly undermining government revenues. Shri Hanish opined that the state's firm resolve to combat this threat through a comprehensive strategy-strengthening surveillance mechanisms, deploying advanced technologies at key checkpoints, and fostering seamless inter-agency coordination. He commended the initiative, saying, FICCI CASCADE's seminar is a timely intervention that will elevate public consciousness and strengthen collaboration among all stakeholders in the fight against smuggling.

While delivering the welcome address, **Dr M I Sahadulla**, Immediate Past Chairman, FICCI Kerala State Council emphasized on the need to address existing policy gaps, enforcement challenges, limited public awareness, and emerging digital vulnerabilities in the battle against illicit trade. He emphasized that leveraging technological advancements such as authentication mechanisms, traceability frameworks, and AI-driven surveillance will be instrumental in curbing counterfeiting and smuggling. **Dr. Sahadulla** further highlighted that consumer education must form the cornerstone of any effective strategy. "An informed consumer," he mentioned, "serves as the first line of defense against illicit goods." Fostering a culture rooted in awareness, ethical consumption, and shared responsibility, he added, is vital to sustaining long-term impact.

**Mr. P C Jha**, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs shared a detailed presentation on "Outlining the Landscape of Illicit Trade Practices - Analysis & Implications," offering deep insights into the evolving dynamics and far-reaching consequences of illicit trade. Mr. Jha noted that India's robust economic growth has given rise to a dynamic and increasingly aspirational consumer base. Between 1999-2000 and 2022-23, rural and urban consumption at current prices surged 7.6 times driven by higher incomes, rapid urbanisation, and improved access to education and economic opportunities. However, this surge in aspirations has not always been matched by corresponding purchasing power, creating fertile ground for illicit trade and counterfeiting. He also mentioned that smugglers are exploiting price disparities and regulatory gaps to tap into this unmet demand.

**Mr. Baby Mathew Somatheeram**, Chairman & Managing Director, Somatheeram Ayurveda Group & Convenor FICCI Tourism Committee stated that that Kerala too has fallen victim to the growing menace of counterfeiting, smuggling, and contrabands. These persistent threats have far-reaching consequences, affecting industries, law enforcement agencies, consumers, the government, and the economy at large. The expanding market for illicit goods is spreading rapidly and poses one of the most significant challenges facing Indian industry today.



A key highlight of the seminar was a thought-provoking panel discussion on "Policies to Prevent Counterfeiting and Smuggling," where **Mr. Deep Chand**, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, offered valuable insights into the growing reach of the illicit market. He shed light on the grey market's rapid expansion in rural India, particularly among the emerging middle- and lower-income segments. Once primarily confined to urban, high-income areas, counterfeiting and smuggling have now made deep inroads into rural regions, underscoring the expanding scale and reach of these illicit activities. Mr. Chand noted that both the central government and the Government of Kerala have taken proactive measures to curb this growing threat.

**Dr. Tiju Thomas**, Commissioner of GST, Customs and Central Excise cited that there is a strong connection between gold smuggling and money laundering in the country. Gold being a low volume, high value item which is easily concealable, transportable and quickly disposable, finds wide acceptance among money laundering syndicates. He also pointed to a notable rise in the number of cigarette seizures in 2023-2024, with a total of 90.98 million units confiscated. Adding further depth and perspective to the discussion, the panel featured several distinguished experts from diverse sectors. The esteemed panellists



included; **Dr. Arul R B Krishna**, IPS, Superintendent of Police, Railways, Kerala; **Mr. Kalliyoor Sasi**, Vice President, Kerala Film Chamber, General Secretary, Kerala Film Society and **Mr. Anish P Joseph**, Regional Business Manager Kerala - STN, HMD Global Oy.

The seminar saw a gathering of over 150 industry captains, consumer forum representatives, government officials, and various stakeholders from across sectors. Their active participation and diverse perspectives underscored a shared commitment in tackling the growing menace of illicit trade through collaborative dialogue and actionable policy solutions





## Laws to tackle counterfeiting will be tightened: Minister

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Minister for industries P Rajeeve said the govt is actively promoting formalisation of industries, encouraging digital practices and working to strengthen laws to curb counterfeiting and smuggling.

Speaking at a seminar titled 'Proactive Approaches to Combat Counterfeiting and Smuggling' organised by FICCI in the city on Wednesday, Rajeeve said, "We are encouraging greater formalisation of businesses because counterfeiting thrives in the informal sector." He added that the govt is moving to fast-track amendments to the Legal Met-

rology Act and the Copyright Act. Stressing the importance of education and awareness, the minister noted that enterprise registrations have increased, and enforcement agencies—including the police and central agencies—have started sharing information.

### FICCI SEMINAR

QR codes, tamper-proof packaging, and digital practices are being encouraged to improve traceability and reduce counterfeiting, he said.

"The govt stands with the national policy as counterfeiting and smuggling undermine the edge of businesses, hinder economic growth, affect

govt revenue, and erode consumer confidence," he said.

PC Jha, advisor to FICCI Cascade and former chairman of the CBITC, highlighted the scale of the problem. He called for stronger penal provisions, higher fines that eliminate profit incentives, separate economic courts, and a dedicated govt task force to tackle the issue.

Jha said the counterfeit market is especially large in sectors like drugs and medicines, packaged food, cosmetics, tobacco, and alcohol. He said an estimated 39% of counterfeit products are sold via e-commerce platforms and warned that smuggling impacts local employment.

## United front needed against illicit trade: Rajeeve

The Hindu Bureau  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Law, Industries, and Coir Minister P. Rajeeve has emphasised the urgent need for collaborative strategy to address the growing threats of illicit trade.

Inaugurating a seminar on 'Proactive Approaches to Combat Counterfeiting and Smuggling' organised by FICCI CASCADE here on Wednesday, Mr. Rajeeve highlighted the severe economic, social and security implications of counterfeiting and smuggling.

10% of global trade Illicit trade, he pointed out, accounts for nearly 10% of global trade, posing a significant challenge to India's growth and industrial integrity. Emphasising Kerala's vulnerability due to its vibrant industrial and trade sectors, he outlined the State government's multi-pronged strategy, including stricter enforcement, technological interventions like QR-coded packaging and blockchain-based tracking, and robust consumer education campaigns.

## കള്ളക്കടത്ത് തടയാൻ സാങ്കേതികവിദ്യ ഉപയോഗപ്പെടുത്തും: മുന്തി പി രാജീവ്



വ്യാജ ഉൽപ്പന്നങ്ങളും കള്ളക്കടത്ത് വസ്തുക്കളും തടയാനതിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ഫിക്സി കാൻസേഡ് സംഘടിപ്പിച്ച സെമിനാറിൽ മുന്തി പി രാജീവ് സംസാരിക്കുന്നു.

### തിരുവനന്തപുരം

നിവമവിദ്യയും വസ്തുക്കളുടെയും വ്യാജ ഉൽപ്പന്നങ്ങളുടെയും കള്ളക്കടത്ത് തടയാൻ തന്ത്രസമയ നിരീക്ഷണത്തിന് ഡ്രോണുകൾ ഉൾപ്പെടെ ആധുനിക സാങ്കേതികവിദ്യ പ്രയോജനപ്പെടുത്തണമെന്ന് മുന്തി പി രാജീവ്. വ്യാജ ഉൽപ്പന്നങ്ങളും കള്ളക്കടത്ത് വസ്തുക്കളും തടയാനതിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ഫിക്സി കാൻസേഡ് സംഘടിപ്പിച്ച സെമി

നാറിൽ സംസാരിക്കുകയായിരുന്നു അദ്ദേഹം.

കള്ളക്കടത്ത് ഉൽപ്പന്നങ്ങൾ പൊതുസുരക്ഷയെയും സാമ്പത്തിക വികസനത്തെയും പ്രതികൂലമായി ബാധിക്കുകയും ചില സന്ദർഭങ്ങളിൽ തീവ്രവാദ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്ക് സാമ്പത്തിക പിന്തുണയേകുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ട്. കൂട്ടായ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിലൂടെ സജീർണമായ ഈ വിഷയത്തെ ചെറുക്കാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുകയാണെന്നും മുന്തി പറഞ്ഞു.

വ്യവസായ പ്രീൻസിപ്പൽ സെക്രട്ടറി എ പി എം മുഹമ്മദ് ഹനീഷ്, പി സി യഥാ, ടീപ് ചന്ദ് (ഫിക്സി കാൻസേഡ് ഉപദേശകൻ), ഡോ. എം ഐ സഹദുള്ള, ബേബി മാത്യു സോമതിനം, ഡോ. ടി കിജു, ടി ഹരോഷ്, ഡോ. അരുൺ ആർ ബി കൃഷ്ണ, ഡോ. ബി ഗോവിന്ദൻ, കള്ളിയൂർ ശശി, അനീഷ് പി ജോസഫ് എന്നിവർ സംസാരിച്ചു.

# SEMINAR ON ILLICIT TRADE IN FOCUS: STATE – LEVEL ACTION AGAINST COUNTERFEITING & SMUGGLING

June 30, 2025 | Ahmedabad, Gujarat

**F**ICCI CASCADE has been at the forefront of raising awareness about the grave threats posed by illicit trade. Recognizing the widespread consequences of counterfeiting and smuggling on public health, safety, and economic well-being, CASCADE has been conducting pan-India seminars to educate stakeholders and mobilize action. In line with this direction, FICCI CASCADE organized a seminar titled, "Illicit Trade in Focus: State - Level Action Against Counterfeiting & Smuggling" on 30th June 2025 at Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

Delivering the keynote address, **Mr. Pranesh Pathak**, Chief Commissioner of Customs, Ahmedabad Zone, highlighted the escalating threat posed by organized smuggling operations in the wake of India's economic growth and expanding global trade. He apprised that as the nation's economy continues to expand, it has become an attractive target for sophisticated illicit syndicates.

From gold, liquor, and narcotics to cigarettes and high-end luxury watches, there has been a marked surge in attempts to



illegally transport goods across India's borders, added Mr. Pathak.

Mr. Pathak opined that such activities not only result in significant revenue losses but also pose grave risks to national security, public health, and the legitimate economy. Citing an example, he highlighted how Godhra Customs seized over 8 million counterfeit cigarettes, psychotropic substances valued at over Rs. 150 crore and luxury watches worth Rs. 13 crores. He mentioned that these substantial seizures, serve as a stark reminder of the audacity and evolving tactics employed by illicit trade networks to undermine the nation's economic integrity.

**Mr. Neeraj Kumar Badgajar**, Additional Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad City, Gujarat stated that illicit trade not only





## Illicit Trade in Focus: State – Level Action Against Counterfeiting & Smuggling

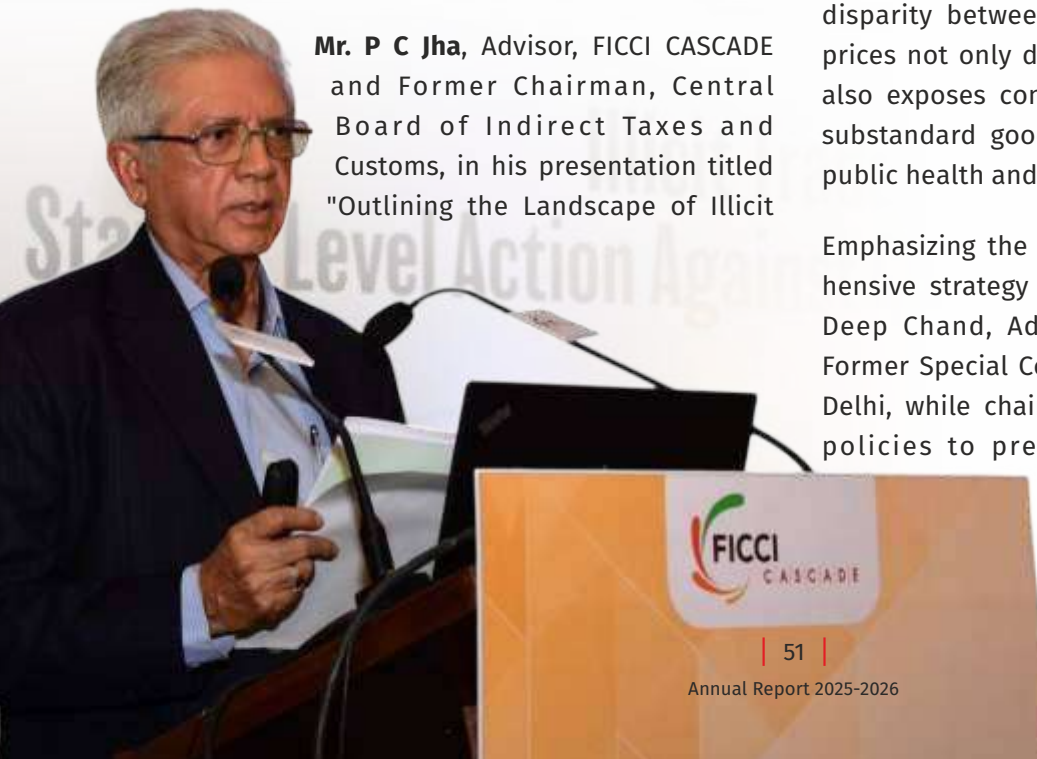


strengthens criminal networks but also poses serious threats to public safety and economic stability. He underscored the need for law enforcement agencies to remain proactive through intelligence-led policing, enhanced inter-agency coordination, and active community engagement. Mr. Badgujar further said that raising public awareness is a vital component in the collective fight against smuggling and counterfeiting.

**Mr. P C Jha**, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, in his presentation titled "Outlining the Landscape of Illicit

Trade Practices - Analysis & Implications," highlighted that smuggling thrives on cost arbitrage driven by high indirect taxes and regulatory loopholes. He explained that when duties on products such as tobacco, liquor, and gold are excessively high, they create strong incentives for illegal trade, which undermines legitimate businesses and leads to significant revenue losses for the government. Mr. Jha emphasized that the disparity between legal and illegal market prices not only distorts fair competition but also exposes consumers to counterfeit and substandard goods, posing serious risks to public health and safety.

Emphasizing the urgent need for a comprehensive strategy to combat illicit trade, Mr. Deep Chand, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, while chairing a panel discussion on policies to prevent counterfeiting and





smuggling, stated that counterfeiting and smuggling are not just economic crimes but they are serious threats to national security, public health, and consumer trust. We need coordinated policy reforms, real-time intelligence sharing, and stronger public-private collaboration, as well as raising consumer awareness to stop these traffickers. Such an approach rooted in both prevention and enforcement are key to protecting legitimate businesses and safeguarding India's economic future.

The panel also featured distinguished speakers who brought diverse perspectives to the discussion. The other speakers included **Mr. Shrikant Awachar**, Additional Director, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Ahmedabad Zonal Unit; **Mr. Ashish Paul**, Vice President- Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd. and **Ms. Anindita Mehta**, CEO, Consumer Education & Research Centre.

Bringing in a local perspective and reinforcing the industry-government partnership, **Mr. Parth Desai** and **Dr. Jaimin Vasa**, Members

of the FICCI Gujarat State Council, shared their insights and emphasized the need for collective action at the state level to effectively combat the menace of illicit trade.

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.



# Media COVERAGE



## 'Customs dept seized smuggled goods worth ₹163cr in Gujarat'

Cigarettes, Psychotropics And Luxury Goods Seized

Times News Network

Ahmedabad: Signaling the scale of smuggling operations in Gujarat, the Ahmedabad Customs recently seized 8 million counterfeited watches, including 6 million counterfeit cigarettes, psychotropic substances, and luxury watches. The data was revealed by the chief commissioner of customs Ahmedabad zone, Pranesh Pathak, at a seminar conducted in the city on Monday.

"As India's economy grows, it is becoming a bigger target for global smuggling networks. These crimes threaten public health, national security, and consumer confidence," said Pathak. The announcement comes alongside new data from FICCI's anti-smuggling arm CASCADe, which report

the size of India's illicit trade economy at its 7.98 lakh crore in FY23 in a report released by them. The five sectors most affected are FMCG (packaged foods), FMCG (personal and household care), alcohol, tobacco, and textiles and apparel. In fact, textiles and apparel alone accounted for over 60% of the value of this, followed by FMCG products, alcohol, and tobacco, the report says.

Experts at the seminar pointed to the rampant key driver. "Smuggling the low cost and high margin for high income taxes and regulatory gaps. When data on products like tobacco, liquor, and high-end luxury goods, which are becoming a major public health and national security concern, are smuggled, it poses a threat to national security and economic growth. The disparity between legal and illegal pricing not only affects fair competition but also poses serious threats to national security, public health, and legitimate commerce. In one recent example, Godhra Customs intercepted over 8 million counterfeit cigarettes and seized psychotropic substances valued at over ₹150 crore. Additionally, luxury watches worth ₹13 crore were also confiscated. These seizures are a stark reminder of the evolving strategies and business of illicit trade networks targeting our economy."

### INDIA'S ILLICIT GOODS MARKET

SPECIAL REPORT MARKET SIZE: ₹7.98 lakh crore (Gross Value Added - Consumer sectors)



with robust enforcement and greater inter-agency coordination," said P. C. Jha, former chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs. He also noted that the government has taken steps to strengthen its anti-smuggling efforts, including the introduction of a bonded tax policy along

## Smuggling poses serious threat to legitimate industries and erodes investor confidence: Ahmedabad Customs Dept. Chief

AHMEDABAD: Mr. Pranesh Pathak, Chief Commissioner of Customs, Ahmedabad Zone, while addressing FICCI CASCADe's seminar on 'Illicit Trade in Focus: State - Level Action Against Counterfeiting & Smuggling' said, "As India's economy expands and global trade accelerates, the country has become increasingly attractive to sophisticated smuggling networks. From gold, liquor, and narcotics to cigarettes and high-end luxury watches, there is a surge in attempts to illegally move goods across our borders. These activities not only erode investor confidence but also pose serious threats to national security, public health, and legitimate commerce. In one recent example, Godhra Customs intercepted over 8 million counterfeit cigarettes and seized psychotropic substances val-

ued at over ₹150 crore. Additionally, luxury watches worth ₹13 crore were also confiscated. These seizures are a stark reminder of the evolving strategies and business of illicit trade networks targeting our economy."

Mr. Naveen Kumar Bagga, Additional Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad City, Gujarat, said, "Illicit trade not only fuels criminal networks but also compromises public safety and economic stability. Law enforcement must stay ahead through intelligence-led policing, inter-agency collaboration, and community engagement. Public awareness is a powerful tool in our collective fight against smuggling and counterfeiting."

Mr. P. C. Jha, Advisor, FICCI CASCADe and Former Chairman, Gujarat Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) said, "Counterfeiting and smuggling are not just economic crimes; they are serious threats to national security, public health, and consumer trust. We need coordinated policy reforms, real-time intelligence sharing, and stronger public-private collaboration, as well as raising consumer awareness to stop these traffickers. Such an approach rooted in both prevention and enforcement are key to protecting legitimate businesses and safeguarding India's economic future." The other speakers included Mr. Shrikant Awasthi, Additional Director, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Ahmedabad Zone; Mr. Manish Paul, Vice President, Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd; and Mr. Anshu Mahesh Chel, Consumer Education & Research Centre.

## Ahmedabad customs seize smuggled goods worth Rs 163 crore in Gujarat

Jul 01, 2025, 02:30 IST



Ahmedabad: Signaling the scale of smuggling operations in Gujarat, the Ahmedabad Customs recently seized Rs 163 crore of smuggled goods, including 8 million counterfeit cigarettes, psychotropic substances, and luxury watches. The data was revealed by the chief commissioner of customs Ahmedabad zone, Pranesh Pathak, at a seminar conducted in the city on Monday.

"As India's economy grows, it is becoming a bigger target for global smuggling networks. These crimes threaten public health, national security, and investor confidence," said Pathak. The announcement comes alongside new data from FICCI's anti-smuggling arm CASCADe, which pegged the size of India's illicit trade economy at Rs 7.98 lakh crore in FY23 in a report released by them. The five sectors most affected are FMCG (packaged foods), FMCG (personal and household care), alcohol, tobacco, and textiles and apparel. In fact, textiles and apparel alone accounted for over 60% of the value of this, followed by FMCG products, alcohol, and tobacco, the report suggests.

Experts at the seminar pointed to the rampant key driver. "Smuggling the low cost and high margin for high income taxes and regulatory gaps. When data on products like tobacco, liquor, and high-end luxury goods, which are becoming a major public health and national security concern, are smuggled, it poses a threat to national security and economic growth. The disparity between legal and illegal pricing not only affects fair competition but also poses serious threats to national security, public health, and legitimate commerce. In one recent example, Godhra Customs intercepted over 8 million counterfeit cigarettes and seized psychotropic substances valued at over ₹150 crore. Additionally, luxury watches worth ₹13 crore were also confiscated. These seizures are a stark reminder of the evolving strategies and business of illicit trade networks targeting our economy."

## Rising smuggling threatens Indian economy, officials warn

FICCI News Bureau

India's economic growth is attracting sophisticated smuggling networks, posing a serious threat to national security, public health, and consumer confidence, stated Pranesh Pathak, Chief Commissioner of Customs, Ahmedabad Zone, at a FICCI CASCADe seminar.



Pathak highlighted a surge in illicit goods, including counterfeit watches, psychotropic substances, and luxury watches. He stated that the government has taken steps to strengthen its anti-smuggling efforts, including the introduction of a bonded tax policy along with robust enforcement and greater inter-agency coordination.

Mr. Naveen Kumar Bagga, Additional Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad City, Gujarat, said, "Illicit trade not only fuels criminal networks but also compromises public safety and economic stability. Law enforcement must stay ahead through intelligence-led policing, inter-agency collaboration, and community engagement. Public awareness is a powerful tool in our collective fight against smuggling and counterfeiting."

## Smuggling networks getting attracted to India amid economic growth, says top Customs official

AHMEDABAD: June 30 India is becoming an attractive target of sophisticated networks smuggling narcotics, gold, and liquor owing to its economic growth, a top Customs official said on Monday while noting a surge in attempts to move goods across borders illegally.

Addressing a seminar organised by FICCI here, Chief Commissioner of Customs of Ahmedabad Zone, Pranesh Pathak, said smuggling of narcotics and other items poses serious threats to national security, public health, and legitimate commerce.

"As India's economy is expanding and global trade accelerating, the country has become increasingly attractive to sophisticated smuggling networks. From gold, liquor, and narcotics to cigarettes and high-end luxury watches, there is a surge in attempts to illegally move goods across our borders," Pathak said.

### India's Illicit Trade Surge: A Growing National Concern

As India's economy expands and global trade accelerates, the country has become increasingly attractive to sophisticated smuggling networks. From gold, liquor, and narcotics to cigarettes and high-end luxury watches, there is a surge in attempts to illegally move goods across our borders.

### ક્રિકીના સેમિનારમાં કસ્ટમરના ચીફ કમિશનર વડે ઉદ્યોગો સામે દ્વારારો અને નકલી વસ્તુઓ મોટું જોખમ ઊંચા પરોક્ષ કર અને કોસ્ટ આર્બિટ્રેજ મુખ્ય કારણ

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## Smuggling poses serious threat to legitimate industries and erodes investor confidence: Pranesh Pathak

Ahmedabad: June 30, 2025



AHMEDABAD, 30 June 2025: Mr. Pranesh Pathak, Chief Commissioner of Customs, Ahmedabad Zone, while addressing FICCI CASCADe's seminar on 'Illicit Trade in Focus: State - Level Action Against Counterfeiting & Smuggling' said, "As India's economy expands and global trade accelerates, the country has become increasingly attractive to sophisticated smuggling networks. From gold, liquor, and narcotics to cigarettes and high-end luxury watches, there is a surge in attempts to illegally move goods across our borders. These activities not only erode investor confidence but also pose serious threats to national security, public health, and legitimate commerce. In one recent example, Godhra Customs intercepted over 8 million counterfeit cigarettes and seized psychotropic substances valued at over ₹150 crore. Additionally, luxury watches worth ₹13 crore were also confiscated. These seizures are a stark reminder of the evolving strategies and business of illicit trade networks targeting our economy."

# SEMINAR ON STRENGTHENING SECURITY: STRATEGIES TO COMBAT COUNTERFEITING AND SMUGGLING

November 13, 2025 | The Park Hotel, Kolkata

**F**ICCI 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 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.





## 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."

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

OUR CORRESPONDENT

### Closer Look

**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

illicit activities, particularly along border and coastal areas.

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. Sanal Ghosal, Co-Chair

of FICCI West Bengal State Council, said illicit trade undermines manufacturing ecosystem and diverts benefits meant for legitimate stakeholders. Former CBIC chairman and FICCI CASCADE advisor P.C. 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 in protecting India's economic security, while Kolkata Police

Deputy Commissioner (Detective Department) Vidit Raj Bhattacharya 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 Arun 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—in about Rs 7.97 lakh crore, with textiles and apparel alone accounting for over half of the total.

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

Vedanta Dasgupta / Nov 17, 2025, 01:31 IST

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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.

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

## Illicit trade: Minister calls for stronger enforcement collaboration

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

**KOLKATA:** Mr. Biplab Mitra, Minister-in-Charge, Consumer Affairs Department, 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."

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.

Mr. Mitra further commented FICCI CASCADE for its continued efforts in empowering consumers and fostering collaboration to combat the threats posed by counterfeit and smuggled goods.

Trithankar Halder, Special Secretary, Consumer Affairs Department, 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."



for over 50 percent of the total illicit trade. Additionally, illicit markets for FMCG (Packaged foods and FMCG Personal and Household Care Goods are estimated at Rs 2,23,813 crore and Rs 7,38,13 crore, respectively.

The report highlighted that illicit trade is undermining legitimate businesses, distorting market competition, and significantly reducing the government's tax revenues in the five mentioned sectors. The impact of illicit trade is particularly severe in tobacco and alcohol, which are subject to higher tax regimes, such as excise and alcohol, in the tobacco sector, over 30 percent of the illicit market can be attributed to punitive taxes, while for alcohol, this figure stands at 46 percent.

Director, Nighthingale Group of Companies, said, "Illicit activities in terms of counterfeiting and smuggling are not merely regulatory or legal infractions, they represent deep structural challenges to our manufacturing ecosystems, undermine the rule of law, and divert the benefits of economic development away from legitimate stakeholders."

Schooling the sentiment, Mr P.C. Jha, Advisor, 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. As India moves towards a \$5 trillion GDP, it is essential to tighten compliance, strengthen

GST mechanisms, and curb these revenue leakages. A coordinated effort between tax authorities, enforcement agencies, and the industry is key to protecting both consumers and the taxpayer."

Mr. K. Ramakrishnan, Additional Director General, Kolkata Zonal Unit, DRI, said, "Combating counterfeiting and smuggling is central to DRI's mission of protecting India's economic security. These illicit activities not only drain government revenues but also distort legitimate trade and endanger consumer safety. Through intelligence-driven enforcement and coordinated action, DRI remains committed to dismantling organized smuggling networks and strengthening consumer-led goods, while fostering greater collaboration and public awareness to safeguard the integrity of India's markets."

Mr. Vidit Raj Bhattacharya, Deputy Commissioner (Detective Department), Kolkata Police, said, "The growing volume of counterfeiting and smuggling poses a serious threat not only to our economy but also to public safety and national security. This requires a crucial trans-

disciplinary role in detecting, investigating, and dismantling these illicit networks that often operate across states and borders. Strengthening intelligence sharing, enhancing inter-agency coordination, and building specialized capacities within law enforcement are key to effectively tackle this challenge."

Other key speakers included Mr. Deep Chandra, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Social Commissioner of India; Mr. Harsh V. Agrawal, Executive Director, Original and Member, FICCI; Mr. Ashish Paul, Vice President, Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd; Mr. Sandeep Sengupta, Director, Indian School of Ethical Hacking (ISEH) and Mr. Biproyo Ghosh, Partner, Grijah Chandra Ghosh & Co. S.S. He commended the initiative for facilitating a meaningful discussion and appreciated FICCI CASCADE's efforts in raising public awareness on this critical issue. Mr. Verma further stated that to realize our national vision, it is imperative that we work collectively to combat this menace and strengthen our economy against its pervasive impact.

## 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.

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**Biplab Mitra**  
@biplabmitraAITC

FICCI Seminar on Strengthening Security: Strategies to Combat Counterfeiting and Smuggling.

5:06 PM - Nov 13, 2025 - 39 Views

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

Kolkata, PAETRA, Nov 13, 2025 (PTI) — The FICCI Counterfeiting Security Strategies to Combat Counterfeiting and Smuggling Seminar was held in Kolkata on Nov 13. The event was inaugurated by FICCI Chairman Biplab Mitra and was attended by Union Minister Jayaprakash Narayan, Deputy Chief Minister Anusuihe Huih, and several other dignitaries. The seminar featured presentations and a panel discussion on the challenges of counterfeiting and smuggling in the current economic environment. FICCI Chairman Biplab Mitra said that counterfeiting and smuggling are major threats to the economy and consumer safety. He urged the government to take stricter measures to combat these illegal activities. The seminar was organized to spread awareness and sensitize stakeholders about the menace of counterfeiting and smuggling.

### अवैध कारोबार पर लगाम के लिए राज्य सरकार तत्पर

बंगाल, 13 नवंबर 2025

पश्चिम बंगाल सरकार के अर्थ मंत्रि विप्लव मित्रा ने आज राज्य सरकार के प्रतिबद्धता को प्रकट करते हुए कहा कि अवैध कारोबार को रोकने के लिए राज्य सरकार तत्पर है। मित्रा ने कहा कि अवैध कारोबार, विशेष रूप से जलसाजी और तस्करी, राज्य की अर्थव्यवस्था और समाज को नुकसान पहुंचा रहा है। उन्होंने कहा कि राज्य सरकार इन अवैध कारोबारों को रोकने के लिए कड़े कानून और कठोर कार्रवाई का दावा करेगी। मित्रा ने कहा कि राज्य सरकार के अर्थ मंत्रि विप्लव मित्रा ने आज राज्य सरकार के प्रतिबद्धता को प्रकट करते हुए कहा कि अवैध कारोबार, विशेष रूप से जलसाजी और तस्करी, राज्य की अर्थव्यवस्था और समाज को नुकसान पहुंचा रहा है। उन्होंने कहा कि राज्य सरकार इन अवैध कारोबारों को रोकने के लिए कड़े कानून और कठोर कार्रवाई का दावा करेगी। मित्रा ने कहा कि राज्य सरकार के अर्थ मंत्रि विप्लव मित्रा ने आज राज्य सरकार के प्रतिबद्धता को प्रकट करते हुए कहा कि अवैध कारोबार, विशेष रूप से जलसाजी और तस्करी, राज्य की अर्थव्यवस्था और समाज को नुकसान पहुंचा रहा है। उन्होंने कहा कि राज्य सरकार इन अवैध कारोबारों को रोकने के लिए कड़े कानून और कठोर कार्रवाई का दावा करेगी।

## 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 को अवैध व्यापार का शिकार होने से बचाने के लिए जागरूकता और सतर्कता सबसे मजबूत हथियार हैं, राज्य के उपभोक्ता मंत्रालय के प्रभारी मंत्री विप्लव मित्रा ने ये बातें गुरुवार को फिक्की कांस्कैड द्वारा आयोजित सेमिनार 'सुरक्षा की मजबूती: जालसाजी एवं तस्करी से निपटने की रणनीतियाँ' को संबोधित करते हुए कहीं। मंत्री ने कहा कि जालसाजी और तस्करी से न केवल वैध व्यापार को नुकसान होता है, बल्कि अस्ुरक्षित 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 दोहराईं। कार्यक्रम में पश्चिम बंगाल सरकार के उपभोक्ता मामलों के विभागा के विशेष सचिव तीर्थकर हलदर सहित कई अन्य वक्ताओं ने भी अपने विचार सझा किये।

## बंगाल में अवैध कारोबार पर नकेल कसने की तैयारी

जागरण संवाददाता, दुर्गापुर : जालसाजी 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 प्रभारी मंत्री विप्लव मित्रा ने फिक्की कांस्कैड द्वारा आयोजित एक सेमिनार में कहा कि अवैध व्यापार न केवल वैध कारोबार को नुकसान पहुंचाता है, बल्कि उपभोक्ताओं की सुरक्षा के लिए भी बड़ा खतरा है। उन्होंने बताया कि राज्य सरकार सीमाई और तटीय इलाकों में टेक्नोलोजी आधारित निगरानी को सुदृढ़ कर रही है। फिक्की कांस्कैड की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार एफएमसीजी, अल्कोहल, तंबाकू और परिधान समेत पांच प्रमुख क्षेत्रों में अवैध

बाजार का आकर 7.97 लाख करोड़ रुपये है। रिपोर्ट में परिधान 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 अतिरिक्त, एफएमसीजी (पैकेज्ड फूड) और एफएमसीजी (पर्सनल एवं हाउसहोल्ड केयर गुड्स) के अवैध बाजार अनुमानित तौर पर क्रमशः 2,23,875 करोड़ रुपये और 73,813 करोड़ रुपये है। कार्यक्रम में डीआरआई, कोलकाता पुलिस और उद्योग जगत के प्रतिनिधियों ने अवैध नेटवर्कों के खिलाफ इंटीलेजेंस आधारित कार्रवाई, जन जागरूकता और एजेंसियों के बीच तालमेल बढ़ाने पर जोर दिया।

## अवैध कारोबार पर लगाम के लिए पश्चिम बंगाल ने कसी कमर

मंत्री विप्लव मित्रा ने प्रवर्तन एजेंसियों के बीच मजबूत गठजोड़ की अपील की

कोलकाता, 13 नवंबर । पश्चिम बंगाल सरकार के उपभोक्ता मामले विभागा के प्रभारी मंत्री विप्लव मित्रा ने आज कहा, 'अवैध कारोबार को रोकने के लिए राज्य सरकार तत्पर है, बल्कि संयुक्त प्रयासों से अवैध कारोबार को रोकना संभव है।' मित्रा ने कहा कि अवैध कारोबार, विशेष रूप से जलसाजी और तस्करी, राज्य की अर्थव्यवस्था और समाज को नुकसान पहुंचा रहा है। उन्होंने कहा कि राज्य सरकार इन अवैध कारोबारों को रोकने के लिए कड़े कानून और कठोर कार्रवाई का दावा करेगी। मित्रा ने कहा कि राज्य सरकार के अर्थ मंत्रि विप्लव मित्रा ने आज राज्य सरकार के प्रतिबद्धता को प्रकट करते हुए कहा कि अवैध कारोबार, विशेष रूप से जलसाजी और तस्करी, राज्य की अर्थव्यवस्था और समाज को नुकसान पहुंचा रहा है। उन्होंने कहा कि राज्य सरकार इन अवैध कारोबारों को रोकने के लिए कड़े कानून और कठोर कार्रवाई का दावा करेगी। मित्रा ने कहा कि राज्य सरकार के अर्थ मंत्रि विप्लव मित्रा ने आज राज्य सरकार के प्रतिबद्धता को प्रकट करते हुए कहा कि अवैध कारोबार, विशेष रूप से जलसाजी और तस्करी, राज्य की अर्थव्यवस्था और समाज को नुकसान पहुंचा रहा है। उन्होंने कहा कि राज्य सरकार इन अवैध कारोबारों को रोकने के लिए कड़े कानून और कठोर कार्रवाई का दावा करेगी।





CAPACITY BUILDING  
PROGRAMMES

# CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR POLICE OFFICERS ON ILLICIT TRADE, FRAUD & ORGANIZED CRIME: BUILDING ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY FOR A SAFER MARKETPLACE

July 28, 2025 | Rajendra Nagar, Delhi

In its continued endeavour to strengthen enforcement capacities and foster collaborative action against the growing menace of illicit trade, FICCI CASCADE organised a capacity-building programme for police officers of Delhi. The initiative aimed to sensitise law enforcement personnel to the multifaceted challenges posed by illicit trade, which spans across sectors and increasingly involves sophisticated, technology-enabled criminal networks. The programme brought together senior police officials, industry leaders, legal experts, and cyber specialists to share insights, exchange best practices, and explore strategies to protect legitimate markets and national interests.

Delivering the keynote address as Chief Guest, **Mr. Mohammad Ali**, Deputy Director, Training, Delhi Police, highlighted the increasing sophistication of illicit trade networks and the critical need for anticipatory and well-coordinated enforcement strategies. He



pointed out that illicit trade today is not an isolated phenomenon, it is intricately linked to organized criminal syndicates and financial fraud, posing serious threats to both national security and economic growth.

Mr. Ali underscored that the role of the police has become more demanding than ever. "Our officers must be armed not only with modern tools and intelligence, but also with the ability to collaborate seamlessly across agencies," he remarked. Strengthening operational capabilities, sharpening investigative skills, and fostering inter-agency partnerships, he added, are essential to protecting legitimate trade and national interests.

**Mr. Deep Chand**, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, shared his insights on the magnitude of illicit trade and its damaging ripple effects. He stressed that counterfeiting,





smuggling, and related offences are far from minor infractions, they directly weaken the rule of law, erode business confidence, and fuel organized syndicates. He observed that initiatives like this programme play a vital role in building a vigilant and well-prepared enforcement ecosystem.

A highlight of the programme was an interactive session titled "**Partnering for Protection: Collaborative Approaches to Combat Illicit Trade, Fraud & Organized Crime.**" This session brought together a distinguished panel of experts who offered cross-sector viewpoints, shared on-ground experiences,

and explored innovative enforcement strategies.

Adding to the industry perspective, **Mr. Ashish Paul**, Vice President, Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd., highlighted the significant economic implications of illicit trade, particularly within the tobacco sector. He emphasized that the sustained growth and effective regulation of the tobacco industry are crucial not only for industrial development but also for strengthening national economic stability and preventing the diversion of funds into illegal channels. He noted that illicit trade undermines legitimate businesses, erodes government revenues, and fuels organised criminal networks.

From a legal and technological perspective, **Mr. Pavan Duggal**, Advocate, Supreme Court of India, Expert and Authority on Cyber Law, Cyber Security Law, Artificial Intelligence Law & E-commerce law, shed light on the growing overlap between cybercrime and illicit trade in an increasingly digital economy. He emphasized that enforcement officers must





be adept at handling digital evidence, tackling cyber-enabled fraud, and countering emerging AI-driven threats that empower illegal networks.

**Mr. Yogesh Malhotra**, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Specialized Training Centre, stated that today's session was not just informative

but transformative. It reinforced the urgency of cross-sector collaboration and provided our officers with key insights they can immediately put into practice.

Among the eminent panellists were **Mr. Akshay Sahi**, Director IES Prime, Dex and Returns/NCRC, Amazon and **Colonel Ravi Madhok**, CPP, CLPOS, VSM, Senior Director & Group Head, Asset Protection and Security, Flipkart. Drawing from their extensive industry experience, they shed light on the evolving tactics of illicit operators in the e-commerce ecosystem, the growing role of data-driven intelligence, and the need for agile, technology-enabled enforcement frameworks.

With the active participation of over 150 police officers, the programme reinforced the importance of united efforts between enforcement agencies and industry to safeguard legitimate markets and national security.



# Media COVERAGE



## 'Illicit trade and organised crime require unified action'

*Illicit trade poses serious risks to national security, economic stability: Mohammad Ali, Dy Director, Training, Delhi Police*

**NEW DELHI:** Mohammad Ali, Deputy Director, Training, Delhi Police on Monday emphasised on the growing complexity of illicit trade and the need for proactive enforcement. "Illicit trade is deeply connected to larger organised criminal networks and fraudulent activities posing serious risks to national security and economic stability. Our police officers must be equipped with the latest tools, information, and collaborative frameworks to protect citizens, ensure legal trade, and secure national interests," he added.

Addressing the FICCI CASCADE's Capacity Building Programme on "Illicit Trade,



**Fraud & Organised Crime: Building Enforcement Capacity for a Safer Marketplace;** Ali highlighted the importance of enhancing skills, intelligence, and inter-agency cooperation to effectively curb such crimes. Deep Chand, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, stated, "Illicit trade practices, counterfeiting,

### Closer Look

- Illicit market size for textiles & apparel alone stands at Rs 4,03,915 cr, accounting for over 50% of total illicit trade
- Illicit markets for FMCG packaged foods is estimated at Rs 2,23,875 crore

smuggling, and related crimes directly undermine the rule of law and inflict enormous losses on legitimate businesses. These are not petty crimes, they fund larger organised syndicates and

disrupt societal order. This programme is a step toward creating an alert and well-prepared police force." Ashish Paul, Vice President, Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd., said that "Illicit trade is an economic crime with long-term implications for India's growth story. If we can reduce it by even 50 per cent, we will unlock immense potential boosting revenue, employment, and genuine business activity. Awareness and enforcement together can make this possible."

As per the report by FICCI CASCADE titled "Challenging Landscape of Illicit Trade: How Changing Factors of Consump-

tion Affect Illicit Markets in India", the size of the illicit market in five key sectors including FMCG packaged goods, personal and household care, alcohol, tobacco, and textiles & apparel has been estimated at about Rs 7.97 lakh crore. The report highlights that the illicit market size for textiles and apparel alone stands at Rs 4,03,915 crore, accounting for over 50 per cent of the total illicit trade.

Additionally, the illicit markets for FMCG packaged foods and personal & household care goods are estimated at Rs 2,23,875 crore and Rs 73,813 crore, respectively. #001

### Illicit trade threat to national security, needs unified action: Delhi Police officer

**NEW DELHI:** (Jul 28) Illicit trade is intricately linked to organised criminal networks and poses a serious threat to national security and economic stability, a Delhi Police officer said on Monday.

Mohammad Ali, Deputy Director (training), Delhi Police, stressed the need for a unified enforcement response to tackle the growing menace at a capacity-building programme organised by FICCI CASCADE on "Illicit Trade, Fraud and Organised Crime: Building Enforcement Capacity for a Safer Marketplace".

"Illicit trade today is no longer a petty offence – it is deeply enmeshed with organised crime and large-scale fraud. It endangers our economy and the safety of our people," Ali said.

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PTI  
Updated on: 28 July 2025 | 10:02 am



Delhi Police: Photo: Career Power

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PTI  
Published - 28 Jul 2025, 10:52 AM IST

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### Illicit Trade Threatens National Security

By **Neelaj Misra Datta, New Delhi**  
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Jul 28, 2025, 09:48

Delhi Police officer highlights illicit trade's link to organised crime and national security, stressing the need for unified action and increased enforcement capacity.

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"Illicit trade today is no longer a petty offence – it is deeply enmeshed with organised crime and large-scale fraud. It endangers our economy and the safety of our people," Ali said.

Enforcement agencies must be equipped with the latest information, tools and collaborative platforms to ensure legal trade and protect national interests, he said.

Deep Chand, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE, and former special commissioner of police, emphasised that crimes such as counterfeiting, smuggling and illicit trade not only disrupt legitimate businesses but also fund larger criminal syndicates.

# CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR POLICE OFFICERS ON ENFORCEMENT AGAINST ILLICIT ECONOMIES: STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF POLICE IN PREVENTING TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

September 24, 2025 | Haryana

FICCI CASCADE organised a capacity building programme for the police officers of Haryana on the theme titled "Enforcement Against Illicit Economies: Strengthening the Role of Police in Preventing Transnational Crime", aimed at fostering dialogue and coordinated action against the growing threat of illicit trade. The programme brought together senior law enforcement officials, industry leaders, and international delegates to discuss the multifaceted challenges posed by counterfeiting and smuggling, their impact on economic growth, public safety, and consumer trust, and the critical role of coordinated enforcement efforts.

Addressing the programme and highlighting the importance of law enforcement in society, **Mr. Karan Goel IPS**, DCP/West, Haryana Police Service, affirmed the pivotal role of law enforcement in safeguarding economic and social stability. He observed that illicit activities such as counterfeiting and smuggling strike at the very foundation of India's aspiration to become a \$5-trillion economy. These clandestine operations not only undermine legitimate businesses but also drain government revenues, hinder overall economic progress, and weaken the broader societal framework. Mr. Goel emphasized that confronting this menace collectively is essential to fortifying the economy against its corrosive effects.

He further highlighted that these illegal practices deprive lawful enterprises of their rightful share, endanger public safety, and erode consumer trust. Such challenges



underscore the necessity for law enforcement agencies to be well-equipped, adequately trained, and fully informed, ensuring they can protect citizens effectively from the dangers posed by illicit trade and uphold public confidence.

Echoing these concerns, **Mr. Deep Chand**, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, noted that counterfeiting and smuggling have wide-ranging detrimental impacts. These activities lead to significant losses for legitimate businesses, undermine consumer confidence, deprive the nation of essential revenue, and







consequently hamper economic growth and development. In addition, the public health risks associated with counterfeit products remain a serious concern, threatening the safety and well-being of citizens.

**Ms. SHIMIZU Hiroko**, Chairperson, IIPPF, opined that counterfeiting and smuggling extend beyond national borders, jeopardizing the integrity of global trade systems. She emphasized that such illicit activities are not merely economic offences but also harm consumers, distort competition, and stifle innovation. Ms. Hiroko stressed the importance of fostering stronger international collaboration and building resilient partnerships among governments, enforcement agencies, and industry stakeholders to effectively tackle this challenge.

**Mr. Ashish Paul**, Vice President- Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd. mentioned that counterfeit

trade and smuggling significantly impede India's economic potential. He emphasized that even a 50% reduction in illicit trade could unlock substantial economic growth, generate employment, and bolster legitimate businesses, contributing directly to India's journey toward self-reliance. Mr. Paul highlighted the importance of raising awareness among young enforcement officials and informed consumers as a critical step toward strengthening enforcement mechanisms, supporting informed decision-making, and advancing the Prime Minister's vision of an Atmanirbhar Bharat by 2047.

The Interactive Session titled "**A Unified Global Front: Strategic Action Against Illicit Markets**", featured active participation by the Japan delegation, including representatives from **Seiko Epson, Yonex, Kubota, Canon, Casio India, Panasonic Life Solutions India, and Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India**





**Pvt. Ltd.** The delegation shared their perspectives on the challenges posed by illicit trade, its impact on industry and consumers, and the need for stronger international cooperation, innovative enforcement strategies, and collaborative industry-government action to dismantle these illegal networks.

FICCI CASCADIE has been working closely over the years with government, industry, enforcement officials, legal fraternity, consumer organizations and the youth to create awareness about the detrimental impact of counterfeiting and smuggling. Among other activities, FICCI CASCADIE has been regularly engaging with law enforcement agencies including police, customs and central armed police forces engaged in border protection in sensitizing them on the gravity of the problem.



The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from over 150 officers in Haryana, who gained valuable insights and skills to counter the adverse effects of counterfeiting and smuggling.





## 'Illicit trade major threat to India's economic goals'



**NEW DELHI:** Senior police and industry leaders on Wednesday stressed the urgent need for stronger enforcement and cross-border cooperation to tackle counterfeiting and smuggling, calling these illicit activities a major threat to India's economic aspirations.

Speaking at FICCI CASCADE's programme "Enforcement Against Illicit Economies: Strengthening the Role of Police in Preventing Transnational Crime", Karan Goel, IPS, DCP/West, Haryana Police Service, warned that the menace undermines the country's economic ambitions.

Highlighting the broader risks, he said: "These illicit activities deprive legitimate businesses of their fair share and endanger the very fabric of our society. The harm caused goes far beyond financial setbacks, posing serious risks to public safety and consumer trust. This makes it imperative for law enforcement agencies to be adequately equipped and well-informed, ensuring they can effectively protect citizens from the dangers inherent in these unlawful practices."

Echoing these concerns, Deep Chand, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE, noted: "Counterfeiting and smuggling have sev-

eral detrimental effects. They result in significant losses for legitimate businesses, erode consumer trust, and deprive the nation of crucial revenue, thereby hindering overall growth and development. Moreover, the associated health risks of counterfeit products are a grave concern, posing a direct threat to the well-being of the public."

SHIMIZU Hiroko, Chairperson, JETRO, underlined the global implications. "Counterfeit and smuggled goods are not merely economic offences; they endanger consumers, weaken fair competition, and undermine innovation. To counter this menace, we must foster stronger cross-border cooperation and build robust partnerships between governments, enforcement agencies, and industry," she said.

Ashish Paul, Vice President-Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd., said: "...Generating awareness among young enforcement officials along with the discerning consumers is the need of the hour. It will strengthen enforcement mechanisms, promote informed decision-making and meaningfully contribute towards the Prime Minister's vision of an Atmanirbhar Bharat by 2047."

## Illicit economies pose transnational threat: FICCI CASCADE calls for stronger enforcement and global collaboration



Written by: NewsX Syndication

## Illicit economies pose transnational threat: FICCI CASCADE calls for stronger enforcement and global collaboration

Illicit economies pose transnational threat. FICCI CASCADE calls for stronger enforcement and global collaboration

ANI 24 Sep 2023 18:46:57



(Source: ANI) / (Photo Credit: ANI)

New Delhi [India], September 24 (ANI): Illicit activities in terms of counterfeiting and smuggling strike at the very foundation of India aspiration to become a USD 5 trillion economy, Karan Goel IPS, DCP/West, Haryana Police Service said on Wednesday.

## मजबूत प्रवर्तन और वैश्विक सहयोग का आह्वान

अपराध प्रवर्तन, मुद्राहत्या, प्रतिस्पर्धा, और वैश्विक सहयोग के बीच संबंधों को मजबूत करने और वैश्विक सहयोग को प्रवर्धित करने के लिए, यह आवश्यक है कि हम इस घाटे को समाप्त करने में निरंतर प्रयास करें। और अर्थव्यवस्था को इसकी प्रतिस्पर्धी प्रकृति में बदलने में मदद करें। अंतरराष्ट्रीय अंतराष्ट्रीय सहयोग में सुदृढ़ता को सुनिश्चित करने और वैश्विक सहयोग को प्रवर्धित करने के लिए, यह आवश्यक है कि हम इस घाटे को समाप्त करने में निरंतर प्रयास करें।



अपराधों को ठीक-ठीक तरीके से पहचानना और उनसे निपटारना, वैश्विक सहयोग को प्रवर्धित करने और वैश्विक सहयोग को प्रवर्धित करने के लिए, यह आवश्यक है कि हम इस घाटे को समाप्त करने में निरंतर प्रयास करें। और अर्थव्यवस्था को इसकी प्रतिस्पर्धी प्रकृति में बदलने में मदद करें। अंतरराष्ट्रीय अंतराष्ट्रीय सहयोग में सुदृढ़ता को सुनिश्चित करने और वैश्विक सहयोग को प्रवर्धित करने के लिए, यह आवश्यक है कि हम इस घाटे को समाप्त करने में निरंतर प्रयास करें।

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

November 12, 2025 | Kolkata

**F**ICCI 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





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

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

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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.

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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

- » 'Protecting consumer rights requires a united effort from government agencies, industry and the community. Awareness and vigilance are our strongest tools'
- » The minister noted that the state is increasingly using technology and intelligence-based surveillance to track illicit activities, particularly along border and coastal areas.

illicit activities, particularly along border and coastal areas. 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) Vidit 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.

## ফিকি'র উদ্যোগ

■ এই সময়: অসামু ব্যবসায়ীদের তরফে জাল পণ্যের ব্যবসার পাশাপাশি চৌর্যচালানের ফলে শুধু যে মার্কেটপ্লেসে থাকা বাকি সং ব্যবসায়ীরাই আর্থিক ভাবে ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত হন তাই নয়, গ্রাহক-স্বার্থও চূড়ান্ত ভাবে ব্যাহত হয়। যে অসং ব্যবসা রুখতে তৎপর হলো পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সরকার। বৃহস্পতিবার এই উপলক্ষে বনিকসভা ফিকি আয়োজিত ফিকি-ক্যাসকেড সেমিনারে রাজ্যের উপভোক্তা বিষয়ক দপ্তরের মন্ত্রী বিপ্লব মিত্র দাবি করেন, এই সব অসামু পদক্ষেপ রুখতে সার্বিক সচেতনতা বাড়ানোর পাশাপাশি প্রশাসন-শিল্প সংস্থা এবং নাগরিক সমাজকে একযোগে কাজ করতে হবে। এই উপলক্ষে এ দিনের আলোচনাসভায় একটি রিপোর্ট প্রকাশ করা হয়।

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

By Team SRF 14 Nov 2025 12:15 AM

Team MP 14 Nov 2025 12:15 AM



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 illicit activities, particularly along border and coastal areas.

Also Read - Mizata 'expresses shock', urges PM to revoke Centre's Daj interlocutor

# CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR POLICE OFFICERS ON ILLICIT TRADE: ENFORCEMENT CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

December 16, 2025 | 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 CASCADA 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 eco-





conomic 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.





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

Updated: Dec 17, 2025 09:32:52pm



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.

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

4:44

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TELEGRAM CONNECT WITH US



## 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.

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

February 02, 2026 | Panaji, Goa



**F**ICCI CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy) organized a Capacity Building Programme for Police Officers of Goa on 'Prevention of Counterfeiting and Smuggling' at the GO's Institute Hall, Goa.

The programme served as a dynamic knowledge-sharing platform, uniting more than 200 senior police officials and industry stakeholders to deliberate on the escalating challenges posed by counterfeiting, smuggling, and illicit trade. Through focused discussions and expert insights, the initiative underscored the serious economic, social, and security implications of these unlawful activities, while reinforcing the

critical role of coordinated enforcement and industry collaboration to effectively combat this growing menace.

**Mr. Alok Kumar**, Director General of Police, Goa, graced the programme as the Chief Guest. In his address, he emphasized that structured capacity-building programmes are essential in enhancing the skills, preparedness, and operational efficiency of police personnel in addressing the complex challenges and evolving challenges posed by illicit trade.

Sharing key enforcement achievements, he informed that in one of the largest single operations of 2025, the Crime Branch seized 4.3 kg of cocaine valued at over Rs. 43 crores, resulting in multiple arrests and the dismantling of an international drug supply chain operating into the State. He further noted that sustained action under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) framework led to the registration of 159 narcotics cases during the year, with seizures





exceeding Rs. 78 crores, including hydroponic cannabis and other high-value contraband, and 206 arrests across Goa.

He emphasised that such operations highlight the scale and sophistication of criminal networks, which often overlap with activities such as smuggling and counterfeiting. He stated that law enforcement agencies, must remain vigilant to the deep and widespread presence of counterfeit and smuggled goods in the marketplace. These illegal activities not only cause significant economic damage but also erode social values, compromise public health, and adversely affect the overall quality of life of citizens.

**Mr. Deep Chand**, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, underscored the far-reaching and multifaceted impact of counterfeiting and smuggling on the nation's economy and society. He opined that illicit trade severely undermines legitimate businesses by creating an uneven marketplace, discouraging fair competition, and weakening investor confidence.

He further highlighted that illicit trade significantly erodes consumer trust, as unsuspecting buyers are often exposed to substandard and potentially hazardous products. The consequent loss of government revenue, he noted, constrains public expenditure on critical sectors such as infrastructure, healthcare, and education, thereby impeding the country's overall growth trajectory. Addressing this menace, he emphasized, requires sustained enforcement efforts, enhanced public awareness, and robust coordination between industry stakeholders and law enforcement agencies.

**Mr. Ashish Paul**, Vice President- Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd., highlighted the structural challenges contributing to the growth of illicit cigarette trade in India. He pointed out that the steep taxation regime on cigarettes has created a significant tax arbitrage, which smugglers exploit by flooding the market with untaxed products. As a consequence, nearly one in every four cigarettes consumed in the country is estimated to be illicit, making the sector particularly vulnerable to organised smuggling operations.





He cautioned that illicit products are often more harmful, while misinformed consumers may perceive them as safer or more affordable alternatives. Retailers, attracted by higher profit margins, further facilitate their circulation. Emphasizing the broader implications, he stated that illicit trade extends far beyond tax evasion, it strengthens criminal syndicates, distorts fair competition, and places an additional burden on enforcement agencies. Combating this challenge, he stressed, requires robust inter-agency coordination, as such activities violate multiple legal frameworks spanning taxation, trade regulations, public health standards, and customs laws.

Underscoring the pivotal role of law enforcement in society, **Mr. Santosh Desai**, Superintendent of Police/ Principal, Police Training School, Valpoi, Goa, stated that illicit trade poses an evolving and multifaceted threat to the nation's economy, internal security, and social fabric. The growing nexus between smuggling, counterfeiting, and organised criminal networks not only results in substantial revenue losses but also exposes citizens to serious risks to their health and safety.

As police officers, we are frequently at the forefront of responding to these emerging

challenges. Initiatives such as this programme play a vital role in strengthening our awareness, enhancing our investigative capabilities, and equipping us with the knowledge required to address these offences with greater efficiency and resolve.

The programme concluded with an engaging interactive session, where the officers shared field-level experiences, operational challenges, and best practices in tackling cases related to counterfeiting and smuggling. The deliberations reaffirmed the urgent need for sustained capacity building, intelligence-sharing, and closer collaboration between enforcement agencies and industry stakeholders.



# Media COVERAGE



## Counterfeit, smuggled goods endanger public health, erode social values and impact economy: DGP, Goa

*The illicit market across five key sectors is estimated at Rs 7.97 lakh crore, officials said*

GOA: FICCI-CASCADE on Monday organised a capacity-building programme for police officers on the "Prevention of Counterfeiting and Smuggling" at the GO's Institute Hall, GRP Camp, Altinho Panaji, Goa, bringing together over 200 senior police officials and industry representatives.

Goa Director General of Police Alok Kumar backed the initiative, stressing the need to sharpen on-ground capabilities to curb illicit trade. "Law enforcement agencies must



recognise the deep and widespread presence of counterfeit and smuggled goods in our markets. These illegal activities impact the economy, erode

social values, endanger public health, and ultimately affect citizens' quality of life," he said. Deep Chand, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and former

Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, said counterfeiting and smuggling "cause significant losses to legitimate businesses, erode consumer trust and deprive the nation of crucial revenue," adding that health risks from illicit products are a "grave concern".

Ashish Paul, Vice President-Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd., noted that halving illicit trade could "unlock un-precedented economic growth, generate employment and strengthen India's journey

towards Atma-nirbhar Bharat by 2047".

Superintendent of Police Santosh Desai said officers must "view crimes through the eyes of victims" and ensure timely action.

Citing a FICCI CASCADE report, officials said the illicit market across five key sectors is estimated at Rs 7.97 lakh crore, with textiles and apparel accounting for over half at Rs 4.04 lakh crore, undermining competition and tax revenues. **MFOST**

### Counterfeit, Smuggled Goods Threaten Economy, Health, Social Values: Goa DGP

27 February 2024, 11:00 AM

Viewing options: [Icons for various media actions]

Counterfeiting and smuggling severely damage India's economy, public health and social values, officials say at a FICCI-CASCADE programme in Goa.



Counterfeiting and smuggling pose a serious threat to India's economy, public health and social values, Director General of Police (DGP) Goa Alok Kumar said on Monday, underscoring the need to strengthen law enforcement capacity to tackle illicit trade.

### Counterfeit, smuggled goods erode social values, endanger public health, and impacts economy: Goa DGP

27 February 2024, 11:00 AM

Viewing options: [Icons for various media actions]



Goa (Goa Today, February 27 AM) Alok Kumar, Director General of Police, Goa has powered that law enforcement agencies must recognise the deep and widespread presence of counterfeit and smuggled goods in India's markets as these illegal activities harm the economy, erode social values, endanger public health, and ultimately affect the quality of life of citizens.

### Counterfeit, smuggled goods endanger public health, erode social values and impact economy: DGP, Goa

By - MFOST

Updated: 2024-02-27 10:16 GMT



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Goa Director General of Police Alok Kumar backed the initiative, stressing the need to sharpen on-ground capabilities to curb illicit trade. "Law enforcement agencies must recognise the deep and wide-spread presence of counterfeit and smuggled goods in our markets. These illegal activities impact the economy, erode social values, endanger public health, and ultimately affect citizens' quality of life," he said.

Deep Chand, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, said counterfeiting and smuggling "cause significant losses to legitimate businesses, erode consumer trust and deprive the nation of crucial revenue," adding that health risks from illicit products are a "grave concern".

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Citing a FICCI CASCADE report, officials said the illicit market across five key sectors is estimated at Rs 7.97 lakh crore, with textiles and apparel accounting for over half at Rs 4.04 lakh crore, undermining competition and tax revenues.

# CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR POLICE OFFICERS ON STRENGTHENING ENFORCEMENT AGAINST ILLICIT TRADE AND ECONOMIC OFFENCES

February 27, 2026 | New Delhi

**F**ICCI's Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE) conducted a specialised training workshop for police officers on "**Strengthening Enforcement against Illicit Trade and Economic Offences**" at the Academy for Smart Policing (ASP), New Delhi.

The workshop witnessed the participation of **police officers of ACP rank and above from Delhi**, along with representatives from industry. The workshop served as an important platform for knowledge sharing and dialogue on the growing challenges posed by counterfeiting, smuggling, and other illicit trade activities. These illegal practices continue to undermine legitimate businesses, disrupt fair market competition, and pose serious risks to economic stability and public safety.

While delivering the Welcome Address and Overview on the Socio-Economic Impact of Counterfeiting and Smuggling, **Mr. Deep Chand**, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, opined that the menace of counterfeiting and smuggling causes deep and far-reaching damage to both the economy and society. He described how these illegal activities inflict heavy financial losses on legitimate businesses, weaken consumer confidence, and deprive the government of critical revenues, ultimately hampering the nation's growth and development.

He further accentuated that a considerable share of the proceeds generated through such illicit activities is often channelled into organised crime networks and even terrorist activities, posing a serious threat to national security. Stressing the need for a coordinated response, he highlighted that effective information sharing and close collaboration among enforcement agencies are crucial to successfully combat the growing challenge of illicit trade.

A key highlight of the programme was the Interactive Session on "Industry Issues and Collaborative Actions Needed with Enforcement Agencies to Counter Economic Offences." The session convened industry experts who deliberated on the emerging challenges posed by economic offences and underscored the need for enhanced coordi-







nation and collaborative action with enforcement agencies to effectively tackle illicit trade and related crimes.

During the session, **Mr. Ashish Paul**, Vice President - Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd., shared his perspective on the growing challenge of illicit trade and its wider economic implications. He underscored that counterfeit trade and smuggling continue to drain India's economic potential and significantly undermine legitimate businesses. He further noted that reducing illicit trade even by half could unlock substantial economic opportunities, leading to greater economic growth, enhanced employment generation, and stronger support for legitimate industries, thereby reinforcing India's journey towards self-reliance. He also accentuated the urgent need to build awareness among young enforcement officials as well as discerning consumers to effectively curb such illegal activities.

Emphasising the broader national vision, he stated that the goal of Viksit Bharat can be accelerated when illicit trade is tackled decisively, with enforcement agencies playing a pivotal role in protecting the formal economy from the damaging effects of counterfeiting and smuggling.

**Mr. Bala Krishnaswami**, Policy Communications Lead, Amazon, shared his perspective that tackling cybercrime, counterfeiting, and smuggling require sustained and consistent efforts. He said that Amazon adopts a year-long approach to awareness campaigns, recognizing that preventing illicit activities demands continuous engagement across multiple channels. He further highlighted that such awareness initiatives can serve as an effective deterrent by clearly informing manufacturers and sellers that involvement in illicit trade is illegal and may attract strict legal consequences.



**Syed Imtiaz Ahmed**, Brand Protection Associate - Legal Department, HUL, highlighted the evolving tactics used by counterfeiters to mislead consumers. He stated that in many cases counterfeiters make minor alterations to brand names while closely replicating colour schemes, fonts, and packaging designs, making the products appear deceptively similar to genuine ones and often leading consumers to believe they are purchasing authentic goods.

The workshop concluded with a strong consensus on the need for sustained collaboration between enforcement agencies and industry stakeholders to effectively combat the growing threat of illicit trade. The programme emphasized the need to strengthen enforcement capabilities, enhance intelligence sharing, and promote greater awareness among officials and consumers to effectively address the complex challenges posed by counterfeiting and smuggling.



These initiatives reaffirm FICCI CASCADE's continued commitment to supporting law enforcement through capacity-building and knowledge-sharing, while fostering collective action to safeguard the legitimate economy and contribute towards the vision of a Viksit Bharat.





# AUTO RALLIES

# AUTO RALLY

## FIGHT SMUGGLING AND COUNTERFEITING

July 14, 2025 | Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir



India continues to grapple with the far-reaching consequences of smuggling and counterfeiting, an underground web that not only undermines our legitimate economy and industries but also endangers the lives and safety of consumers. Alarming, a significant portion of the population affected by these illicit activities remains unaware of the true scale and severity of the threat. To effectively address the issue, sensitization and public engagement are imperative.

As part of our ongoing commitment to raise widespread awareness about the adverse impacts of smuggling and counterfeiting on our economy, society, as well as health and safety of the citizens, FICCI CASCADE successfully orchestrated an Auto Rally in Srinagar,

Jammu & Kashmir on 14th July 2025. This initiative witnessed over 200 auto rickshaws forming a convoy as they traversed a designated route which commenced from Nehru Park, Boulevard Road, Srinagar, amplifying the message of awareness and collective action across the city.

Flagging off the Auto Rally, **Mr. Nasir Aslam Wani**, Advisor to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, emphasized that smuggling and counterfeiting are insidious threats that penetrate markets, undermine legitimate businesses, drain government revenues, and endanger public safety. He mentioned that the impact of these illegal activities may not always be visible, but the consequences are grave.



He lauded the rally as a vital initiative in raising public awareness and promoting consumer vigilance. Mr. Wani further stressed the urgent need for widespread public sensitization and a shift in societal attitudes to curb the problem of counterfeit and smuggled goods in daily trade.

Reaffirming his commitment to the cause, he added, "We stand united in the fight against illicit trade and are dedicated to advancing this mission through sustained efforts, stronger collaborations, and meaningful action across Jammu and Kashmir."

**Shri Tanvir Sadiq**, Member of the Legislative Assembly, Jammu and Kashmir, highlighted that illicit trade poses a significant threat to the economy, endangers livelihoods, and puts public safety at serious risk. He emphasized that in a region like Jammu and Kashmir, where efforts are consistently being made towards peace, stability, and development tackling counterfeiting and smuggling must be a collective priority.

He further underscored the importance of robust enforcement mechanisms and widespread public awareness as critical tools to safeguard the interests of legitimate

businesses and secure a safer and more promising future for the youth of the region.

**Mr. Mushtaq Ahmed Burza**, Chair, FICCI J&K State Council accentuated that in a region like Jammu & Kashmir, where economic stability and employment are key pillars of progress, curbing illicit trade is vital in ensuring growth, trust, and supporting lawful enterprise.

**Mr. Deep Chand**, Advisor to FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, asserted that illicit trade is far more than just an economic concern, it poses a direct threat to national security. He noted that the proceeds from smuggling often fuel





organized crime and even terrorist activities, making it a grave issue that demands urgent attention.

"Every smuggled product in the market undermines legitimate businesses, drains government revenue, and endangers public health," he remarked. Highlighting the significance of the Auto Rally in Srinagar, Mr. Chand said the initiative is a call to action, aimed at engaging and empowering citizens to take an active role in the fight against illicit trade.

During the rally, several impactful messages were shared to raise awareness about the serious implications of illicit trade. At the heart of the campaign were four powerful slogans, each emphasizing a key consequence: illicit trade causes job losses, finances terrorist activities, fuels organized crime and poses significant health hazards.

The auto rally was meticulously coordinated, following a route that spanned Nehru Park, Boulevard Road ?Proceed straight along Boulevard Road? SKICC ?Royal Springs Golf Course gate and then ultimately concluding its journey at Nehru Park.

The Auto Rally in Srinagar stands as a significant step forward in FICCI CASCADE's

ongoing efforts to engage with communities, local authorities, and the general public in the fight against illicit trade. By fostering awareness and encouraging public resistance to smuggling and counterfeiting, initiatives like this play a crucial role in building a more informed and vigilant society. Through sustained outreach campaigns, FICCI CASCADE continues to strengthen consumer awareness and mobilize nationwide support to eradicate the menace of illicit trade.



# Media COVERAGE



## Advisor to CM flags off auto rally highlighting impacts of illicit trade

**GJ REPORT**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 14: To amplify its commitment towards building awareness against the growing threat of illicit trade in India, FICCI CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy) today organized an Auto Rally in Srinagar.

This initiative witnessed over 200 auto rickshaws forming a convoy as they traversed a designated route which commenced from Nehru Park, Boulevard Road, Srinagar.

Flagging off the auto rally, Nasir Aslam Wani, Advisor to the Chief Minister said, "Smuggling and counterfeiting are silent threats that infiltrate our markets, harm local businesses, deprive the government of vital revenue, and put the lives of citizens at risk. While their impact may not always be visible, the consequences are grave. This rally is an important step in educating our people and encouraging them to be vigilant consumers. I com-



Advisor to CM Nasir Aslam Wani along with MLA Tamir Sadiq flagging off Auto Rally in Srinagar on Monday.

ment FICCI CASCADE for bringing this campaign to the heart of Kashmir and urge every citizen to be a responsible part of this movement."

"There is a need for widespread public sensitization and societal change to effectively combat the growing acceptance of counterfeit goods and smuggled products in everyday commerce", emphasized Wani.

Wani further stated that we wholeheartedly support

this important cause and stand united in the fight against illicit trade.

"We are committed to taking this initiative forward with sustained efforts, greater collaboration, and impactful action in Jammu and Kashmir," he added.

The rally marked yet another milestone in FICCI CASCADE's national awareness campaign, aimed at engaging with communities, spreading awareness about the serious consequences of illicit trade, and

mobilizing public support to curb the menace of smuggling and counterfeiting.

The auto rally was meticulously organized and proceeded through Nehru Park, Boulevard Road, and proceeded past prominent city landmarks including SKICC and Royal Springs Golf Course Gate, before culminating back at Nehru Park.

Tamir Sadiq, Member of Legislative Assembly, Jammu and Kashmir, said that "Illicit trade poses a

serious threat to our economy, endangers livelihoods, and compromises public safety. In a region like Jammu and Kashmir, where we are working tirelessly towards stability and progress, combating counterfeiting and smuggling must be a shared priority. Strong enforcement and public awareness are essential to protect the rights of genuine businesses and the future of our youth."

Mushtaq Ahmad Buzra, Chair, FICCI J&K State Council, said that "In a region like Jammu & Kashmir, where economic stability and employment are key pillars of progress, curbing illicit trade is vital to ensuring growth, trust, and lawful enterprise."

Deep Chand, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, said, "Illicit trade is not just an economic issue, it is a threat to national security. Often, proceeds from smuggling find their way into funding organized crime and terrorist activities."

## FICCI CASCADE organizes an auto rally in Srinagar to combat illicit trade

JD CORRESPONDENT

Srinagar: To amplify its commitment towards building awareness against the growing threat of illicit trade in India, FICCI CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy) today organized an Auto Rally in Srinagar.

This initiative

|| CONTD ON PAGE 2

## Advisor to CM flags off FICCI CASCADE's Auto Rally

Says smuggling, counterfeiting silent threats; need to educate citizens to be vigilant consumers

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: To amplify its commitment towards building awareness against the growing threat of illicit trade in India, FICCI CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy) on Monday organized an Auto Rally in Srinagar.

This initiative witnessed over 200 auto rickshaws forming a convoy as they traversed a designated route which commenced from Nehru Park, Boulevard Road.

Flagging off the rally, Nasir Aslam Wani, Advisor to the Chief Minister said, "Smuggling and counterfeiting are silent threats that infiltrate our markets, harm



Advisor to CM Nasir Aslam Wani during the flag off ceremony of auto rally at Srinagar

local businesses, deprive the government of vital revenue, and put the lives of citizens at risk. While their impact may not always be visible, the consequences are grave. This rally is an important step in educating our people and encouraging them to be vigilant consumers. I commen-

ted FICCI CASCADE for bringing this campaign to the heart of Kashmir and urge every citizen to be a responsible part of this movement."

"There is a need for widespread public sensitization and societal change to effectively combat the

growing threat of illicit trade in India, FICCI CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy) today organized an Auto Rally in Srinagar. This initiative witnessed over 200 auto rickshaws forming a

convoy as they traversed a designated route which commenced from Nehru Park, Boulevard Road, Srinagar.

|| CONTD ON PAGE 3

## Advisor CM Nasir Wani flags off FICCI CASCADE's Auto Rally



Advisor to CM Nasir Wani at flagging off ceremony.

EARLY TIMES REPORT

SRINAGAR, July 14: To amplify its commitment towards building awareness against the growing threat of illicit trade in India, FICCI CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy) today organized an Auto Rally in Srinagar. This initiative witnessed over 200 auto rickshaws forming a convoy as they traversed a designated route which commenced from Nehru Park, Boulevard Road, Srinagar.

Flagging off the auto rally, Mr Nasir Aslam Wani, Advisor to the Hon'ble Chief Minister said, "Smuggling and counterfeiting are silent threats that infiltrate our markets, harm local businesses, deprive the government of vital revenue, and put the lives of citizens at risk. While their impact may not always be visible, the consequences are grave. This rally is an important step in educating our people and encouraging them to be vigilant consumers. I commend FICCI CASCADE for bringing this campaign to the heart of

Kashmir and urge every citizen to be a responsible part of this movement."

"There is a need for widespread public sensitization and societal change to effectively combat the growing acceptance of counterfeit goods and smuggled products in everyday commerce", emphasized Mr Wani.

Wani further stated that we wholeheartedly support this important cause and stand united in the fight against illicit trade. "We are committed to taking this initiative forward with sustained efforts, greater collaboration, and impactful action in Jammu and Kashmir," he added.

The rally marked yet another milestone in FICCI CASCADE's national awareness campaign, aimed at engaging with communities, spreading awareness about the serious consequences of illicit trade, and mobilizing public support to curb the menace of smuggling and counterfeiting.

## तस्करि के खिलाफ फिक्की ने निकाली ऑटो रैली

सुरक्षा के बढ़ावा के लिए नासिर अस्लम वानी ने शहर में ऑटो, जकारियों के साथ रैली निकाली और नासिर अस्लम वानी ने शहर में ऑटो, जकारियों के साथ रैली निकाली



SRINAGAR: To amplify its commitment towards building awareness against the growing threat of illicit trade in India, FICCI CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy) today organized an Auto Rally in Srinagar. This initiative witnessed over 200 auto rickshaws forming a convoy as they traversed a designated route which commenced from Nehru Park, Boulevard Road, Srinagar.

# AUTO RALLY

## FIGHT SMUGGLING AND COUNTERFEITING

December 06, 2025 | New Delhi



**F**ICCI 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 CASCADIE 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.





## 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.

## Awareness rally against smuggling

New Delhi: BJP Lok Sabha member from North East Delhi Manoj Tiwari on Saturday flags off FICCI-CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Destroying the Economy), annual auto rally to raise large scale awareness on the impact of smuggled and counterfeit goods on India's economy, public health, and national security. Making a passionate appeal during the flag-off ceremony, Mr Tiwari 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. He said saying "no" to smuggled goods is a powerful act of patriotism. It is a stand for a safer India, a stronger economy, and a future free from the shadows of illegal trade and terror funding.

## FICCI flags off anti-smuggling rally; buying illegal goods fuels anti-India forces, says leader

NEW DELHI: (Dec 6) FICCI's annual anti-smuggling auto rally was launched in the capital on Saturday, with leaders present at the event saying citizens unintentionally strengthen anti-India forces by purchasing smuggled goods, a statement said.

The initiative by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE) saw more than 300 auto-rickshaws drive out from FICCI House here, aimed at raising awareness about the impact of smuggled and counterfeit goods on consumers and legitimate businesses, it said.

According to the statement, Member of Parliament Manoj Tiwari, during the flag-off, defined smuggling as a silent threat that fuels criminal networks and terrorism, and added that when citizens buy smuggled goods, they unintentionally strengthen forces that work against India's safety and stability.

FICCI CASCADE flags annual anti-smuggling auto rally

1 x 1



## FICCI flags off anti-smuggling rally; buying illegal goods fuels anti-India forces, says leader

PTI

Published on: Dec 06, 2025 04:44 pm IST



FICCI flags off anti-smuggling rally; buying illegal goods fuels anti-India forces, says leader



FICCI flags off anti-smuggling rally; buying illegal goods fuels anti-India forces, says leader

New Delhi, FICCI's annual anti-smuggling auto rally was launched in the capital on Saturday, with leaders present at the event saying citizens unintentionally strengthen anti-India forces by purchasing smuggled goods, a statement said.



# ZERO-EVASION

# 7<sup>th</sup> Edition ZERO-EVASION

## Inter-School Competition Empowering Youth to Combat Smuggling & Counterfeiting

August 22, 2025 | New Delhi

**F**ICCI CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy) continues to harness the energy and vision of youth as catalysts for change and guardians of the nation's economic integrity. Staying true to its commitment to educate young minds on the perils of smuggling and counterfeiting, the committee recently hosted the 7th edition of its flagship youth initiative, Zero Evasion - "**Empowering Youth to Combat Smuggling & Counterfeiting**", at FICCI, Federation House, New Delhi.

The programme saw the spirited participation of over **600 students** from more than **80 premier schools across Delhi/NCR**, who expressed their perspectives and creativity through three dynamic competitions: **Elocution, Poster-Making, and Jingle Writing**.

The esteemed jury comprised prominent leaders and FICCI CASCADE Think Tank members: **Mr. Anil Sinha**, Former Director,



Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI); **Mr. Sanjeev Tripathi**, Former Chief, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW); and **Mr. P. C. Jha**, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs.

Addressing the gathering, **Mr. P. C. Jha** emphasised that the youth of today are





tomorrow's leaders. Engaging them in the fight against smuggling and counterfeiting is not only vital for public safety but also for safeguarding the nation's economy. Initiatives like Zero Evasion equip young citizens with the knowledge and conviction to protect our economic interests and act as vigilant guardians of integrity.

**Mr. Anil Sinha** accentuated that combating illicit trade goes beyond enforcement, it demands collective responsibility. School students, as future torchbearers, play a pivotal role in fostering ethical trade practices. FICCI CASCADE's annual competitions

are designed to enlighten, inspire, and empower students to lead a youth-driven movement against smuggling and counterfeiting.

Highlighting the transformative potential of youth, **Mr. Sanjeev Tripathi** stated that illicit trade jeopardises not only the present economy but also the nation's future. Young people, as agents of change, must recognise their power to challenge unethical practices. By becoming aware consumers and responsible citizens, they can champion a culture of integrity and pave the way for a stronger and brighter tomorrow.





Over the years, FICCI CASCADE has emerged as a dedicated platform for raising awareness about the dangers of illicit trade. Its youth-focused programmes provide meaningful avenues for students to actively participate, engage, and contribute to the cause. By partnering with policymakers,

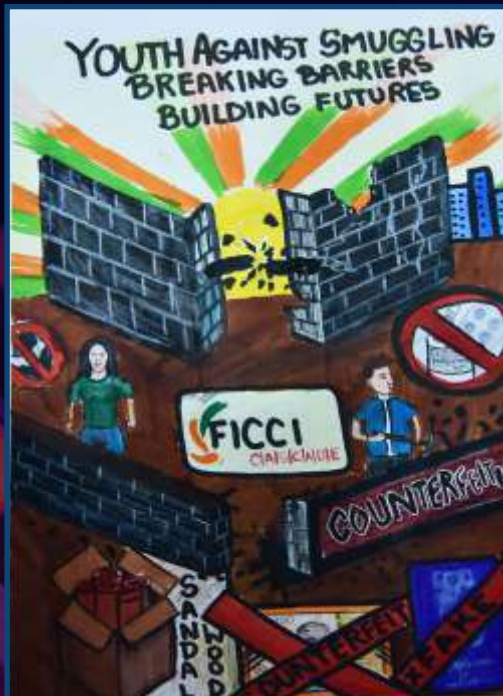
industry leaders, enforcement agencies, media, and the youth, FICCI CASCADE continues to expand its impact through interschool and intercollege competitions nationwide, reinforcing a collective commitment to curb smuggling and counterfeiting.

S.No.	Name of the Competition	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Special Jury Award
1	Elocution	<p><b>Sanvi Srijan,</b> Bal Bharti Public School, Noida</p> <p><b>Kenisha Dawar,</b> Lotus Valley International, Gurgaon</p>	<p><b>Suhani Mahapatra,</b> The Indian Heights School, Dwarka</p>	<p><b>Abishta Jha,</b> The Khaitan School, Noida</p>	<p><b>Agrim Jain,</b> The Shri Ram School, Aravali</p> <p><b>Zafar Raza,</b> Panchsheel Balak Inter College, Noida</p> <p><b>Aadya Malik,</b> The HDFC School, Gurugram</p>
2	Poster-Making	<p><b>Ouchitya Khurana,</b> Lotus Valley International, Gurgaon</p>	<p><b>Upasana Nair,</b> St. George's School, Alaknanda</p>	<p><b>Utkarshika Rajput</b> Lotus Valley International, School</p>	<p><b>Shaurya Bhatt,</b> New Green Fields School, Saket-</p> <p><b>Partho Bar,</b> Soami Nagar Model School, New Delhi</p>
3	Jingle Writing	<p><b>Navya,</b> SRM Public School Noida</p>	<p><b>Madhuri Agarwal,</b> The HDFC School, Gurugram</p>	<p><b>Aishani Sharma,</b> Navy Children School, New Delhi</p>	





# WINNING PAINTINGS



1<sup>ST</sup> POSITION



2<sup>ND</sup> POSITION



3<sup>RD</sup> POSITION

CONSOLATION



CONSOLATION



# WINNING JINGLES




HANU AGARWAL  
 School: SRM Public School  
 Roll Number: 1982078570

## तस्करी और जालसाजी ख़िलाफ़ती के लिए युवाओं का संरक्षित बनना

जिंदगी: जहाँ युवा

जहाँ युवा, सुनी फुकर  
 तस्करी की काली चककर  
 सचियाँ छुपाए, सच्यो छुपाए  
 युवा शक्ति को बर्बाद है अधिकतर।



युवा शक्ति परकृत हो जाओ  
 तस्करी से दूरी बनाओ  
 देश की उन्नति के लिए, जहाँ युवा  
 देश का भविष्य, ब्रह्मचर्याओ

सत्य और ईमानदारी के दीप जलाओ  
 सच का पहर बनने करो, तस्करी का पहर जलाओ  
 सच का जालसाजी, बर्बाद है  
 तस्करी ख़िलाफ़ती से युवा शक्ति को बर्बाद है

Hanu Madhu Agarwal  
 SMC The MGC School  
 Roll Number 9550722746

## FAKES ARE HERE

A jingle to empower youth to combat smuggling and counterfeiting.

(Verse 1)  
 They promise wealth through dirty smuggle,  
 Earn easy money with no struggle.  
 Those hungry lions waiting for prey,  
 Change on the state and they decay.

(Chorus)  
 Fakes are here,  
 But we mustn't fear.  
 Stop the smuggling, fight the crime,  
 Truth will win, it's about time.

(Verse 2)  
 Gold, currency, cattle, and drugs,  
 Swarm the border like bugs,  
 Quality is laughed at and compromised,  
 Empire of quantity is advertised.

(Chorus)  
 Fakes are here,  
 But we mustn't fear.

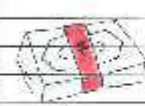

Hanu Madhu Agarwal  
 SMC The MGC School  
 Roll Number 9550722746

## Empowering Youth To Combat Smuggling And Counterfeiting

Finish your nose and ears,  
 A warning sign to fear!  
 Smuggle and counterfeiters,  
 Steal us, we'll find your secrets.  
 We're not your prey!  
 They find for they set the pace,  
 (Fashionistas, push! someone's  
 while our river in 'Kangaroo' school!  
 Let there be law, not just a show!)

Fix eyes slender by guitars,  
 Trunkies while in anticipation through jingles  
 They don't want any gold,  
 Not a range of diamonds in,  
 Kicks that hit!


Loved today, loved parties,  
 But why fear our government?  
 (Remember, we're not a 'Kangaroo' school!  
 Today we demand justification!)

दोड़ हो जल जलसी,  
 गे जो खकरी।  
 नद जलें तुम खकरी,  
 नद जलें तुम खकरी।

शक्ति का यह अर्थिया,  
 जहाँ है फिर बने की जिलिया।  
 बगैर युवा है इस जलक की, नानक?  
 युवा का अपने इरादे है,  
 नदें युवा में तब तक जलक है।

We are united, we are confident!



# DIGITAL ART COMPETITION 2026 STAND AGAINST SMUGGLING

21<sup>st</sup> January 2026 | New Delhi

Smuggling continues to be a pervasive challenge that transcends national boundaries, adversely impacting economies, legitimate businesses, public health, and national security across the globe. It erodes government revenues, fuels organized crime, and undermines fair trade practices, thereby posing a serious threat to sustainable economic growth. In order to address this critical issue and reaffirm its commitment to raising awareness, FICCI CASCADE observes 11th February as Anti-Smuggling Day. The observance serves as a significant platform to bring together policymakers, enforcement agencies, industry leaders, media, and civil society to collectively assess the magnitude of the problem and explore avenues for stronger cooperation, information sharing, and coordinated action.

As a run-up to Anti-Smuggling Day and to spread awareness about the menace of smuggled goods, FICCI CASCADE organises an annual Digital Art Competition in January on the theme "**Stand Against Smuggling.**" The competition generates wider public awareness on the issue of smuggling, encourages individuals to reject illicit products, and promotes creative expression to inspire positive societal change. By encouraging creative expression, the competition provides a unique platform for participants to articulate powerful messages against smuggling and to promote informed and responsible consumer behaviour.

The competition has consistently received an overwhelming response from participants across the country, reflecting growing public

concern and engagement on the issue. This year, over 10,000 entries were submitted from diverse regions, showcasing remarkable creativity, originality, and a deep understanding of the socio-economic impact of smuggling.

The entries were evaluated by an esteemed jury comprising members of the FICCI CASCADE Think Tank: Mr. Ramesh Abhishek, Former Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade; Mr. Ravi Capoor, Former Secretary, Ministry of Textiles and CEO, Sansad TV; and Mr. Anil Sinha, Former Director, Central Bureau of Investigation. The jury members commended the participants for their insightful interpretations of the theme and the high artistic standards reflected in the submissions.

The winners were felicitated and awarded attractive cash prizes in recognition of their outstanding artwork.

## NAME OF WINNERS ARE AS FOLLOW

**First Position-** Abhishek

**Second Position -** Anish Minj

**Third Position -** Muaigathinbou Ch Niumai

## Consolation Prize Winner

Devan Bidhan

Bhumika Singh

The competition not only witnessed artistic excellence but also reinforced the collective resolve to stand united against smuggling and illicit trade.

1st Position-Abhishek



2nd Position- Anish Minj



3rd Position- Muaigathinbou Ch Niumai



Consolation  
Bhumika Singh



Consolation  
DEVAN





# THINK TANK MEETINGS

# THINK TANK

## *Members*





# FICCI CASCADE

# 27<sup>TH</sup> THINK TANK Meeting

July 17, 2025 | New Delhi

**F**ICCI CASCADE convened its 27th Think Tank Meeting to deliberate on the MASCRAGE 2025 agenda and the forthcoming CASCADE Study, which will be released during the conference. Members shared their valuable insights and suggestions on the proposed agenda and study framework. The meeting also highlighted ongoing CASCADE initiatives and outlined the roadmap for future activities.

## Key Actionable Points:

- » The Chairman commended the success of initiatives like Anti-Smuggling Day, recognizing their effectiveness in elevating public consciousness and galvanizing multi-stakeholder engagement against illicit trade. Mr. Rajput stressed the need to institutionalize this model to maintain its momentum and deepen collaboration between the public, private sector, and policymakers in addressing the escalating threat of smuggling and counterfeiting.
- » The Chairman further emphasized the need to engage more experts with domain-specific knowledge to strengthen the impact of CASCADE's initiatives. Members were apprised that capacity-building programmes have been instrumental in spreading awareness about the grave threat posed by illicit trade. The increasing volume of seizures across India indicates the escalating scale and complexity of the problem.
- » Strengthening efforts to protect indigenous IP particularly in areas such as Geographical Indications and Patents, was identified as a key priority for India. It was noted that the Supreme Court's recognition of counterfeiting as a criminal offence marks a significant milestone, with the judiciary showing increasing support through judgments that uphold the rights of IP holders.
- » As part of the deliberations on the MASCRAGE 2025 agenda, members proposed inviting Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India and Shri Kiren Rijju, Hon'ble Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India, as Chief Guests for the conference.
- » To broaden global participation and amplify the conference's outreach, it was recommended that an open invitation be extended to international delegates for virtual attendance, thereby fostering wider engagement and collective action against illicit trade.
- » The members further recommended inviting the following dignitaries and subject-matter experts for relevant sessions at MASCRAGE 2025:
  - » **Dr. Anju Rathi Rana**, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice
  - » **Shri Pavan Kapoor**, Deputy National Security Advisor
  - » **Mr. Rahul Navin**, Director, Director of Enforcement
  - » **Dr. Gulshan Rai**, Former National Cyber Security Coordinator & Former DG, CERT-In

- » **Mr. Hardeep Batra**, Commissioner of Customs, Mumbai, and Former Chairman, Counterfeit and Piracy Committee, WCO
- » For the Plenary Session 6 titled "Resilience in Action: Industry-Led Solutions to Counter Smuggling and Counterfeiting," it was recommended to include speakers from the e-commerce, pharmaceutical, FMCG, and alcoholic beverage sectors, to ensure comprehensive industry representation.
- » A new judiciary-focused panel discussion was suggested for the MASCRUDE agenda. It was proposed to invite Hon'ble Justice Prathiba M. Singh to participate in the panel, followed by a valedictory address by a Judge of the Supreme Court of India to facilitate an insightful legal discourse.
- » It was agreed that the next Think Tank Meeting would be scheduled for the first week of September 2025 to review the progress of the study and discuss upcoming CASCADE initiatives.

Update on Study: Towards a Tax Equitable Society

**Mr. Kaushik Dutta** presented an update on the study titled "Towards a Tax Equitable Society".

- » The TARI team was tasked with proposing an appropriate title for the study.
- » It was agreed that a draft of the report would be circulated to all members by the end of August 2025 for review and feedback.

## List of Participants

1. **Mr. Anil Rajput**, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE
2. **Justice Manmohan Sarin**, Former Chief Justice, Former Lokayukta, NCT of Delhi, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Judge, High Court of Delhi
3. **Mr. Najib Shah**, Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs
4. **Mr. Sanjeev Tripathi**, Former Chief, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)
5. **Dr. Debi Prasad Dash**, Former Principal Director General, DRI, Chairman, Enforcement Committee World Customs Organisation (WCO)
6. **Mr. Arun Chawla**, Director General, Indian Council of Arbitration & Former Director General, FICCI
7. **Mr. Suvashis Choudhary**, Former Joint Commissioner and Chief Security Commissioner, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, Delhi
8. **Mr. P K Malhotra**, Former Secretary Law, Ministry of Law & Justice, Government of India
9. **Mr. Hem Kumar Pande**, Former Secretary, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India
10. **Ms. Sungita Sharma**, Former Special Secretary & Member (Admn), Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs
11. **Mr. Anil Sinha**, Former Director, Central Bureau of Investigation
12. **Mr. Rajiva Ranjan Verma**, Former Director General, RPF, NCB, Civil Defence, Home Guard & Fire Services, Bureau of Police Research and Development
13. **Mr. Deep Chand**, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi
14. **Mr. P C Jha**, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs
15. **Mr. Rajiv Ohri**, Executive Vice President, ITC Ltd.
16. **Ms. Kashifa Hasan**, Joint Director, FICCI CASCADE
17. **Ms. Shikha Bhatt**, Assistant Director, FICCI CASCADE

# FICCI CASCADE

# 28<sup>TH</sup> THINK TANK Meeting

November 4, 2025 | New Delhi

**F**ICCI CASCADE convened its 28th Think Tank Meeting to deliberate on the theme for MASCRAGE 2026 and to share the draft "Recommendations to Combat Illicit Trade" with its esteemed members. Members were invited to provide their valuable insights and suggestions on the proposed recommendations. The meeting also highlighted CASCADE's ongoing initiatives, reviewed strategic priorities, and discussed the roadmap for upcoming programmes.

## Key Actionable Points:

- » The Chairman commended the success of MASCRAGE, noting how the platform has consistently strengthened public awareness and mobilized diverse stakeholders in the fight against illicit trade. He emphasized the need to sustain this momentum and continue contributing meaningfully to India's efforts to combat this growing menace.
- » Members were invited to propose potential themes for MASCRAGE 2026 and actively contributed their suggestions during the discussion. Following a constructive exchange of ideas, the theme for MASCRAGE 2026 was finalized as "Securing Economies and Empowering Nations."
- » It was suggested to develop a curated video for the next edition of MASCRAGE, illustrating the origins of illicit trade, its evolution over the years, and the current landscape. This visual narrative would help contextualize the issue and provide participants with a comprehensive

understanding of its scale and impact. Members further recommended that the video should highlight key international initiatives undertaken to combat counterfeiting and smuggling, including efforts led by organisations such as the WCO and INTERPOL, and that it be updated annually to incorporate the latest developments and global best practices.

- » To strengthen outreach and broaden the impact of CASCADE's initiatives, members recommended organising state-level programmes in cities such as Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, and Surat. They also suggested identifying additional states and regions significantly affected by illicit trade to ensure wider and more strategic coverage.
- » Members suggested that, for Anti-Smuggling Day, CASCADE should explore partnerships with relevant UN bodies that are actively addressing major smuggling challenges globally. It was further proposed that representatives from the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the World Customs Organization, and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) be invited to participate in the conference to strengthen and foster high-level engagement.

Update on Study: Towards a Tax Equitable Society

**Mr. Kaushik Dutta** presented an update on the revised study titled "Towards a Tax Equitable Society - Understanding Taxpayer

Perceptions, Willingness, and Compliance Behaviour in India."

- » The Chairman noted that the report should include a dedicated component capturing the perspectives of high tax-paying individuals, as this segment is currently underrepresented in the study. He further emphasized the importance of integrating international best practices that support the retention of wealth within the country. It was also highlighted that the study should incorporate inputs from FICCI's Tax Committee, co-chaired by Mr. Rajeev Dimri, Tax Partner, KPMG, to ensure a more comprehensive and robust analysis.
- » For the next edition of MASGRADE, the proposed title for the upcoming study "Illicit Trade and Its Consequences" was discussed. The Chairman shared the suggested title, and all members were in agreement with the proposed theme.

## List of Participants

1. **Mr. Anil Rajput**, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE
2. **Justice Manmohan Sarin**, Former Lokayukta, NCT of Delhi, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir, Judge, High Court of Delhi
3. **Mr. Najib Shah**, Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs
4. **Mr. Sanjeev Tripathi**, Former Chief, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)
5. **Dr. Debi Prasad Dash**, Former Principal Director General, DRI, Chairman, Enforcement Committee World Customs Organisation (WCO)
6. **Mr. Suvashis Choudhary**, Former Joint Commissioner and Chief Security Commissioner, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, Delhi
7. **Mr. P K Malhotra**, Former Secretary Law, Ministry of Law & Justice, Government of India
8. **Mr. Hem Kumar Pande**, Former Secretary, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India
9. **Ms. Neeta Lall Butalia**, Former Director General, DGHRD & Principal Director General, NACIN
10. **Mr. Anil Sinha**, Former Director, Central Bureau of Investigation
11. **Mr. Arun Chawla**, Director General, Indian Council of Arbitration & Former Director General, FICCI
12. **Mr. P C Jha**, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs
13. **Mr. Deep Chand**, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi
14. **Mr. Rajiv Ohri**, Executive Vice President, ITC Ltd.
15. **Ms. Swati Srivastava De**, Deputy General Manager, ITC Ltd.
16. **Ms. Kashifa Hasan**, Joint Director, FICCI CASCADE
17. **Ms. Shikha Bhatt**, Assistant Director, FICCI CASCADE

# FICCI CASCADE

# 29<sup>TH</sup> THINK TANK Meeting

February 14, 2026 | New Delhi

**F**ICCI CASCADE convened its 29th Think Tank Meeting to review its ongoing initiatives and chart a strategic roadmap for the months ahead. The meeting provided a constructive platform for the exchange of ideas and forward-looking deliberations aimed at strengthening efforts to combat illicit trade and smuggling.

A key highlight of the meeting was the forthcoming FICCI CASCADE Study, scheduled for release at MASCRAGE 2026. Members engaged in detailed discussions on the study's scope, framework, methodology, and key focus areas.

## Key Actionable Points:

- » The Chairman commended the success of Anti-Smuggling Day, noting that it served as a significant platform to amplify awareness, reinforce collective resolve, and mobilize diverse stakeholders in the fight against smuggling. He emphasized the importance of further strengthening engagement with international communities and embassies, encouraging coordinated efforts and support from respective governments to advance collaborative action against smuggling and illicit trade.
- » Members emphasized that CASCADE's activities should be strategically aligned with regions and sectors where the incidence of smuggling is particularly high. They underscored the need for targeted capacity-building programmes and sustained awareness initiatives in

areas most affected, to ensure greater impact and effective intervention.

- » It was further suggested that outreach efforts be strengthened across all regions of India-North, East, South, and West. Members emphasized the need to sensitize citizens about the adverse impact of smuggling and encourage greater public participation in efforts to combat illicit trade.
- » It was proposed that, in the lead-up to the next edition of Anti-Smuggling Day, letters be addressed to the Chief Secretaries of all States, requesting them to nominate representatives from their respective departments to participate in the conference.
- » To enhance visibility and strengthen public outreach, members recommended undertaking a coordinated communication campaign through articles. It was further suggested that CASCADE could place advertisement at international airports. The commercial viability of the same to be evaluated to assess its effectiveness. This would help further amplify CASCADE's initiatives and reinforce the message of "Say No to Counterfeit and Smuggled Products."
- » It was suggested that a meeting be scheduled with the Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), to deliberate on advancing the proposal at the international level and to explore the

possibility of pursuing recognition of 11th February as Anti-Smuggling Day at the United Nations.

- » It was recommended to organise inter-agency coordination workshops involving senior officials from DRI, Customs, and Police, with the objective of strengthening collaboration, enhancing intelligence sharing, and ensuring a more coordinated response to smuggling.
- » Members proposed approaching the 'Taskaree' team to develop a pro bono awareness video and explore their association as brand ambassadors for CASCADE, with the aim of widening public outreach and amplifying the message against smuggling and counterfeit trade.
- » For securing UN recognition of Anti-Smuggling Day, it was suggested to explore the possibility of engaging with a Non-Permanent Member of the UN Security Council to advance an appropriate resolution at the Security Council. It was also recommended to approach the Secretary General of the World Customs Organization (WCO) to facilitate institutional support in obtaining this recognition. Secretariat to seek guidance from Mr D P Dash on the same.
- » It was further suggested to identify and collaborate with organizations in other countries engaged in combating illicit trade, in order to build strategic partnerships, exchange best practices, and reinforce collective global action against smuggling and counterfeiting.
- » Members recommended intensifying awareness initiatives among school children and youth, while strengthening engagement with the Ministry of

Education at the State level. This would help promote informed consumer behaviour and further advance the objective of curbing illicit trade.

- » The Chairman proposed reaching out to **Mr. Manoj Tiwari**, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), Northeast Delhi, to feature in an awareness audio-visual campaign for CASCADE, with a view to amplifying the message against illicit trade and smuggling.

Update on Study: Illicit Markets and Its Impact on the Indian Economy

**Mr. Kaushik Dutta** presented an update on the forthcoming study titled "Illicit Markets and Its Impact on the Indian Economy"

- » The TARI team was advised to further refine the study framework by clearly identifying the key sectors to be covered. Members recommended that the study incorporate data examining linkages between illicit markets and organized crime, along with relevant country-specific case studies to provide comparative insights and strengthen the overall analysis.
- » It was also suggested that the study assess the scale and dynamics of the unorganized sector and analyse its economic implications, particularly with respect to revenue loss, impact on employment, and its nexus with illicit trade activities.

## List of Participants

1. **Mr. Anil Rajput**, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE and Member - Corporate Management Committee & President - Corporate Affairs, ITC Limited

# THINK TANK MEETING

2. **Mr. Hem Kumar Pande**, Former Secretary, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India
3. **Mr. Najib Shah**, Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs
4. **Mr. Sanjeev Tripathi**, Former Chief, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)
5. **Mr. Anil Sinha**, Former Director, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
6. **Dr. Debi Prasad Dash**, Former Principal Director General, DRI & Chairman, Enforcement Committee World Customs Organization (WCO)
7. **Mr. Ramesh Abhishek**, Former Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
8. **Mr. Suvashis Choudhary**, Former Joint Commissioner & Chief Security Commissioner, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, Delhi
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14. **Ms. Shikha Bhatt**, Senior Assistant Director, FICCI CASCADE







# ARTICLES

# THE FISCAL WISDOM IN OUR TEXTS



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



***India's sustainable economic model must reflect its ancient wisdom while adapting to present realities rather than replicating the path of developed nations.***

**A**part from spiritual and philosophical insights, India's ancient texts offer practical frameworks for governance, economics, and public finance. For nation-building, we often seek best practices from developed economies. Yet, our own ancient texts like the Arthashastra and Manusmriti provide enduring wisdom that is relevant even today. These texts advocate a model for sustainable governance rooted in economic rationality rather than based on the welfare of a few at an enormous cost to the masses. They reflect lived principles of empires that achieved an ideal blend of territorial integrity and expansion, social stability, and economic prosperity.

One of the most powerful embodiments of this wisdom was the Mauryan Empire, which was the first realisation of Akhand Bharat. The Mauryan state stood out for its efficient administration, ethical statecraft, and investments in national security and public welfare.

At the time of Chandragupta Maurya's rise in 322 BCE, India was politically fragmented, dominated by small, often warring, kingdoms.

Against this backdrop, Kautilya, the strategist, economist, philosopher, and advisor to Chandragupta Maurya, authored the Arthashastra as a comprehensive manual of governance. It was also a response to the complexities of building and maintaining a vast, diverse empire. It offered detailed guidance on governance, economic management, taxation, military organisation, diplomacy, and penal code. Remarkably, this manual influenced governance in India for the next 1,500 years.

The idea of yogakshema was central to Arthashastra's vision of sustainable governance-yoga (resource acquisition) and kshema (their effective use). This holistic approach ensured both raksha (security) and palana (welfare) of the people-and under this umbrella, the book declared "Kosha moolo danda", meaning "revenue is the backbone of administration".

Arthashastra presented a remarkably nuanced approach to taxation, considering it a dharmic responsibility, binding both ruler and citizen. Taxes were to be fair, moderate, and propor-

tionate, designed to encourage compliance rather than prohibitive. Also, taxpayers had transparency on how the taxes they paid were utilised, and tax officials were subject to strict oversight to prevent corruption. Revenues were to be reinvested in public-facing sectors such as agriculture, trade, infrastructure, education, and culture. The system also allowed for tax relief during natural calamities, highlighting an early form of counter-cyclical fiscal policy.

A striking example of the Arthashastra was the prescribed tax rate—one-sixth of a citizen's income, or about 16.67%. This rate was designed to strike a careful balance, low enough to encourage compliance and productive activity, yet adequate to support the state's functions. Interestingly, modern fiscal theory such as the Laffer curve also suggests that moderate, well-calibrated taxation leads to better compliance and stronger revenues.

Today, as India strives to improve its tax-to-GDP ratio, expand the formal economy, and work towards building a \$5-trillion economy by 2027 for a Viksit Bharat by 2047, Kautilya's legacy is inspiring. What made his vision enduring was its firm grounding in fiscal prudence and the belief that true state power emerges not from extraction, but from empowerment. This philosophy has quietly guided India's fiscal evolution since Independence by moving beyond the colonial-era taxation system that prioritised revenue over welfare. India has emphasised redistribution and embraced progressive taxation and investment in public welfare. Landmark reforms like the goods and services tax (GST) and the digitisation of tax systems have taken this focus forward, echoing Kautilya's vision of a tax regime that is clear, efficient, and aligned with the larger

goal of shared prosperity. Yet, India's fiscal journey is far from complete. Some key challenges remain, such as broadening the tax base, reducing informality, and building compliance through trust. For voluntary compliance to thrive, tax rates must be fair, moderate, and aligned with people's ability to pay. Citizens also need to see tangible returns—better infrastructure, public services, and responsive governance. To be sure, the present government has made visible progress; however, much more needs to be done. Tax rates on many items are still high, and the GST structure remains complex with many slabs. High rates incentivise evasion, burden enforcement, and fuel illicit markets, ultimately undermining revenue and public welfare.

As India navigates shifting geopolitical dynamics and evolving economic paradigms, it must draw strength from its roots. The Arthashastra's timeless tenets are not relics of the past, but living principles for building a modern, resilient, and inclusive nation. India's sustainable economic model must reflect its ancient wisdom while adapting to present realities rather than replicating the path of developed nations. In this journey, history is not merely something to be remembered; it is to derive inspiration from and build upon. Ignoring such teachings can be only at our great peril.

## The fiscal wisdom in our texts



**PC JHA**

Advisor, FICCI Committee on Growth, Strategy, and Sustainability and India Development Institute

India's sustainable economic model must reflect its ancient wisdom while adapting to present realities rather than replicating the path of developed nations

APART FROM SPIRITUAL and philosophical insights, India's ancient texts offer practical frameworks for governance, economics, and public finance. For nations building new or resurrected governance in developed economies, let our own ancient texts like the Arthashastra and Manu-smriti provide guiding wisdom that is relevant even today. These texts advocate a model for sustainable governance rooted in economic rationality rather than based on the welfare of a few or an excessive control by the masses. They reflected principles of pragmatism that achieved an ideal blend of territorial integrity and expansion, social stability, and economic prosperity.

One of the most powerful embodiments of this wisdom was the Mauryan Empire, which was the first realisation of a globalised state. The Mauryan state stood out for its efficient administration, ethical conduct, and investment in national security and public welfare.

Under Emperor Chandragupta Maurya's rule in 322 BCE, India was politically fragmented, dominated by small, warring states, kingdoms. Against this backdrop, Kautilya, the strategist, economist, philosopher, and advisor to Chandragupta Maurya, authored the Arthashastra as a comprehensive manual of governance. It was also a response to the complexities of building and maintaining a vast, diverse empire. It offered detailed guidance on

governance, economic management, taxation, military organisation, diplomacy, and internal order. Remarkably, this manual on ancient governance in India for the year 322 BC is still relevant today.

The idea of *rajadharma* was central to Arthashastra's vision of sustainable governance—governance as a duty and a sacred obligation to the people and the state. This holistic approach covered both the welfare and justice of the people—and under this umbrella, the book delineated "Kosha" (treasury), meaning "Kosha" as the backbone of administration. Arthashastra presented a remarkably nuanced approach to taxation, considering it a shared responsibility, involving both ruler and citizen. Taxes were to be fair, moderate, and proportional, designed to encourage compliance rather than prohibition. Also, taxpayers had transparency on how their taxes they paid were utilised, and tax officials were subject to strict oversight to prevent corruption. Revenues were to be reinvested in public-facing sectors such as agriculture, trade, infrastructure, education, and culture. The system also allowed for tax relief during natural calamities, highlighting an early form of counter-cyclical fiscal policy. A striking example of the Arthashastra

was the prescribed tax rate—one-sixth of a citizen's income, or about 16.67%. This rate was designed to strike a careful balance, low enough to encourage compliance and productive activity, yet adequate to support the state's functions. Interestingly, modern fiscal theory such as the Laffer curve also suggests that moderate, well-calibrated taxation leads to better compliance and stronger revenues.

Today, as India strives to improve its tax-to-GDP ratio, expand the formal economy, and work towards building a \$5-trillion economy by 2027 for a Viksit Bharat by 2047, Kautilya's legacy is inspiring. What made his vision enduring was its firm grounding in fiscal prudence and the belief that true state power emerges not from extraction, but from empowerment. This philosophy has quietly guided India's fiscal evolution since Independence by moving beyond the colonial-era taxation system that prioritised revenue over welfare. India has emphasised redistribution and embraced progressive taxation and investment in public welfare. Landmark reforms like the goods and services tax (GST) and the digitisation of tax systems have taken this focus forward, echoing Kautilya's vision of a tax regime that is clear, effi-

cient, and aligned with the larger goal of shared prosperity. Yet, India's fiscal journey is far from complete. Some key challenges remain, such as broadening the tax base, reducing informality, and building compliance through trust. For voluntary compliance to thrive, tax rates must be fair, moderate, and aligned with people's ability to pay. Citizens also need to see tangible returns—better infrastructure, public services, and responsive governance. To be sure, the present government has made visible progress; however, much more needs to be done. Tax rates on many items are still high, and the GST structure remains complex with many slabs. High rates incentivise evasion, burden enforcement, and fuel illicit markets, ultimately undermining revenue and public welfare.

As India navigates shifting geopolitical dynamics and evolving economic paradigms, it must draw strength from its roots. The Arthashastra's timeless tenets are not relics of the past, but living principles for building a modern, resilient, and inclusive nation. India's sustainable economic model must reflect its ancient wisdom while adapting to present realities rather than replicating the path of developed nations. In this journey, history is not merely something to be remembered; it is to derive inspiration from and build upon. Ignoring such teachings can be only at our great peril.

# CASCADE : THE CASE FOR AN ANTI-SMUGGLING DAY



**Mr. Najib Shah**  
Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs and Think Tank Member FICCI CASCADE

*Undoubtedly, substantial seizures of illicitly traded goods and instances of evasion occur in India and globally, but what is detected represents only a minuscule fraction of the overall criminal activity, notes former CBIC Chairman Najib Shah, underscoring the importance of CASCADE and its objectives.*

The Committee against Smuggling & Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE), a think-tank under the aegis of the industry association FICCI, observed the 5th Anti-Smuggling Day on February 11. The event had participation by government officials, representatives from the embassies, UN bodies and the industry. The concept of a day designated to highlight the pernicious impact of smuggling is laudable. While most people are broadly aware of the term smuggling, very few realize the impact of smuggling on the economy.

Smuggling as defined under the Customs Act and couched in typical legalese refers to any act or omission which will render 'such' goods to confiscation. The definition is wide and relates not only to import but also export, to illegal import or attempt to export of goods, but also to attempts to evade, payment of the

correct tax, or a restriction or prohibition.

At the end of the day smuggling is an economic activity. Policy makers must be cognizant and strike a correct balance between revenue, consequences thereof and larger social goals. Where there is demand and the supply is restricted or costly, smuggling will follow. Thus, a whole gamut of goods is presently sought to be smuggled.

Gold (despite record licit imports contributing to a widening trade gap) and tobacco are smuggled because of the incessant demand and the tax structure which provides an arbitrage and high profit. Narcotics and synthetic drugs because they are prohibited and the profit margins are astronomical given the demand fueled by the increasing incidence of drugs in the country; exotic animals again for the same reasons as are red sanders, an item falling under the Convention

on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora (CITES) and restricted, which is attempted to be illegally exported to meet the demand in the far-east countries.

Then there are cases of products sought to be imported under the guise of licit import or mis-declared to evade duty or where trade is used to launder money. Smuggled goods are popular with the public at large because they are cheaper since they have not paid taxes or are otherwise prohibited.

The damage that smuggling does is enormous. Apart from the obvious generation of profits (higher the tax incidence, higher the profit) which are outside the tax net, this money, can in turn be used to fund other nefarious activity. All anti-national, terrorists' activity ultimately is financed by such acts of evasion. And in case the money is to be transferred to the principal architect who may be located outside the country, hawala transactions which are outside the licit banking channels are utilised resulting in yet another offence.

Smuggling damages licit industry and results in licit jobs being lost. Yes, it does generate jobs which are necessary for the illegal activities, but these are criminal jobs and the country can do without these. Smuggled goods are invariably of poor quality with no after sales guarantees and are not safe - smuggled automobiles parts is a case in point. They can be health hazards especially since pharma products are also sought to be smuggled by unscrupulous criminals.

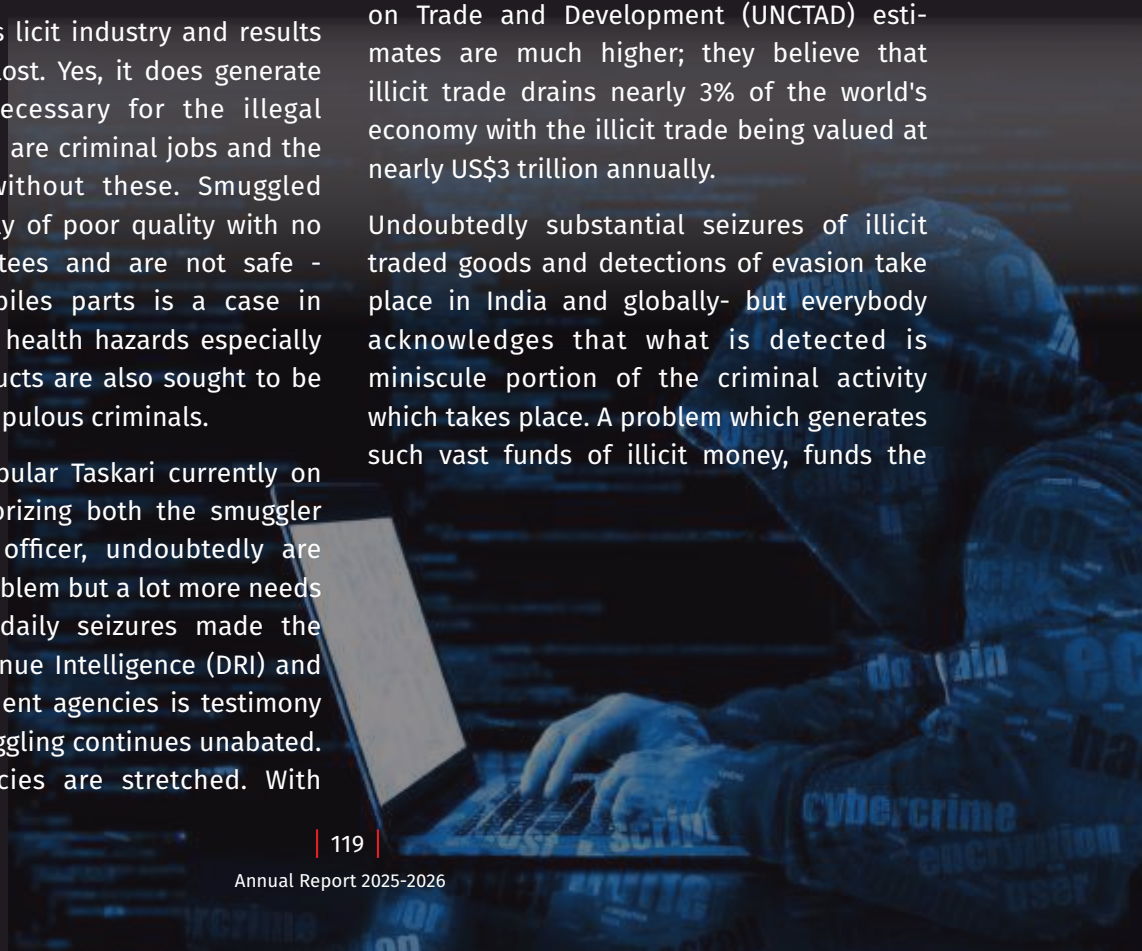
Serials like the popular Taskari currently on Netflix while glamorizing both the smuggler and the customs officer, undoubtedly are highlighting the problem but a lot more needs to be done. The daily seizures made the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) and the other enforcement agencies is testimony to the fact the smuggling continues unabated. Enforcement agencies are stretched. With

meagre resources they necessarily must make risk-based calls.

Criminals exploit this situation. Given the universally accepted acknowledgement that smuggling is harmful to the economy it is surprising that no specific day to highlight the dangers of smuggling and bring on board policy makers, enforcement agencies and the public at large on a common platform has happened thus far. CASCADE has conducted five editions of the Anti-Smuggling Day so far and awareness is being built-but obviously much more needs to be done.

The Global Risks Report 2025 published by the World Economic Forum lists criminal and illicit economic activity as a potent risk; illicit activities have been defined as those that undermine economic advancement and growth, and includes but not limited to illicit financial flows, illicit trade and cybercrime. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) estimates that transnational organised crime generates more than 1.5% of global GDP; The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) estimates are much higher; they believe that illicit trade drains nearly 3% of the world's economy with the illicit trade being valued at nearly US\$3 trillion annually.

Undoubtedly substantial seizures of illicit traded goods and detections of evasion take place in India and globally- but everybody acknowledges that what is detected is miniscule portion of the criminal activity which takes place. A problem which generates such vast funds of illicit money, funds the



activities of terror outfits, which impacts and disrupts all segments of society and nations, and which has been prevalent from across centuries with no signs of reducing, certainly warrants a bit more awareness. We should never forget that what is at stake is the national and economic security of the nation.

In this context the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) the body which will be most adversely impacted by smuggling given their mandate to ensure the integrity of the borders should though the Ministry of External Affairs seek to influence the UN to recognise this day. There are UN international days for pulses, happiness, bee, argania (have you even heard of this - it is a thorny shrub found in Morocco) bicycle, lake, translation, post, television, football among the more than 200 days commemorated across the year for various causes.

Here is an activity which impacts every single country in the world, which needs coordinated action amongst enforcement agencies across the globe and within each country, which fuels terrorist activity, which is growing by the day - and yet. The idea of a day is to mobilize political will, public awareness about a particular issue so that concerted action can be initiated. While CASCADE is doing its bit, the day needs national and global recognition.



By Najib Shah

February 17, 2026, 2:13:43 PM IST (Published)

6 Min Read

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The Committee against Smuggling & Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE), a think-tank under the aegis of the industry association FICCI, observed the 5th Anti-Smuggling Day on February 11. The event had participation by government officials, representatives from the embassies, UN bodies and the industry. The concept of a day designated to highlight the pernicious impact of smuggling is laudable. While most people are broadly aware of the term smuggling, very few realize the impact of smuggling on the economy.

Observing an anti-smuggling day is not an admission of our inability to counter the problem; it is merely an acknowledgement of the extent of the problem and the urgent need to have all hands-on board especially the citizenry, to counter the menace. By merely not buying smuggled products we can cripple smuggling gangs. And if you were to still do so then we need to remember that we will have blood in our hands- we could very well by our act be financing, God forbid, the next terrorist activity in the country.

*The author, Najib Shah is former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs. The views are personal.*



NEWSLETTERS

## NEWSLETTER

### CHAIR'S MESSAGE



**Anil Prasad**  
Chairman, FICCI

As we begin the year 2025, I am pleased to see the continued growth and resilience of the Indian economy. The government's focus on infrastructure, digitalization, and skill development has laid a strong foundation for sustainable growth. FICCI remains committed to supporting the government's vision and working closely with industry leaders to address challenges and seize opportunities. We will continue to advocate for policies that foster innovation, protect intellectual property, and create a favorable business environment. Together, we can build a stronger, more competitive India for the future.

## NEWSLETTER

### RECENT INITIATIVES

#### ANTI-SMUGGLING DAY

(17 FEBRUARY 2025 | MUMBAI)



**S**ignaling a significant milestone in the fight against smuggling, FICCI, in collaboration with the Mumbai Customs Commissioner's Office, organized the first-ever Anti-Smuggling Day on February 17, 2025, in Mumbai. The event, held at the prestigious Taj Hotel, brought together industry leaders, government officials, and law enforcement agencies to discuss strategies for curbing smuggling and strengthening the nation's trade and tax systems. The day-long program featured a panel discussion, a keynote address by the Mumbai Customs Commissioner, and a series of workshops and seminars. The event was a resounding success, with over 500 participants and a high level of engagement. It underscored the industry's commitment to ethical trade practices and the need for a multi-stakeholder approach to combat smuggling effectively.

## NEWSLETTER

### Digital Art

#### Winners 2025



The winners of the Digital Art 2025 competition are showcased in this section. The exhibition features a variety of digital art pieces, including abstract compositions, digital portraits, and interactive installations. The winners have demonstrated exceptional creativity and technical skills, pushing the boundaries of digital art. The exhibition is a testament to the growing talent and innovation in the digital art space in India.

## NEWSLETTER

### The Cost of Crime: How Organized Crime and Illicit Trade Weaken Economies

By Dr. Anil Prasad, Chairman, FICCI

Organized crime and illicit trade have emerged as significant threats to the global economy. These activities not only result in direct financial losses but also undermine the rule of law, erode trust, and distort market competition. The cost of crime is high, affecting businesses, governments, and society as a whole. It is essential for governments and industry to work together to address these challenges through stronger legal frameworks, improved law enforcement, and industry self-regulation. By reducing the cost of crime, we can create a more stable and prosperous economic environment.

#### HAPPENING TODAY

**X** **State** **Share** **IX**

**17 FEB 2025**



## NEWSLETTER

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

India Police officers to undergo accountability from this week



FICCI has successfully completed a capacity building programme for police officers on the prevention of counterfeiting and smuggling. The programme, which ran from February 10 to 14, 2025, in Mumbai, was a significant milestone in the industry's efforts to combat these issues. It provided police officers with valuable insights into the latest trends and techniques used by counterfeiters and smugglers. The programme included a mix of theoretical sessions, practical exercises, and group discussions. The participants expressed their appreciation for the program and their commitment to applying the knowledge gained to their duties. This initiative is a testament to FICCI's commitment to supporting law enforcement agencies in their fight against crime.

## NEWSLETTER

### Digital Art

#### Winners 2025



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## NEWSLETTER

### WIDE COVERAGE



This section highlights the extensive media coverage of FICCI's initiatives and events. From national news outlets to regional publications, FICCI's work has been widely reported, showcasing the industry's impact on the economy and society. The coverage includes articles, interviews, and feature stories that highlight the industry's contributions to India's growth and development. This wide reach of media attention is a testament to the industry's visibility and influence in the public sphere.

## NEWSLETTER

### SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS



This section showcases a variety of social media campaigns and initiatives. The campaigns are designed to raise awareness, engage the audience, and promote FICCI's values and initiatives. The campaigns include social media contests, live streaming events, and interactive content. The use of social media has allowed FICCI to reach a wider audience and foster a sense of community among its members and stakeholders. These campaigns are a testament to the industry's digital presence and its commitment to staying connected with its audience.

## NEWSLETTER

### WHAT'S NEXT



This section highlights upcoming events and initiatives. The campaigns are designed to raise awareness, engage the audience, and promote FICCI's values and initiatives. The campaigns include social media contests, live streaming events, and interactive content. The use of social media has allowed FICCI to reach a wider audience and foster a sense of community among its members and stakeholders. These campaigns are a testament to the industry's digital presence and its commitment to staying connected with its audience.



**NEWSLETTER**

**CHAIR'S MESSAGE**



**ANIL KUMAR**  
Chairman, FICCI

**Chairman's Message**

As we begin the year 2025, I am pleased to see the continued growth and resilience of the Indian economy. The government's focus on infrastructure and digital transformation provides a strong foundation for our growth. FICCI remains committed to supporting the government's initiatives and ensuring a level playing field for all businesses. We will continue to work closely with the government to address the challenges faced by the industry and to promote sustainable growth. I look forward to a successful year ahead for all of us.

**NEWSLETTER**

**RECENT INITIATIVES**

**3RD MEETING OF PARLIAMENTARY PANEL ON COMMERCE AND PREVENTION OF CORRUPT ON THE TONG AND SMUGGLING**

12th Nov 2024, Delhi



FICCI's Chairman, Anil Kumar, participated in the 3rd meeting of the Parliamentary Panel on Commerce and Prevention of Corruption on the Tong and Smuggling. The meeting was held on 12th Nov 2024 in Delhi. The panel members discussed the challenges faced by the industry and the government's initiatives to address them. FICCI's Chairman highlighted the need for a level playing field and the importance of infrastructure and digital transformation for the industry's growth.

**NEWSLETTER**

**STRENGTHENING SECURITY: STRATEGIES TO COORDINATE CYBER SECURITY AND SECURITY**

12th Nov 2024, Delhi

**STRENGTHENING SECURITY: STRATEGIES TO COORDINATE CYBER SECURITY AND SECURITY**



FICCI's Chairman, Anil Kumar, participated in a panel discussion on "Strengthening Security: Strategies to Coordinate Cyber Security and Security". The panel was held on 12th Nov 2024 in Delhi. The panel members discussed the challenges faced by the industry and the government's initiatives to address them. FICCI's Chairman highlighted the need for a level playing field and the importance of infrastructure and digital transformation for the industry's growth.

**NEWSLETTER**

**Disrupting Organized Crime: Enforcement Strategies for a Borderless Threat**

12th Nov 2024, Delhi

**Disrupting Organized Crime: Enforcement Strategies for a Borderless Threat**



FICCI's Chairman, Anil Kumar, participated in a panel discussion on "Disrupting Organized Crime: Enforcement Strategies for a Borderless Threat". The panel was held on 12th Nov 2024 in Delhi. The panel members discussed the challenges faced by the industry and the government's initiatives to address them. FICCI's Chairman highlighted the need for a level playing field and the importance of infrastructure and digital transformation for the industry's growth.

**NEWSLETTER**

**AUTO RALLY**

**FIGHT SMUGGLING AND COUNTERCRAFTING**

12th Nov 2024, Delhi

**AUTO RALLY**



FICCI's Chairman, Anil Kumar, participated in an auto rally event on "Fight Smuggling and Counteracting". The event was held on 12th Nov 2024 in Delhi. The event featured a parade of vehicles and a discussion on the challenges faced by the industry and the government's initiatives to address them. FICCI's Chairman highlighted the need for a level playing field and the importance of infrastructure and digital transformation for the industry's growth.

**NEWSLETTER**

**"11 FACTORS: ENHANCING EFFICIENCY & QUALITY"**

12th Nov 2024, Delhi

**"11 FACTORS: ENHANCING EFFICIENCY & QUALITY"**



FICCI's Chairman, Anil Kumar, participated in a panel discussion on "11 Factors: Enhancing Efficiency & Quality". The panel was held on 12th Nov 2024 in Delhi. The panel members discussed the challenges faced by the industry and the government's initiatives to address them. FICCI's Chairman highlighted the need for a level playing field and the importance of infrastructure and digital transformation for the industry's growth.

**NEWSLETTER**

**TOWARDS BALANCED CIGARETTE TAXATION**

12th Nov 2024, Delhi

**TOWARDS BALANCED CIGARETTE TAXATION**



FICCI's Chairman, Anil Kumar, participated in a panel discussion on "Towards Balanced Cigarette Taxation". The panel was held on 12th Nov 2024 in Delhi. The panel members discussed the challenges faced by the industry and the government's initiatives to address them. FICCI's Chairman highlighted the need for a level playing field and the importance of infrastructure and digital transformation for the industry's growth.

**NEWSLETTER**

**EDIA MEDIA DAY '24**

12th Nov 2024, Delhi

**EDIA MEDIA DAY '24**



FICCI's Chairman, Anil Kumar, participated in the EDIA Media Day '24 event. The event was held on 12th Nov 2024 in Delhi. The event featured a panel discussion on "EDIA Media Day '24" and a discussion on the challenges faced by the industry and the government's initiatives to address them. FICCI's Chairman highlighted the need for a level playing field and the importance of infrastructure and digital transformation for the industry's growth.

**NEWSLETTER**

**WHAT'S NEXT**

12th Nov 2024, Delhi

**WHAT'S NEXT**



FICCI's Chairman, Anil Kumar, participated in a panel discussion on "What's Next". The panel was held on 12th Nov 2024 in Delhi. The panel members discussed the challenges faced by the industry and the government's initiatives to address them. FICCI's Chairman highlighted the need for a level playing field and the importance of infrastructure and digital transformation for the industry's growth.





# SOCIAL MEDIA

# SOCIAL Media



**11th MAM DARE 2025**  
MOVEMENT AGAINST MUGGERS AND SMUGGLERS  
18-19 September 2025 | 18th Floor, Connaught Place  
Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

India already has strong legal frameworks like the Copyright Act, Patent Act, and Trademark Act. The challenge is not the absence of laws, but the effective application and enforcement of these provisions.

**MR. S. S. JAYASINGH**  
Former Judge, High Court of India

Sponsors: euro, Amazon, PUNIM, etc.

**11th MAM DARE 2025**  
MOVEMENT AGAINST MUGGERS AND SMUGGLERS  
18-19 September 2025 | 18th Floor, Connaught Place  
Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

Counterfeit goods may look attractive, but they are extremely harmful in the short, medium, and long term. Consumers need greater awareness to identify and avoid such products, and to understand the risks they pose to health, safety, and the economy.

**RAMESH ABHISHEK**  
Former Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

Sponsors: euro, Amazon, PUNIM, etc.

**5th EDITION**  
**ANTI SMUGGLING DAY, 2026**

**Anil Rajput**  
Chairman, FICCI CASCADE

**Wallocoms Address**

**FEB 11<sup>th</sup> 2026 | WEDNESDAY**  
**VENUE: LE-MERIDIEN, NEW DELHI**

Sponsors: euro, Amazon, PUNIM, etc.

**Buying illicit cigarettes is as if you set a building on fire every day only this time, it's hospitals, schools, and livelihoods that burn**

Sponsors: euro, Amazon, PUNIM, etc.

**11th MAM DARE 2025**  
MOVEMENT AGAINST MUGGERS AND SMUGGLERS  
18-19 September 2025 | 18th Floor, Connaught Place  
Growing Illicit Trade: Destabilising Economic Welfare

**CONFLUENCE OF COUNTRIES**

India	Belgium	France	Spain
Switzerland	USA	Singapore	Denmark

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**You won't even NOTICE IT, until it becomes a PROBLEM you can't ignore**

Sponsors: euro, Amazon, PUNIM, etc.

**Power of STEPPING away from Illicit Trade**

Sponsors: euro, Amazon, PUNIM, etc.

**Capacity Building Programme for Police Officers on Prevention of Counterfeiting and Smuggling**

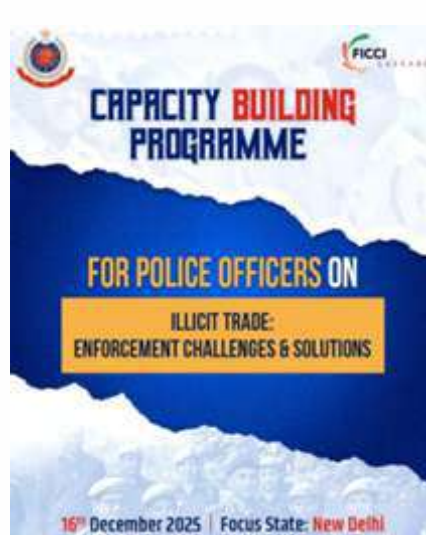
**3<sup>rd</sup> February, Monday**

**Venue: GO's Institute Hall, GRP Camp, Attito Panaji**  
**Focus State: Goa**

Sponsors: euro, Amazon, PUNIM, etc.

**Your purchase may be small, but what it fuels is massive**

Sponsors: euro, Amazon, PUNIM, etc.







# MEDIA COVERAGE

# Media COVERAGE



## GST 2.0 more than a tax reform, focused on ease of living & ease of doing biz, says minister

**NEW DELHI:** GST 2.0 is more than a tax reform—it is about improving the ease of living for households and the ease of doing business for enterprises, said Union Budget Minister, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while addressing FICCI CASCADe MANCRADE 2025 conference on Thursday.

Highlighting the significance brought to be the reform, he said, "From filing GST returns in a year in 2017 to only from today, it shows how government can truly respond to industry's voice. At the same time, we must clearly define the trade and reach technology solutions to ensure you that reconstructions emerging



Union Budget Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, FICCI CASCADe Chairman Anil Kapoor, and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at the FICCI CASCADe MANCRADE 2025 conference.

greater efficiency. GST 2.0 already embodies the vision of 'One Nation, One Tax, At FICCI CASCADe, we have long advocated for rational tax structures to reduce illicit trade. High tax rates create price gaps that fuel smuggling and counterfeiting. GST 2.0 addresses these concerns, and I urge policymakers to continue keeping the structure balanced to discourage illicit markets." The conference also saw the unveiling of 'SREED' a strategic framework against illicit trade, and the release of a FICCI CASCADe-CAR report. Unveiling the journey of GST reforms, which modernised GST 2.0 as a milestone in reshaping India's indirect tax system.

## Illicit Trade Raising Socio-Economic, Security Concerns: Justice Manmohan



Justice Manmohan Singh, Chairman of the National Commission for Consumer Protection (NCCP), said that illicit trade poses a significant threat to the socio-economic and security of the country. He called for a comprehensive approach to tackle the issue, involving government, industry, and consumers.

## Info has strengthened its international enforcement network with multilateral agreements: Mohan Kumar Singh



Mohan Kumar Singh, Chairman of the Information Commission, said that the Commission has strengthened its international enforcement network with multilateral agreements. He highlighted the Commission's commitment to transparency and accountability, and its efforts to ensure that information is accessible and accurate.

## Justice Manmohan: 'अवैध व्यापार अर्थव्यवस्था के लिए खतरा', जस्टिस मनमोहन बोले- देश की सुरक्षा के लिए भी संकट

नया दिल्ली, 19 सितंबर, नई दिल्ली (प्रभास)। जस्टिस मनमोहन सिंह ने कहा कि अवैध व्यापार अर्थव्यवस्था के लिए खतरा है, और देश की सुरक्षा के लिए भी संकट। उन्होंने कहा कि अवैध व्यापार अर्थव्यवस्था को बाधित करता है, और देश की सुरक्षा के लिए भी संकट।



## उत्पादों के दाम घटने से लोगों को होगी बचत त्योहारों में बढ़ेगी बिक्री, मजबूत बनेगी जीडीपी

**नया दिल्ली, 19 सितंबर (आईएनएस)।** देश में उत्पादों के दाम घटने से लोगों को बचत होगी, त्योहारों में बढ़ेगी बिक्री, मजबूत बनेगी जीडीपी।

**संकेत -** उत्पादों के दाम घटने से लोगों को बचत होगी, त्योहारों में बढ़ेगी बिक्री, मजबूत बनेगी जीडीपी।

**विशेष -** उत्पादों के दाम घटने से लोगों को बचत होगी, त्योहारों में बढ़ेगी बिक्री, मजबूत बनेगी जीडीपी।

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## 'India deepens capabilities to curb smuggling'

**New Delhi:** India has significantly enhanced its global enforcement capabilities to curb transnational smuggling networks through 42 Mutual Customs Cooperation Agreements with major trading partners, while 21 more such pacts are under negotiation, CBIC Member Mohan Kumar Singh said Wednesday at the 5th Edition of Anti-Smuggling Day organised by FICCI CASCADe. PTI

## India strengthens international enforcement architecture with 42 MoUs signed, 21 under negotiation: CBIC Member

**NEW DELHI:** India has significantly enhanced its global enforcement capabilities to curb transnational smuggling networks through 42 Mutual Customs Cooperation Agreements with major trading partners, while 21 more such pacts are under negotiation, CBIC Member Mohan Kumar Singh said Wednesday at the 5th Edition of Anti-Smuggling Day organised by FICCI CASCADe.

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## Smuggling poses serious threat to legitimate industries and erodes investor confidence: Ahmedabad Customs Dept. Chief

**AHMEDABAD:** Mr. Pranesh Pathak, Chief Commissioner of Customs, Ahmedabad Zone, while addressing FICCI CASCADe's seminar on 'Illicit Trade in Focus: State-Level Action Against Counterfeiting & Smuggling' said, "As India's economy expands and global trade accelerates, the country has become increasingly attractive to sophisticated smuggling networks. From gold, used at over 7150 crore. Additionally, luxury watches worth Rs. 13 crore were also confiscated. These seizures are a stark reminder of the evolving strategies and boldness of illicit trade networks targeting our economy."

Mr. Neeraj Kumar Badgajar, Additional Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad City, Gujarat, said, "Illicit trade not only fuels criminal networks but also competes with legitimate businesses and erodes government revenues. The disparity between legal and illegal market pricing not only distorts fair competition Police, New Delhi, said, "Counterfeiting and smuggling are not just economic crimes; they are serious threats to national security, public health, and consumer trust. We need coordinated policy reforms, real-time intelligence sharing, and stronger public-private collaboration, as well as raising consumer awareness to stop these traffickers. Such an approach rooted in both pre-

## व्यापार: जीएसटी सुधार से देश में नकली सामानों के व्यापार में कमी आएगी फिक्की कैस्केड



जीएसटी सुधार से देश में नकली सामानों के व्यापार में कमी आएगी फिक्की कैस्केड। उन्होंने कहा कि अवैध व्यापार अर्थव्यवस्था को बाधित करता है, और देश की सुरक्षा के लिए भी संकट।

## GST Reform: FICCI के अनुसार GST 2.0 टैक्स घटाएगा और 41,000 करोड़ रुपये के अवैध तंबाकू पर रोक लगाएगा

**GST 2.0 से वही और अवैध तंबाकू के लिए रोक लगाएगी।** GST 2.0 से वही और अवैध तंबाकू के लिए रोक लगाएगी।

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## UN should declare Feb 11 as 'International Anti-Smuggling Day': Industry expert



Industry expert has called for the UN to declare Feb 11 as 'International Anti-Smuggling Day' to raise awareness against smuggling. He highlighted the Commission's commitment to transparency and accountability, and its efforts to ensure that information is accessible and accurate.





### FICCI CASCADA trains over 60 officials of Delhi Police on illicit trade

Over 60 senior police officials and industry representatives participated in the training session on counterfeiting, smuggling, and other illicit trade.



New Delhi, December 16: FICCI Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeit Goods Empowering the Economy (CASCADA) organised a Capacity Building Programme for Police Officers on 'Illicit Trade and Security Challenges of Industry' at the Leadership Training Centre, Aerodrome Road, Delhi.

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



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 impact 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 also integral tools in ensuring that consumers are not victims of illicit trade."

Counterfeit, smuggled goods harm our health, endanger public health and means economy. Read Story

#### Counterfeit trade is bleeding India's economy and public health, Goa DGP warns

Police and industry officials flag public health risks, revenue losses, and weak enforcement gaps



Panaji (Goa) (India), February 2 (IANS): Goa's Director General of Police, DGA Prasad, has warned that law enforcement agencies must remain vigilant to the deep and widespread prevalence of counterfeit and smuggled goods in India's markets as these illegal activities harm the economy, waste social resources, endanger public health, and ultimately affect the quality of life of citizens.

FICCI-CASCADA (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeit Activities, Empowering the Economy) today organised a Capacity Building Programme for Police Officers on 'Prevention of Counterfeiting and Smuggling' in Panaji, Goa. The five-point chief emphasised his support for the initiative and highlighted the importance of such capacity building programmes in strengthening the competence, readiness, and organisational effectiveness of police personnel by countering illicit trade.

### കളഭകാടത്ത് തടയാൻ സാങ്കേതികവിദ്യ ഉപയോഗപ്പെടുത്തും: മന്ത്രി പി രാജീവ്



കളഭകാട്: കേരളത്തിലെ കളഭകാട് നഗരത്തിൽ നടന്ന 'PROACTIVE APPROACHES TO COMBAT COUNTERFEITING AND SMUGGLING' എന്ന പേരിൽ ഒരു സെമിനാർ. മന്ത്രി പി രാജീവ് ഉദ്ദേശിച്ചു. കേരളത്തിലെ കളഭകാട് നഗരത്തിൽ നടന്ന 'PROACTIVE APPROACHES TO COMBAT COUNTERFEITING AND SMUGGLING' എന്ന പേരിൽ ഒരു സെമിനാർ. മന്ത്രി പി രാജീവ് ഉദ്ദേശിച്ചു.

### Deep, powder, coffee, liquor, biscuits, glass, oil, iron, copper are reported Q1 2023



### Rising smuggling threatens Indian economy, officials warn

India's economic growth is attracting sophisticated smuggling networks, posing serious threats to national security, public health, and legitimate businesses, stated Prakash Fathak, Chief Commissioner of Customs, Ahmednagar Zone, at a FICCI CASCADA seminar.

Fathak highlighted a surge in illicit movement of goods like gold, liquor, narcotics, and counterfeit products. He cited a recent Godhra Customs seizure of over 8 million counterfeit cigarettes and psychotropic substances worth over ₹300 crore, along with ₹2 crore in luxury watches, as evidence of evolving illicit trade strategies.

Indian Customs has intensified its enforcement operations across all zones, centred on curbing illicit trade. Neeraj Kumar Budgaje, Additional Commissioner of Police, Ahmednagar City, stressed that illicit trade fuels criminal networks and compromises public safety. He urged intelligence-led policing, inter-agency collaboration, and public awareness.

P.C. Jha, Advisor, FICCI CASCADA and former CBC Chairman, noted that high indirect taxes and regulatory gaps drive smuggling, particularly for tobacco, liquor, and gold. This undermines legitimate businesses, reduces government revenue, and exposes citizens to harmful goods. He called for balanced tax policies, robust enforcement, and better inter-agency coordination.

### ഇറക്കുമതി കളഭകാട് ക്രിയോഗ് ചാമ്പ് നഗർ ജനമ് മിശ്റു കൂറ്റു ഉൻ വേക്രകാട്രിനി വിഖാസ ഗവവവർ ഉ: അമവവവ വേക്രകാട്രിനി വിഖാസ ഗവവവർ ഉ:



ഇറക്കുമതി കളഭകാട് ക്രിയോഗ് ചാമ്പ് നഗർ ജനമ് മിശ്റു കൂറ്റു ഉൻ വേക്രകാട്രിനി വിഖാസ ഗവവവർ ഉ: അമവവവ വേക്രകാട്രിനി വിഖാസ ഗവവവർ ഉ:

### अंतरराष्ट्रीय अपराध की रोकथाम में पुलिस की भूमिका को सुदृढ़ बनाना - करण गोयल आइपीएस



अंतरराष्ट्रीय अपराध की रोकथाम में पुलिस की भूमिका को सुदृढ़ बनाना - करण गोयल आइपीएस



# Media COVERAGE



## Value of counterfeit & pirated goods crosses USD 2.81 trillion in year 2022: FICCI



Thiruvananthapuram, May 21 (UND) The value of counterfeit and pirated goods has crossed USD 2.81 trillion in year 2022 impacting commerce and industry, governments, economies and the

society at large, according to Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

Counterfeiting and smuggling activities are highly pervasive across countries and sectors, representing a multi-billion-dollar industry globally that continues to grow and impact

economies.

To fight against this social evil, the FICCI took an initiative in the form of 'Committee against Smuggling, Counterfeiting and Piracy Destroying the Economy' (CASCADE). FICCI-CASCADE over the years has been successful in stirring an active debate on the topic across various states in India.

FICCI-CASCADE, as a part of its objective to increase awareness about the growing menace of smuggling, counterfeiting and pirated goods, has been organizing seminars across various states

## വ്യാജ ഉത്പന്ന വിപണനത്തിന് ഇ-കൊമേഴ്സ് മറയാക്കുന്നു - വികി

തടസ്സം, തടസ്സപ്പെടുത്തലുകൾ തടയുന്നതിനായി വികി കമ്മ്യൂണിക്കേഷൻ പ്രൈവറ്റ് ലിമിറ്റഡ് (വികി) ഇ-കൊമേഴ്സ് മറയാക്കുന്നതിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ആശങ്കയോടെ വ്യാജ ഉത്പന്ന വിപണനത്തിന് ഇ-കൊമേഴ്സ് മറയാക്കുന്നു. വികി കമ്മ്യൂണിക്കേഷൻ പ്രൈവറ്റ് ലിമിറ്റഡ് (വികി) ഇ-കൊമേഴ്സ് മറയാക്കുന്നതിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ആശങ്കയോടെ വ്യാജ ഉത്പന്ന വിപണനത്തിന് ഇ-കൊമേഴ്സ് മറയാക്കുന്നു. വികി കമ്മ്യൂണിക്കേഷൻ പ്രൈവറ്റ് ലിമിറ്റഡ് (വികി) ഇ-കൊമേഴ്സ് മറയാക്കുന്നതിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ആശങ്കയോടെ വ്യാജ ഉത്പന്ന വിപണനത്തിന് ഇ-കൊമേഴ്സ് മറയാക്കുന്നു.

## विभिन्न देशों के साथ सीमा शुल्क समझौतों से तस्करी रोकने की क्षमता बढ़ी: सीबीआई सदस्य



വികി കമ്മ്യൂണിക്കേഷൻ പ്രൈവറ്റ് ലിമിറ്റഡ് (വികി) ഇ-കൊമേഴ്സ് മറയാക്കുന്നതിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ആശങ്കയോടെ വ്യാജ ഉത്പന്ന വിപണനത്തിന് ഇ-കൊമേഴ്സ് മറയാക്കുന്നു. വികി കമ്മ്യൂണിക്കേഷൻ പ്രൈവറ്റ് ലിമിറ്റഡ് (വികി) ഇ-കൊമേഴ്സ് മറയാക്കുന്നതിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ആശങ്കയോടെ വ്യാജ ഉത്പന്ന വിപണനത്തിന് ഇ-കൊമേഴ്സ് മറയാക്കുന്നു.

## संयुक्त राष्ट्र 11 फरवरी को 'इंटरनेशनल एंटी स्मगलिंग डे' घोषित करे: फिक्की कैस्केड के चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत

गुवाहाटी 11 फरवरी को 'इंटरनेशनल एंटी स्मगलिंग डे' घोषित करे। फिक्की कैस्केड के चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत



नई दिल्ली, 11 फरवरी (आईएनएस) - संयुक्त राष्ट्र 11 फरवरी को 'इंटरनेशनल एंटी स्मगलिंग डे' घोषित करे। फिक्की कैस्केड के चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत

## GST Reforms To Reduce Counterfeit Goods Trade: FICCI CASCADE Chairman

For businesses, especially MSMEs, GST 2.0 introduces rationalised rates that address distortions caused by the inverted duty structure. Sectors critical for rural employment and manufacturing—such as tractors, farm machinery, fertilisers, textiles, handicrafts, and construction inputs—are now subject to lower, more rational rates, the report said.



GST 2.0: जीएसटी कटौती से आम भारतीय को राहत, खत्म बड़ेनी-कारोबार घमसेना, ज्योतों पर खिलाई अर्थव्यवस्था

## GST reforms, rate cut kick in from today

From daily essentials to cars and electronics get cheaper

From daily essentials to cars and electronics get cheaper

## P. Rajeev calls for a united front against illicit trade



Learn, understand, and use whatever it takes to have an effective and efficient system of law enforcement to address the global threat of illicit trade.

## विभिन्न देशों के साथ सीमा शुल्क समझौतों से तस्करी रोकने की क्षमता बढ़ी: सीबीआईसी सदस्य



नई दिल्ली, 11 फरवरी (आईएनएस) - संयुक्त राष्ट्र 11 फरवरी को 'इंटरनेशनल एंटी स्मगलिंग डे' घोषित करे। फिक्की कैस्केड के चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत

## Illicit trade raising socio-economic security concerns: Justice Manmohan

Illicit trade raising socio-economic security concerns: Justice Manmohan

INDIA NEWS

# Event Coverage

# Media COVERAGE

## जीएसटी 2.0 से कीमतों में अंतर कम होगा, तस्करी एवं जालसाजी पर लगेगी लगाम

नई दिल्ली, (एनएसएनए) : जीएसटी 2.0 के तहत जीएसटी की दरों में 50% तक की कमी आएगी, जो कि जीएसटी 1.0 से 50% तक की कमी है। यह कमी जीएसटी 2.0 के तहत की जाएगी, जो कि जीएसटी 1.0 से 50% तक की कमी है। यह कमी जीएसटी 2.0 के तहत की जाएगी, जो कि जीएसटी 1.0 से 50% तक की कमी है।



## सरकार अवैध व्यापार को रोकने के लिए फिककी केस्कैड की सिफारिशों पर काम करेगी: अर्जुन राम मेघवाल

नई दिल्ली, (एनएसएनए) : अर्जुन राम मेघवाल ने कहा कि सरकार अवैध व्यापार को रोकने के लिए फिककी केस्कैड की सिफारिशों पर काम करेगी। उन्होंने कहा कि यह कदम अवैध व्यापार को रोकने के लिए आवश्यक है।

## Maggi, Coffee, Ghee, Butter: Essentials Get Cheaper From Today As GST 2.0 Begins

The step comes ahead of the festive season, when demand typically spikes, and is expected to revive consumption after months of subdued growth.

By ANI Live Business | Updated at: 22 Sep 2025 10:17 PM (IST)



## Lower GST Rates to Ease Tax Burdens, Empower MSMEs, and Accelerate Formalisation: Reports

## New GST rates HIGHLIGHTS: 90% of GST benefits will flow to end customers, govt. estimates

New GST rates HIGHLIGHTS: India's GST framework is set for its biggest overhaul since 2017, with a new two-slab system rolling out from September 22. Most goods and services will fall under 5% or 18%, while luxury and sin goods face higher rates. The move is aimed at easing compliance and bringing simplicity to the indirect tax regime.

## From shampoos to biscuits, 375 items get cheaper under GST 2.0



## More than 75% of rural monthly expenditure will face nil or 5% rate under GST 2.0: FICCI

The report noted that this translates was a significant improvement over the current GST rate structure.

By ANI Live Business | Updated at: 22 Sep 2025 10:17 PM (IST)



## GST 2.0 rollout: Cheaper essentials hit shelves early; FMCG, e-commerce firms pass on rate cuts

TOI Business Desk | TIMESOFINDIA.COM | Updated: Sep 20, 2025, 20:14 IST

Companies are proactively reducing prices on daily essentials as the new, lower GST rates take effect. Major FMCG players like P&G and Hindustan Unilever have already begun dispatching products with revised price tags, absorbing the tax gap to boost...



## GST 2.0 reform govt response to industry's voice: Meghwal

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, SEPT. 18

Union minister of state for law and justice Arjun Ram Meghwal on Thursday said that GST 2.0 taxation reform is government's response to the industry's demand. "It is not just about taxation, it is about making life easier for households and businesses," Mr Meghwal said.

## Lower GST rates to ease tax burdens, empower MSMEs, and accelerate formalisation: Report

NEW DELHI: (Sep 19) The government's announcement of GST 2.0 will not only ease tax burden on households, empower MSMEs, and accelerate formalisation, but also bring India closer to the dream of a single tax regime, a report said.

The GST overhaul will nearly triple the share of items taxed at 5 per cent, rising from 54 consumption categories to 149 categories under GST 2.0. FICCI's Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCAD E) said in a report:

For rural households, the share of exempt and merit goods in their consumption basket is expected to rise sharply from 56.3 per cent to 73.5 per cent, while for urban households, this share is likely to increase from 50.5 per cent to 66.2 per cent, it said.

## India Commits to Combat Illegal Trade: Arjun Ram Meghwal

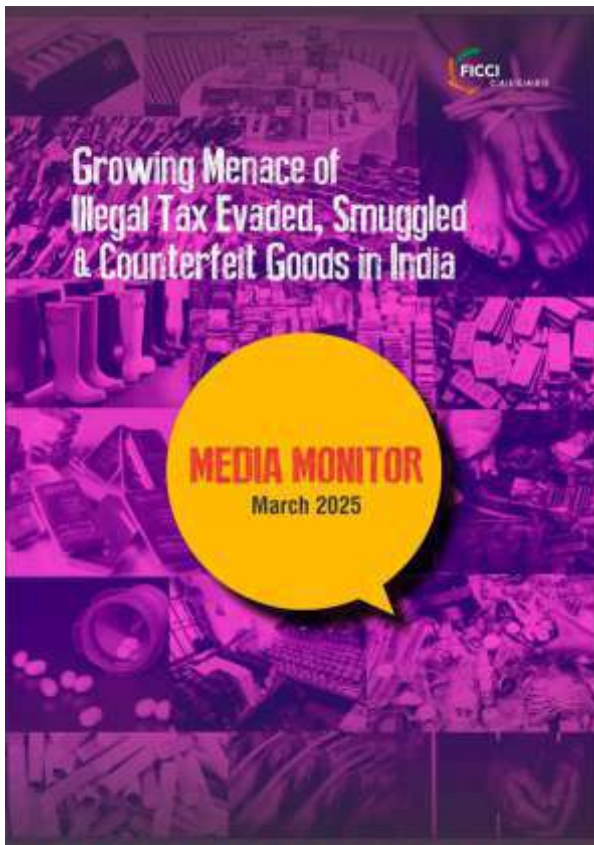
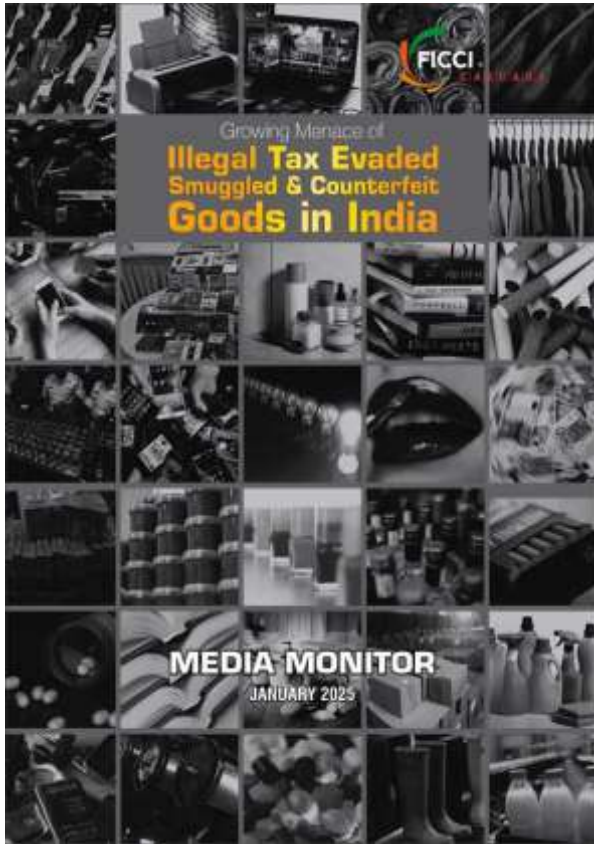


Union Minister of State for Law and Justice, Arjun Ram Meghwal, has said that India is committed to protecting its citizens against illegal and counterfeit trade.

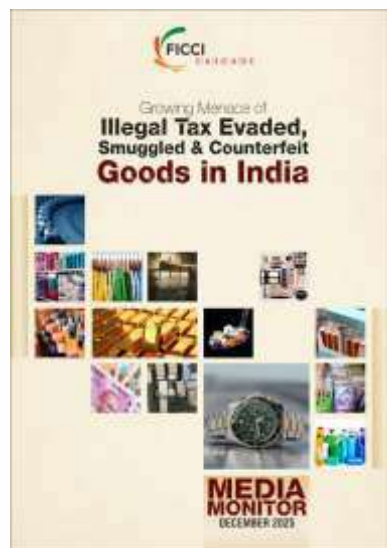
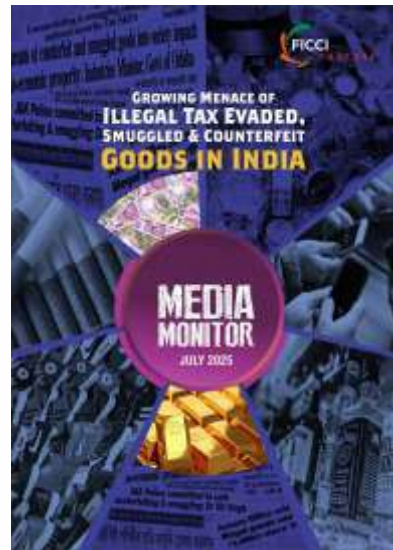




# MEDIA MONITORS



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Established in 1927, FICCI is the largest and oldest apex business organisation in India. Its history is closely interwoven with India's struggle for independence, its industrialization, and its emergence as one of the most rapidly growing global economies.

A non-government, not-for-profit organisation, FICCI is the voice of India's business and industry. From influencing policy to encouraging debate, engaging with policy makers and civil society, FICCI articulates the views and concerns of industry. It serves its members from the Indian private and public corporate sectors and multinational companies, drawing its strength from diverse regional chambers of commerce and industry across states, reaching out to over 2,50,000 companies.

FICCI provides a platform for networking and consensus building within and across sectors and is the first port of call for Indian industry, policy makers and the international business community.

[www.ficci.in](http://www.ficci.in)



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 at FICCI Federation House, New Delhi.

FICCI Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE)

[www.ficcicascade.in](http://www.ficcicascade.in)