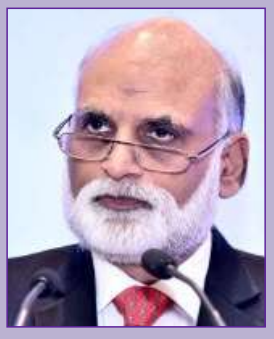
NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2026

FICCI CASCADE

CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Anil Rajput
Chairman, FICCI CASCADE

Illicit trade is no longer merely a law-enforcement issue; it is a challenge to India's economic security, consumer safety and national development. Every counterfeit product sold and every smuggled consignment that enters our markets weakens legitimate enterprise, erodes public trust and deprives the nation of valuable resources.

The nature of illicit trade is evolving rapidly. Criminal networks increasingly exploit technology, digital commerce, global supply chains and sophisticated financial systems. Combating these threats requires an equally dynamic response-one that combines stronger enforcement, informed consumers, responsible industry practices and effective policy support.

Recognising that the challenge of illicit trade demands a comprehensive and collaborative response, FICCI CASCADE continues to pursue a multi-dimensional strategy. Our efforts are anchored in creating greater public awareness, empowering enforcement agencies, engaging the youth, leveraging digital platforms and advancing knowledge to build a stronger ecosystem that protects legitimate trade and promotes responsible commerce.

Building Consumer Awareness - Consumer awareness continues to remain at the heart of our mission

The observance of the 5th Anti-Smuggling Day on 11th February 2026 marked another important milestone in FICCI CASCADE's nationwide movement to combat smuggling and illicit trade. The occasion brought together policymakers, government institutions, enforcement agencies, diplomatic missions, industry representatives and other stakeholders, reaffirming the shared resolve to strengthen enforcement, deepen inter-agency collaboration and enhance public awareness in addressing the growing menace of smuggling.

Our seminar on "Protecting Consumers: Addressing the Threat of Smuggling and Counterfeiting" in New Delhi reinforced the urgent need to address the far-reaching consequences of illicit trade on public health, consumer safety and national welfare. The active participation of senior leaders from government, Parliament, enforcement agencies and industry reaffirmed the national importance of combating illicit trade. Our outreach efforts continued with another seminar in Hyderabad, bringing together key stakeholders to deliberate on emerging trends and collaborative strategies to curb illicit trade, further reinforcing the importance of coordinated institutional action.

Engaging Youth

As part of Anti-Smuggling Day, FICCI CASCADE also organised a nationwide Digital Art Competition on the theme "Stand Against Smuggling." The enthusiastic participation of over 10,000 students gives us confidence that the next generation recognises integrity, ethical consumption and responsible citizenship as essential pillars of India's future.

Strengthening Enforcement

Complementing these efforts, our capacity-building programmes in Goa, Punjab and Delhi equipped more than 600 enforcement officers across various ranks-including ACPs, DSPs, DCPs, SIs and ASIs-with practical knowledge and investigative insights to further strengthen enforcement against smuggling and counterfeiting.

Leveraging Digital Platforms

Over the past few months, FICCI CASCADE has expanded its outreach through digital platforms. Our X Space sessions have emerged as meaningful forums for dialogue and knowledge-sharing, bringing together policymakers, enforcement agencies, industry leaders, experts and citizens. With participation from several thousand listeners, these conversations have broadened awareness, encouraged informed discourse and strengthened public engagement in the fight against illicit trade.

Knowledge Leadership

FICCI CASCADE's Monthly Media Monitor continues to provide valuable insights into major seizures of smuggled, counterfeit and tax-evaded goods. By tracking evolving enforcement trends and recognising the commendable efforts of officers whose vigilance disrupts illicit networks, the publication serves as an important knowledge resource in strengthening the collective fight against illicit trade.

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Every initiative undertaken by FICCI CASCADE seeks to strengthen the ecosystem of legitimate trade and reinforce public confidence in lawful enterprise. Looking ahead, FICCI CASCADE will continue to strengthen partnerships with government, industry, academia, technology experts and civil society. We will deepen our focus on emerging challenges such as digital marketplaces, cross-border e-commerce, consumer education and capacity building, ensuring that India's response remains proactive, collaborative and future-ready.

I am of the firm view that the fight against illicit trade cannot be won by enforcement agencies alone. It demands informed consumers, responsible businesses and active citizens. Together, we can build an economy founded on integrity, innovation and trust. As India advances towards becoming a developed nation, protecting legitimate trade is not simply an economic necessity-it is fundamental to realising the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Jai Hind

Anil Rajput

Chairman

FICCI CASCADE

NEWS FLASH

ANI
South Asia's Leading Multimedia News Agency



DRI seizes 71 lakh smuggled cigarettes worth Rs 14 crore in North East

ANI | Updated: Jun 12, 2026 17:30 IST | World News

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New Delhi [India], June 12 (ANI): In a major crackdown on cigarette smuggling, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) seized around 71 lakh foreign-origin cigarettes worth nearly Rs 14 crore in the North Eastern Region, as per a statement by the Ministry of Finance.

According to the release, DRI had been carrying out multiple coordinated operations in the region. The operations, conducted since May 2026, led to the arrest of four individuals involved in the illegal trade. Furthermore, the agency worked closely with local enforcement authorities to track the movement of contraband and prevent illegal sales in the region.

https://www.aninews.in/news/business/dri-seizes-71-lakh-smuggled-cigar ettes-worth-rs-14-crore-in-north-east20260612173024/

The Tribune

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 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 120 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.



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

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.

RECENT INITIATIVES





FICCI 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 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 hat 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.



'India deepens int'l enforcement network with multilateral MoUs to curb smuggling'

As many as 42 mutual customs cooperation agreements signed, 21 under negotiation

MPOST BUREAU

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 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, approximately 120 kilograms of cocaine, around 50 kilograms of heroin, and close to 3,700 kilograms of hydroponic cannabis at airports," he said.

Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has also detected over 100 wildlife trafficking cases, along with seizures involving dual-use goods, arms, ammunition, drones and fake Indian currency notes, he said.

He stressed 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.



CLOSER LOOK

- CBIC member Mohan Kumar Singh said that smuggling has evolved into an organised, technology-driven economic crime with direct implications for national security and economic stability
- He was addressing the 5th Edition of Anti-Smuggling Day organised by FICCI CASCADE

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

Highlighting the importance of collective international action, FICCI CASCADE chairman Anil Rajput said, "Combating smuggling cannot be the responsibility of one institution or one country alone. Strong partnerships among compliant nations are essential to promote legal trade, share intelligence, and decisively punish illicit operators."

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, Rajput added.

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

STATESMAN 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 120 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 container scanning 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 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 strengthened inter'l enforcement architecture with 42 MoUs signed, 21 under negotiation: CBIC Member



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.

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



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 organized 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 150 million illicit cigarettes, 20 tons of red sanders, 120 kilograms of cocaine, and 350 kilograms of amphetamines. Additionally, numerous seizures related to wildlife smuggling and dual-use goods have also been made.

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





India deepens global enforcement capabilities to curb smuggling, 21 more pacts in works: CBIC member

New Delhi, Feb 11 (PTI) 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 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, approximately 120 kilograms of cocaine, around 50 kilograms of heroin, and close to 3,700 kilograms of hydroponic cannabis at airports," he said.

Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has also detected over 100 wildlife trafficking cases, along with seizures involving dual-use goods, arms, ammunition, drones and fake Indian currency notes, he said.

He stressed 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.

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



Senior enforcement officials and international experts on Tuesday called for intelligence-led, globally coordinated action to dismantle increasingly sophisticated smuggling networks, as India expanded its customs cooperation framework and stepped up seizures across borders.

सीमा शुल्क करार से तस्करी पर अंकुश बढ़ा : सीबीआईसी

नई दिल्ली। केंद्रीय अप्रत्यक्ष कर और सीमा शुल्क बोर्ड (सीबीआईसी) के सदस्य मोहन कुमार सिंह ने बुधवार को कहा कि भारत ने प्रमुख व्यापारिक साझेदारों के साथ 42 पारस्परिक सीमा शुल्क सहयोग समझौतों के माध्यम से अंतरराष्ट्रीय तस्करी नेटवर्क पर अंकुश लगाने के लिए अपनी वैश्विक प्रवर्तन क्षमता को काफी मजबूत किया है। इसके अलावा 21 और ऐसे समझौतों पर बातचीत जारी है। सिंह ने उद्योग मंडल फिक्की- कैस्केड द्वारा आयोजित तस्करी निरोधक दिवस के पांचवें संस्करण को संबोधित करते हुए यह बात कही। सामूहिक अंतरराष्ट्रीय कार्रवाई का जिक्र करते हुए फिक्की कैस्केड के चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत ने कहा, तस्करी से लड़ना किसी एक संस्था या एक देश की जिम्मेदारी नहीं हो सकती।



DIGITAL ART COMPETITION
STAND AGAINST SMUGGLING

21st 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	SECOND POSITION
ABHISHEK	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.





DIGITAL ART WINNERS 2026





1st Position
Abhishek



2nd Position **Anish Minj**



3rd Position **Muaigathinbou Ch Niumai**

CONSOLATION PRIZE WINNER



Devan Bidhan



Bhumika Singh

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

2nd February 2026 | GO's Institute Hall, GRP Camp, Altinho Panaji



FICCI 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.



CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR POLICE OFFICERS ON

STRENGTHENING ENFORCEMENT AGAINST ILLICIT TRADE AND ECONOMIC OFFENCES

27th February 2026 | Chanakyapuri, New Delhi



FICCI'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 coordination 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 Imtiyaz 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.



SEMINAR ON

PROTECTING CONSUMERS: ADDRESSING THE THREAT OF SMUGGLING AND COUNTERFEITING

8th April 2026 | FICCI, New Delhi





Illicit trade is no longer a fringe concern, it is a systemic threat to consumer safety, public health, and economic integrity. Recognising the urgency of collective action, FICCI CASCADE organised a seminar titled **"Protecting Consumers: Addressing the Threat of Smuggling and Counterfeiting"** on Wednesday, 8th April 2026 at FICCI, Federation House, New Delhi, bringing together senior policymakers, judicial leaders, enforcement officials, industry representatives, and consumer organisations to deliberate on effective strategies to combat the growing menace of counterfeiting and smuggling.

Inaugural Session: Advancing Consumer Protection through Stronger Policy and Institutional Frameworks

Shri Pralhad Joshi, Hon'ble Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution and Minister of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India, delivered a special video address during the programme. In his address, the Minister described illicit trade as a "shadow economy" that poses serious challenges to consumer welfare, businesses, and the nation's economy.

The Hon'ble Minister stated that smuggling and counterfeiting expose consumers to unsafe, substandard, and even toxic products, undermine honest businesses, and erode government revenues that could otherwise be invested in public welfare and infrastructure. Emphasising that the objective is not merely consumer protection but consumer prosperity, he highlighted initiatives such as the Central Consumer Protection Authority, the National Consumer Helpline, and the Jago Grahak Jago campaign as key pillars in empowering citizens.

Calling for a broader coalition to combat illicit trade, the





Hon'ble Minister underscored that when a product is fake, it represents a betrayal of consumer trust. He stressed that addressing this challenge requires shared responsibility and collective action from the government, industry, and society at large.

Smt. Nidhi Khare, Secretary, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India, noted that consumer protection has evolved from awareness-building initiatives to a technology-enabled ecosystem. Highlighting significant improvements in grievance redressal mechanisms, the Secretary stated that resolution timelines have been reduced from 63 days to around 21 days, and in some online cases, to as little as 72 hours.

Speaking on the role of digital platforms, Ms. Khare observed that while e-commerce platforms operate at a vast scale and require continuous regulatory oversight, they are increasingly taking proactive measures to curb the sale of counterfeit products. Emphasising the need for a comprehensive and collaborative response, Ms. Khare underscored the importance of strengthening quality standards, supporting MSMEs, enhancing platform accountability, and reinforcing enforcement efforts across both digital and physical marketplaces.



Mr. Anil Rajput, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE, while delivering the welcome address, stated that advancing consumer protection today requires a decisive shift from a reactive approach to a preventive, structured and forward-looking system. Emphasising the government of India's significant steps through the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, the establishment of the Central Consumer Protection Authority, and initiatives like 'Jago Grahak Jago', Mr. Rajput underscored that the evolving nature of illicit trade demands stronger implementation and deeper institutional coordination. Better intelligence-sharing across agencies, stronger enforcement mechanisms, and greater use of technology are needed to detect and prevent violations. A whole-of-society approach bringing together government, industry and consumers is essential to effectively combat smuggling and counterfeiting.

Mr. P C Jha, Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs and Advisor, FICCI CASCADE, provided a comprehensive enforcement and governance perspective, stressing that consumer protection must be seen as an integral pillar of economic policy. Mr. Jha concluded that dismantling the financial networks behind profit-driven crimes such as smuggling and counterfeiting is critical to effectively combating these activities, rather than merely intercepting consignments.

Panel Discussion: Empowering the Power of Consumers in the Fight Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting

Mr. Hem Kumar Pande, Former Secretary, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India, and Think Tank Member, FICCI CASCADE highlighted that consumer empowerment is rooted in fundamental rights such as safety, information, choice, and grievance redressal. He also emphasized that consumers must exercise responsibility through awareness, ethical conduct, and informed decision-making.

Dr. Ashwani Mahajan, National Co-Convener, Swadeshi Jagran Manch, noted that strong economic measures can significantly contribute to curbing illegal and terror-linked activities. He stressed the need to strengthen and modernise Customs infrastructure to effectively combat smuggling and counterfeiting.

Prof. Bejon Kumar Misra, Founder, Consumer Online Foundation, underscored the importance of consumer awareness, quality assurance, and stronger policy interventions in tackling illicit trade. He emphasized that consumer protection requires a balanced approach involving enforcement, awareness, and consumer participation.

Ms. Pushpa Girimaji, Author, Columnist, and Consumer Rights & Safety Specialist, highlighted the serious health and safety risks posed by counterfeit and smuggled products. She emphasized leveraging digital platforms and social media to create greater consumer awareness, particularly among the youth.

Dr. Anant Sharma, National Chairman, Consumer Federation of India, identified lack of awareness, price sensitivity, and limited availability of genuine products as key drivers of counterfeit consumption. He advocated product innovation, fair pricing, and balanced taxation to reduce demand for illicit goods.

Ms. Anindita Mehta, CEO, Consumer Education and Research Centre (CERC), and Vice President, Consumers, encouraged consumers to verify the price, quality, and source of products before purchase. She emphasized that awareness and education remain the most effective tools for reducing demand for counterfeit and smuggled goods.

Prof. Deepak Gupta, Founder and Chief Research & Innovation Officer, Checko.ai, and Retired Professor, IIT Kanpur, highlighted the growing importance of technology-driven product authentication systems in consumer protection. He noted India's potential to emerge as a global leader in anti-counterfeiting innovations.

Interactive Session: Judicial Power & Policy: Advancing Consumer Protection Through Stronger Robust Measures Against Illicit Trade

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Manmohan Sarin, Former Lokayukta, NCT of Delhi, Former Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir, Former Judge, High Court of Delhi and Think Tank Member, FICCI CASCADE, emphasized the importance of instilling awareness, ethics, and responsible consumer behaviour among young people. He observed that educating the younger generation is critical to effectively combating illicit trade.





Hon'ble Ms. Justice Sangita Dhingra Sehgal, President, Delhi State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, stated that informed consumers serve as the first line of defence against illicit trade, while an active judiciary ensures effective enforcement. She stressed the need for empowered citizens, responsive institutions, and strong legal frameworks.

Mr. K.P. Sunder Rao, Advocate, highlighted the consumer-friendly provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, and the increasing accessibility of consumer courts. He emphasized the importance of public awareness in ensuring effective utilisation of consumer rights and remedies.

Panel Discussion: Accelerating Action Against Illicit Trade Identify, Analyse and Respond for Stronger Consumer Protection

Mr. Anil Sinha, Former Director, Central Bureau of Investigation and Think Tank Member, FICCI CASCADE, observed that counterfeiting and smuggling pose serious threats not only to the economy but also to public health and safety. He highlighted the importance of awareness initiatives in building an informed and vigilant consumer base.

Ms. Padma Jaiswal, IAS, Secretary to the Government of NCT Delhi (Administrative Reforms), emphasized the need for strong inter-agency coordination and preventive measures across supply chains to combat illicit trade. She also stressed the importance of integrating small and medium enterprises into the formal economy.

Mr. Devesh Chandra Srivastava, IPS, Special Commissioner of Police Crime, Delhi Police, advocated stronger legal deterrents and enhanced collaboration between industry and enforcement agencies. He highlighted the role of actionable intelligence and timely complaints in dismantling illicit trade networks.

Mr. Dheeraj Rastogi, Principal Commissioner of Customs, ACC (Import), New Delhi stressed the importance of trademark registration and active cooperation between brand owners and Customs authorities. He also highlighted the potential of artificial intelligence and machine learning in strengthening customs enforcement.

Colonel Archit Goswami, SM, Assam Rifles, underscored the significance of community engagement and local participation in combating smuggling. He noted that human intelligence and trusted local networks remain critical tools in identifying and disrupting illicit trade routes.

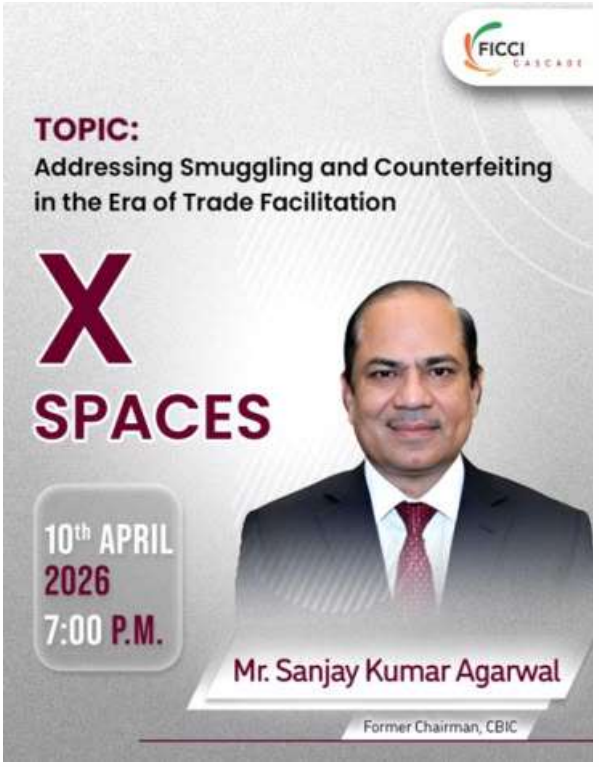
The seminar highlighted that combating smuggling and counterfeiting requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach involving consumer awareness, judicial effectiveness, regulatory strength, and technology-driven enforcement. A key takeaway across sessions was the need to move beyond fragmented interventions towards a cohesive, ecosystem-based response involving government, industry, and consumers. The discussions reinforced that empowering consumers remains central to addressing illicit trade, while collaboration and innovation will be critical in building a safer and more transparent marketplace.

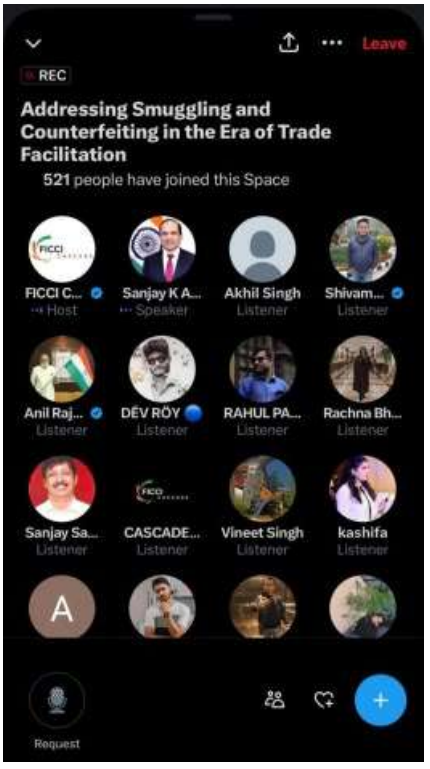
TWITTER PODCAST ON

Addressing Smuggling and Counterfeiting in the Era of Trade Facilitation

with Mr. Sanjay Kumar Agarwal, Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)

10th April 2026





FICCI CASCADE hosted a Twitter Spaces session featuring **Mr. Sanjay Kumar Agarwal**, Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), offering valuable insights into the evolving landscape of customs enforcement and trade facilitation in India.

During the discussion, Mr. Agarwal highlighted the vast scale at which Indian Customs operates, managing nearly 50,000 cargo entries and 1,25,000 courier shipments each day. To efficiently handle this volume while preventing port congestion and reducing business costs, the department leverages a highly automated Risk Management System (RMS) powered by Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. This advanced system enables the seamless clearance of around 85% of legitimate trade, while selectively flagging high-risk consignments for closer scrutiny.

The discussion also underscored how high tax structures often act as a key driver of illicit trade. Commodities such as areca nuts, which attract import duties of up to 100%, and cigarettes, which are subject to steep domestic taxes, frequently become targets for smugglers seeking higher profit margins. Mr. Agarwal noted that illicit cigarettes account for an estimated 26% to 33% of the total market in India, positioning the country among the largest markets for illicit tobacco globally. The challenge is further intensified by the growing nexus between smuggling and organised crime networks, which employ sophisticated mechanisms, including money laundering and cryptocurrencies, to finance illegal activities and undermine regulatory frameworks.

Mr. Agarwal emphasized that India has undertaken several key policy reforms, most notably the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST). The GST Network (GSTN) serves as an integrated data platform, linking cross-border transaction data from Customs with domestic supply chain information. This integration enables tax authorities to deploy advanced analytics to identify revenue leakages and detect fraudulent transactions more effectively. In addition, India is progressively adopting digital traceability measures, such as WHO-aligned track-and-trace systems, to enable real-time monitoring of supply chains and curb the infiltration of counterfeit and illicit goods into the formal market.

Mr. Agarwal mentioned that dismantling illicit trade requires a deeply collaborative framework involving multiple stakeholders. This includes not only inter-agency cooperation between enforcement agencies but also the active participation of the private sector. FICCI CASCADE plays a vital role in this ecosystem by fostering public awareness and steering national debates on the socio-economic hazards of smuggling and counterfeiting.



RECENT INITIATIVES

INTERACTIVE SESSION ON

COMBATING ILLICIT TRADE: STRENGTHENING ENFORCEMENT AND POLICY RESPONSES

25th April 2026 | ITC Grand Goa



An Interactive Session on "Combating Illicit Trade: Strengthening Enforcement and Policy Responses" was organised by FICCI CASCADE on 25th April 2026 in Goa. The session aimed to deliberate on the growing scale of illicit trade in India, assess its multifaceted impact on the economy and society, and explore robust enforcement mechanisms and policy interventions to address this challenge.

During the session, **Mr. Sidhartha Gautam**, Partner and Lead Auto & IM Sector, Risk Advisory KPMG, delivered a presentation on the upcoming study, "Assessing the Impact of Illicit Trade," which is scheduled to be released during MASCRADE in September 2026. The study covers eight sectors, namely Tobacco and Cigarettes; Alcohol and IMFL; Pharmaceuticals; Agrochemicals and Pesticides; FMCG and Packaged Foods; Digital Piracy and IP Theft; Petroleum and Fuel Adulteration; and Luxury Goods and Apparel.

The study will provide a comprehensive assessment of the scale and impact of illicit trade across these sectors and evaluate its adverse implications for the Indian economy. It will estimate revenue losses to the government, analyse broader economic and social consequences, and examine sector-wise patterns of illicit trade. The report will further identify structural and regulatory gaps, review prevailing enforcement trends, and highlight operational challenges faced by enforcement agencies. In addition, it will examine concerns relating to consumer safety, public health, and environmental risks arising from illicit trade, while offering actionable recommendations to strengthen policy frameworks, enhance inter-agency coordination, and leverage technology-driven enforcement solutions.

In his welcome address, **Mr. Anil Rajput**, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE stated that Illicit trade is not a new phenomenon, it has persisted for decades, driven by antisocial elements and arbitrage opportunities that can undermine a nation's social and economic fabric if left unchecked. He observed that the issue has grown significantly in both scale and complexity, and its rapid expansion today is a matter of serious concern. He recalled that when FICCI CASCADE was established in 2011, illicit trade received limited attention. However, with India's rapid economic growth, increasing purchasing power, and rising demand for branded goods, the environment has become increasingly vulnerable to smuggling and counterfeiting activities.

Referring to estimates by Global Financial Integrity, he noted that illicit trade is now valued at nearly US$ 3 trillion globally. In India, the size of illicit trade across key sectors has reportedly increased from around Rs. 1 lakh crore to







nearly Rs. 8 lakh crore over the past decade. Despite sustained enforcement efforts, only about 3% of illicit goods are intercepted, underscoring the magnitude of the challenge. He emphasised that stronger policy interventions, robust enforcement, and collaborative action are essential to effectively curb illicit trade.

Mr. P. C. Jha, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Chairman of Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, shared insights on "Understanding the Expanding Landscape of Illicit Trade: Economic and Social Implications." He observed that illicit trade poses a significant threat to India's fiscal framework by depriving the government of critical revenues essential for nation-building. He highlighted that smuggling and counterfeiting distort fair market competition, erode the tax base, and impede the growth of the formal economy. Stressing India's aspiration of becoming a US$ 5 trillion economy, he emphasised the urgent need to strengthen compliance mechanisms, reinforce enforcement systems, and effectively address revenue leakages.

Following the presentation, a focused dialogue on "Policy, Enforcement and Industry Perspectives on Tackling Smuggling and Counterfeiting" was convened, bringing together key stakeholders for meaningful deliberations. The session was graced by eminent dignitaries, including **Mr. Ved Prakash Surya**, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Goa; **Mr. Piyush Ankit**, Joint Commissioner of Customs, Goa; and Mr. Gurudas Kadam, Superintendent of Police, Goa, who shared valuable insights from enforcement and regulatory perspectives.

Mr. Piyush Ankit, Joint Commissioner of Customs, Goa, highlighted that customs authorities are actively monitoring all major entry points and frontiers in the state. He noted that evolving policy measures have significantly influenced smuggling patterns, particularly following the reduction in customs duty on gold from 15% to 6%, which altered traditional smuggling dynamics. He further pointed out that increasing demand for products such as e-cigarettes, along with price differentials in certain commodities and narcotic substances, continues to create arbitrage opportunities for illicit trade.

Drawing attention to emerging trends, he referred the growing prevalence of hydroponic cannabis, citing a recent seizure of approximately 33 kg valued at around Rs. 11 crores in Goa.

He also noted a shift in smuggling methods, with narcotics increasingly being routed through cargo imports and multi-transit channels to evade detection. Emphasising the need for collective action, he stressed that a coordinated approach among enforcement agencies is essential to effectively tackle the evolving challenges posed by smuggling and illicit trade.

Mr. Ved Prakash Surya, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Goa, highlighted the critical frontline role played by the police in detecting, investigating, and dismantling illicit networks operating across state and international borders. He underscored the importance of strengthening intelligence-sharing mechanisms and fostering closer coordination among enforcement agencies to effectively respond to the increasingly sophisticated nature of such crimes.

Mr. Gurudas Kadam, Superintendent of Police, Goa stated that the Goa police is taking proactive and prompt action to curb the smuggling of e-cigarettes and narcotic substances and remain committed to addressing such offences with utmost urgency and effectiveness.

Mr. Najib Shah, Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs and Think Tank Member, FICCI CASCADE mentioned that the growing consumer inclination towards counterfeit goods is largely driven by their lower prices, while many consumers fail to recognise the serious consequences associated with smuggled and fake products. He emphasised that addressing this issue requires a concerted national effort with active participation from all sections of society.

The session witnessed the presence of distinguished Think Tank Members of FICCI CASCADE including **Mr. Hem Kumar Pande**, Former Secretary, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India; **Mr. Sanjeev Tripathi**, Former Chief, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW); **Mr. Justice Manmohan Sarin**, Former Chief Justice, Former Lokayukta, NCT of Delhi, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir & Judge, Hight Court of India; **Mr. Suvashis Choudhary**, Former Joint Commissioner & Chief Security Commissioner, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, Delhi; **Mr. Ravi Capoor**, Former Secretary, Ministry of Textiles & CEO, Sansad TV; **Ms. Neeta Lall Butalia**, Former Director General, DGHRD & Principal Director General, NACIN and **Mr. Deep Chand**, Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi & Advisor, FICCI CASCADE.

The Think Tank Members also shared their perspectives on the evolving challenges of illicit trade, highlighting the need for stronger policy enforcement, greater institutional coordination, and sustained public awareness to effectively combat illicit trade and safeguard economic and societal interests.

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR POLICE OFFICERS ON
TACKLING COUNTERFEITING AND SMUGGLING: STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT

12th June 2026 | Phillaur, Punjab



FICCI CASCADE organised a **Capacity Building Programme for Police Officers on "Tackling Counterfeiting and Smuggling: Strategies for Effective Enforcement" on 12 June 2026 at Phillaur, Punjab.** The programme was designed to enhance awareness among police officers on the growing challenges posed by counterfeiting and smuggling and to strengthen enforcement capabilities through knowledge-sharing and capacity building.

The programme reflected a collective commitment towards fostering a safer, more transparent, and resilient marketplace by equipping law enforcement personnel with the knowledge and tools required to address the evolving threats of illicit trade. The programme underscored the importance of strengthening institutional preparedness and reinforcing enforcement mechanisms to effectively combat increasingly sophisticated smuggling and counterfeiting networks.

Mr. Amardeep Singh Rai, IPS, Special Director General of Police, Punjab, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. In his address, he emphasised that illicit trade has emerged as a serious and multifaceted challenge with far-reaching economic and social consequences. He observed that counterfeiting and smuggling not only erode government revenues and undermine legitimate businesses but also pose significant risks to consumer safety and contribute to the growth of organised criminal networks. He highlighted the need for robust enforcement, continuous capacity building, and enhanced coordination among government agencies, law enforcement authorities, and industry stakeholders to effectively tackle these challenges.

Mr. Mohammed Tayyab, IAS, Secretary, Jails Department, Government of Punjab, highlighted the critical importance of institutional preparedness in combating economic offences. He noted that as illicit trade networks become increasingly sophisticated and technologically advanced, enforcement agencies must continuously upgrade their knowledge, skills, and investigative capabilities. He stressed that capacity-building initiatives play a vital role in enhancing the effectiveness of enforcement agencies and strengthening the overall response to illicit trade.







Mr. Ankurjeet Singh, IAS, Additional Secretary, Home Affairs, Government of Punjab, observed that illicit trade is not merely an economic issue but a significant public welfare concern. He noted that smuggled goods, counterfeit medicines, food products and other illicit consumer goods pose serious risks to public health and safety, erode consumer confidence and adversely affect societal well-being. He emphasized that effectively addressing these challenges requires stronger enforcement, enhanced public awareness and sustained coordination among all stakeholders.

Mr. Deep Chand, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE, presented an overview of the economic and social consequences of counterfeiting and smuggling. He highlighted that the impact of illicit trade extends far beyond revenue loss. According to estimates, smuggling across key sectors causes losses exceeding Rs. 1.17 lakh crore to the Indian economy and adversely affects more than 16 lakh livelihood opportunities, thereby hindering inclusive economic growth. He emphasized that as India progresses towards becoming one of the world's leading economies, curbing illicit trade must remain a national priority. Achieving this objective will require stronger enforcement, enhanced institutional capacity, sustained awareness generation, and greater collaboration among government, industry, media, consumers and enforcement agencies.

Mr. Ashish Paul, Vice President - Corporate Affairs, ITC Ltd., accentuated that curbing illicit trade requires collective responsibility and coordinated action. He stated that government agencies, enforcement authorities, industry, citizens and security institutions all have a critical role to play in strengthening compliance, enhancing awareness and building a robust ecosystem to combat counterfeiting and smuggling. He further mentioned that only through sustained collaboration and a shared commitment can we create a lasting impact in addressing the menace of illicit trade.

Dr. Rishi Kulshresth, Advocate, High Court of Delhi, stated that combating illicit trade requires more than seizure operations. It demands robust legal scrutiny, timely enforcement action, effective search and seizure mechanisms, and rigorous verification of documentation to protect legitimate industry and curb counterfeiting and smuggling at their source.

The technical sessions examined the economic and social impact of counterfeiting and smuggling, their links with organised crime, and the legal framework for enforcement. The discussions also highlighted the importance of industry-enforcement collaboration, intelligence-sharing, brand protection, consumer awareness, and coordinated action to combat illicit trade.

The programme brought together senior government officials, police officers, industry representatives, and legal experts on a common platform to exchange experiences, discuss enforcement challenges, and explore best practices for combating illicit trade. The deliberations reinforced the need for a collaborative approach to safeguard legitimate businesses, protect consumers, and strengthen India's fight against counterfeiting and smuggling.



SEMINAR ON

ILLICIT TRADE: A UNIFIED APPROACH TO COUNTER SMUGGLING AND COUNTERFEITING

30th June 2026 | Vivanta By Taj, Hyderabad

Smuggling and Counterfeiting have become increasingly sophisticated and well-organised crime in recent years, spanning multiple sectors and transcending state as well as international borders. Addressing a challenge of this magnitude requires sustained collaboration among government, enforcement agencies, industry, and consumers. With this objective, FICCI CASCADE has been consistently fostering dialogue and promoting collective action through its nationwide series of seminars. As part of this ongoing initiative, FICCI CASCADE organised a seminar on **"Illicit Trade: A Unified Approach to Counter Smuggling and Counterfeiting"** on 30 June 2026 at Vivanta by Taj, Hyderabad.

The seminar brought together policymakers, enforcement officials, industry leaders, legal experts, and consumer representatives on a common platform to deliberate on strengthening strategies, enhancing coordination, and reinforcing the collective fight against illicit trade.

Delivering the inaugural address, **Dr J Ram Chander Naik**, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker, Telangana Assembly, underscored the need for a coordinated national approach to tackle the growing menace of counterfeiting and smuggling. He observed that illicit trade has evolved into a serious challenge with far-reaching economic and social consequences, posing significant risks to consumer safety, undermining legitimate businesses, and impeding the nation's economic development. Stressing that counterfeiting and smuggling can no longer be viewed merely as economic offences, he called for stronger policy interventions, robust enforcement mechanisms, and enhanced collaboration among government, industry, enforcement agencies, and citizens. He further noted that forum such as FICCI CASCADE play a vital role in fostering stakeholder engagement, raising public awareness, and promoting a unified and coordinated response to effectively combat illicit trade.



Mr. T. Muralidharan, Past Chairman, FICCI Telangana State Council and Chairman, TMI Group, emphasised the importance of collective action in combating the growing challenge of illicit trade. He mentioned that counterfeiting and smuggling adversely impact every sector of the economy by undermining legitimate businesses, discouraging innovation, and creating an uneven competitive environment. Stressing that the fight against illicit trade requires a collaborative approach, he called for stronger partnerships among policymakers, enforcement agencies, industry, and consumers. Reaffirming FICCI CASCADE's commitment to this cause, he noted that the organisation will continue to facilitate meaningful dialogue and support initiatives aimed at strengthening India's efforts to combat counterfeiting and smuggling.

Mr. P. C. Jha, IRS (Retd.), Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), provided an overview of the evolving landscape of illicit trade, highlighting the increasing scale and sophistication of counterfeiting and smuggling. He emphasised that the dynamic nature of illicit trade necessitates a comprehensive and coordinated response driven by intelligence-led enforcement, technology-enabled solutions, and stronger inter-agency collaboration. He further underlined the importance of raising public awareness about the economic, social, and consumer safety risks associated with counterfeit and smuggled goods. Mr. Jha opined that addressing illicit trade requires a holistic strategy that integrates robust policy measures, strengthened enforcement mechanisms, technological innovation, and active







consumer participation to ensure an effective and sustained response.

Delivering the vote of thanks for the inaugural session, **Mr. Jayadev Meela**, Co-Chairman, FICCI Telangana State Council and Managing Director, Sudhakar Group, reinforced the FICCI Telangana State Council's commitment to supporting FICCI CASCADE's initiatives in strengthening the fight against counterfeiting, smuggling, and other forms of illicit trade.

The seminar featured a panel discussion on "Policies to Prevent Counterfeiting and Smuggling", chaired by **Mr. Deep Chand**, IPS (Retd.), Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi. Setting the context for the deliberations, Mr. Chand emphasised that effectively combating illicit trade requires a coordinated and sustained multi-stakeholder approach. He mentioned that enforcement agencies alone cannot address the growing challenge of counterfeiting and smuggling, and stressed the importance of stronger collaboration among government, industry, law enforcement agencies, and civil society. He further highlighted that continuous stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and knowledge sharing are critical to strengthening the national response against illicit trade.

Mr. Rajiv Thampula, IRS, Additional Commissioner of Customs, Hyderabad Customs, accentuated that combating smuggling and counterfeiting is at the core of customs mandate to protect India's economic interests and secure its borders. These illicit activities not only result in significant loss of government revenue but also undermine legitimate trade, fuel organised crime, and pose serious risks to consumer safety. Through intelligence-led enforcement, robust border controls, and close coordination with national and international stakeholders, Customs remains committed to disrupting smuggling networks, preventing the movement of counterfeit goods, and strengthening public awareness to preserve the integrity of India's trade and economy.

Mr. R. Bhaaskaran, IPS, Dy. Inspector General of Police, CI Cell, Intelligence Department, Telangana, stated law enforcement agencies are at the forefront of combating these illicit activities by detecting, investigating, and dismantling criminal networks that often operate across states and international borders. Addressing this challenge requires robust intelligence sharing, stronger inter-agency collaboration, and continuous capacity building to enhance enforcement capabilities. A coordinated and sustained approach is essential to disrupt organised illicit trade and protect the interests of citizens and the nation.

The session also featured insightful perspectives from distinguished experts representing industry and consumer advocacy. Other eminent panellists included **Ms. Shikha Sharma**, Country Lead, Customer Trust External Relations (CTXR), Amazon India; **Prof. Bejon Kumar Misra**, Founder, Consumer Online Foundation; and **Dr. Anant Sharma**, National Chairman, Consumer Federation of India. They enriched the deliberations by sharing their views on the need to strengthen consumer awareness, enhance industry collaboration, and reinforce safeguards against counterfeit and smuggled goods through coordinated action.

The seminar reaffirmed FICCI CASCADE's steadfast commitment to strengthening collaborative efforts among government departments, enforcement agencies, industry, academia, consumer organisations, and civil society to combat the growing menace of counterfeiting and smuggling. The deliberations underscored the importance of sustained policy advocacy, institutional capacity building, public awareness, and multi-stakeholder collaboration in effectively addressing illicit trade. Through its continued nationwide initiatives, FICCI CASCADE remains dedicated to fostering a fair, transparent, and secure marketplace, safeguarding consumer interests, supporting legitimate businesses, and contributing to India's economic growth and development.

PROTECTING CONSUMERS FROM SMUGGLING & COUNTERFEITING IN INDIA: A STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE



Anil Rajput
Chairman, FICCI CASCADE and Member – Corporate Management Committee & President, Corporate Affairs ITC Limited

Counterfeit and smuggled goods pose a considerable challenge to any country, more so to an evolving economy like India. Illicit goods account for a quarter of all goods sold in India, a serious concern for us. Anil Rajput, Chairman of CASCADE in FICCI, writes about this menace exclusively for SAVIOURS.



INTRODUCTION

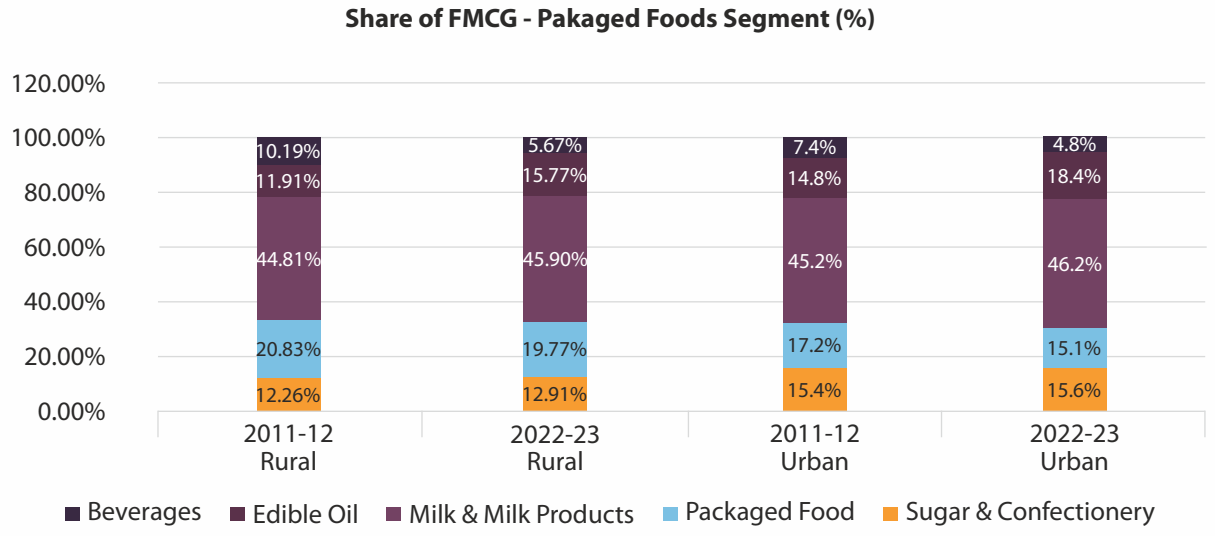
Illicit trade in India has moved far beyond isolated instances of counterfeiting, becoming a systemic challenge with serious consequences for consumer safety, economic integrity, and institutional credibility. What was once often dismissed as a problem confined to imitation goods or tax evasion now penetrates everyday markets with far greater depth and sophistication. Counterfeit, smuggled, and unregulated products increasingly intersect with routine consumption across sectors such as packaged foods, personal care, textiles, alcohol, and tobacco, exposing consumers to risks that are not always visible at the point of purchase. The issue, therefore, is no longer merely one of commercial illegality. It is a matter of public safety, market trust, and the resilience of the formal economy. Any serious response must recognise illicit trade not as a peripheral distortion, but as a structural threat that demands coordinated attention across policy, enforcement, industry, and consumer awareness.

CHANGING CONSUMPTION LANDSCAPE

At the heart of this challenge lies a transformation in India's consumption landscape. As economic growth continues to expand the consumer base, demand patterns are undergoing a structural shift in both scale and composition. Consumption across packaged foods,

personal and household care products, textiles and apparel, alcoholic beverages, and tobacco has broadened significantly, reflecting rising incomes, urbanisation, and changing lifestyles. This expansion, while indicative of economic progress, has also created new vulnerabilities. A wider, more diverse consumer base, particularly in middle- and lower-income segments, has increased markets' susceptibility to the entry and proliferation of counterfeit and smuggled goods. The shift in consumption towards middle- and lower-income groups makes exposure to illicit markets broader and more socially consequential than before.

The expansion of consumption is evident not only in aggregate expenditure but also in the diversification and deepening of the household consumption basket. In categories such as packaged foods, consumption is spread across multiple segments rather than concentrated in a narrow set of goods. At the household consumption level, monthly per capita expenditure (MPCE) on FMCG packaged foods rose sharply, from ₹256.5 to ₹690.5 in rural India and from ₹407.4 to ₹1,022.9 in urban India between 2011-12 and 2022-23 over the same period. This matters because illicit trade flourishes most easily in markets that are large, fragmented, and embedded in routine household consumption. Where the consumer basket is broad and frequently purchased, counterfeit and substandard goods can enter circulation with far less visibility.



Source: TARI calculations, NSSO 2011-12 and 2022-23

Figure 1. Broad-based consumption across packaged food segments expands the everyday market in which illicit goods can circulate.

Figure 1 illustrates this pattern clearly. In both rural and urban India, milk and milk products remain the single largest component of monthly per capita expenditure on FMCG packaged foods, accounting for 44.81 percent to 45.90 percent of the rural basket and 45.2 percent to 46.2 percent of the urban basket between 2011-12 and 2022-23. At the same time, the share of packaged food in monthly per capita expenditure increased from 11.91 to 15.77 percent in rural areas and from 14.8 to 18.4 percent in urban areas, indicating deeper penetration of processed and convenience-oriented products into everyday consumption. Such breadth increases the complexity of monitoring supply chains and makes consumer verification more difficult, particularly when purchases are frequent and low in individual value. In practical terms, this means that illicit penetration in FMCG does not require dominance in any one segment to become economically significant. Even limited infiltration across a wide basket of goods can produce a substantial cumulative impact.

The scale of the opportunity is itself revealing. The FMCG market reached US$121.8 billion in 2023 and is projected to expand sharply in the coming years, while the food processing sector is expected to rise from US$866 billion in 2022 to US$1,274 billion in 2027. When such a scale combines with a dispersed retail base and uneven consumer awareness, even a small degree of counterfeit penetration can translate into very large volumes of illicit goods moving through ordinary channels of consumption.

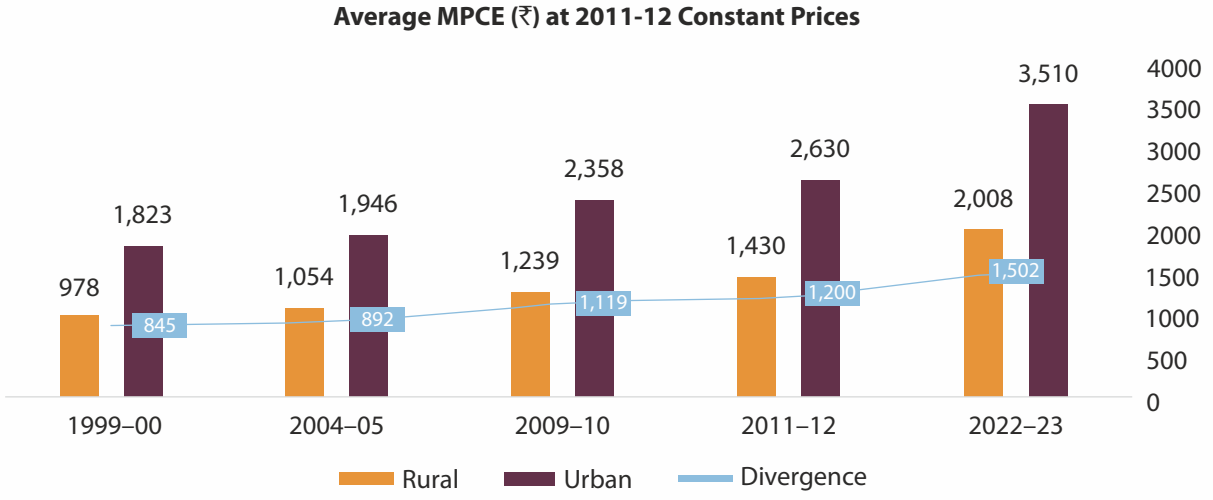
CONSUMPTION A FEEDER TO ILLICIT TRADE

The relationship between expanding consumption and illicit trade is not incidental. It is embedded within the very dynamics of demand. As access to goods increases, so does sensitivity to pricing, particularly in categories

where consumption is frequent and quality differentiation is not immediately apparent. In such environments, illicit products can position themselves as viable alternatives by exploiting gaps between aspiration and affordability. This dynamic is best understood through tax and price arbitrage. Where regulation, taxation, logistics, or compliance costs substantially raise the price of legal goods, illicit suppliers can exploit the gap by placing visually similar or functionally substitutable goods on the market at lower prices.

Consumer decision-making is shaped by a combination of economic and contextual factors. Price differentials between legitimate and illicit products often act as a strong incentive, particularly in sectors such as fast-moving consumer goods and textiles, where purchases are frequent and perceived risk is low. In tobacco and alcoholic beverages, taxation and pricing structures can alter consumer behaviour much more sharply, creating incentives for consumers to shift toward illicit alternatives when legal products become less affordable. Illicit trade is therefore not merely a supply-side problem. It is reinforced by demand-side responses to market conditions.

Figure 2 helps explain the economic backdrop against which these decisions are made.



Source: NSSO Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2022-23, Fact Sheet.

Figure 2. Rising rural and urban expenditure, coupled with widening consumption gaps, shape the demand conditions that drive illicit trade.

At current prices, rural MPCE increased from ₹486 in 1999-2000 to ₹3,773 in 2022-23, while urban MPCE rose from ₹855 to ₹6,459 over the same period. The rural-urban gap at current prices widened from ₹369 to ₹2,686. At constant 2011-12 prices, rural MPCE rose from ₹978 to ₹2,008, while urban MPCE increased from ₹1,823 to ₹3,510, and the divergence widened from ₹845 to ₹1,502. These figures show that while consumption has grown across both rural and urban India, the gap between them has also widened. Such uneven growth reinforces differential price sensitivity across markets, making lower-cost illicit alternatives more attractive in some segments while simultaneously broadening the overall market for counterfeit and smuggled goods.

ROLE OF CONSUMER

This shifts attention to the role of the consumer within the ecosystem of illicit trade. The conventional framing of the consumer as a passive victim captures only part of the reality. The persistence of counterfeit markets suggests a more complex interaction, in which consumer behaviour, whether influenced by economic constraints, limited awareness, or habitual purchasing patterns, sustains demand. That is why awareness must extend beyond recognition to behavioural change. It is not enough for a consumer to know that counterfeit goods exist. Consumers must also be equipped to identify them, understand their risks, and recognise that lower prices can often conceal higher personal and social costs.

The consumer dimension of illicit trade must therefore be taken more seriously. In many cases, the consumer does not encounter illicit goods as a consciously chosen act of illegality, but as part of routine market participation. This is especially true in categories of frequent purchase, where transactions are low in individual value and verification is rare. The danger lies precisely in this ordinariness. Counterfeit packaged foods, personal care items, household goods, cigarettes, or alcohol affect daily life more quietly and often more dangerously than the more visible forms of commercial deception. Illicit trade

penetrates not only markets, but habits. It enters kitchens, neighbourhood shops, informal supply chains, and increasingly digital carts. Consumer protection must therefore stand at the centre of the policy response. The question is not merely how much revenue is lost or how much legitimate industry is displaced, serious though both are. It is also whether ordinary citizens are being exposed to unsafe goods without adequate awareness, recourse, or institutional protection.

COMPLEX AND MULTIPLE DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS - A CHALLENGE

At the same time, the changing nature of distribution channels has further complicated the landscape. The expansion of informal retail networks, coupled with increasingly complex supply chains, has blurred the distinction between legitimate and illicit markets. For consumers, the ability to distinguish genuine from counterfeit products is often constrained, particularly as counterfeiters replicate packaging, branding, and product characteristics with increasing sophistication. This convergence creates conditions in which even well-intentioned consumers may inadvertently participate in the circulation of illicit goods. The problem is no longer confined to traditional wholesale and street-market networks. The OECD has warned that e-commerce is being widely misused for counterfeit trade, with online channels helping illicit networks scale distribution while reducing the likelihood of detection.

The implications of these dynamics extend beyond individual transactions. At a systemic level, sustained demand for illicit products undermines legitimate industry, erodes public revenues, and weakens the effectiveness of regulatory frameworks. More importantly, it exposes consumers to a range of risks, from compromised product quality to serious health and safety hazards in critical sectors. The challenge, therefore, is not limited to protecting consumers from illicit goods but extends to understanding and addressing the behavioural and structural factors that allow such markets to persist.

The impact on industry is equally significant. Legitimate businesses face unfair competition from illicit operators who do not bear the costs of compliance, taxation, or quality assurance. This affects profitability, weakens incentives for compliant investment, and has implications for employment, especially in sectors dependent on formal production and organised distribution. The economic implications are also fiscal. Loss of tax revenue from illicit trade harms public finances, while diverting demand from the legitimate industry weakens the growth of the regulated market. Over time, this discourages investment, reduces job creation, and undermines confidence in formal economic systems.

In FMCG, the numbers are especially revealing. The illicit market in packaged foods rose from ₹1,12,474 crore in 2017-18 to ₹2,23,875 crore in 2022-23, while the illicit market share remained around one-quarter of the market, reaching 25.4 percent in 2022-23 after peaking at 26.4 percent in 2018-19. These figures make clear that illicit trade in everyday consumption categories can no longer be treated as secondary to more visible sectors like tobacco. They reinforce the larger point that the issue has shifted from a narrow economic offence to a broader question of consumer protection and public safety.

If the expansion of illicit trade is shaped by demand-side dynamics, its persistence is equally a reflection of institutional and enforcement frameworks. The challenge is not only to understand how counterfeit and smuggled goods enter consumption cycles, but also to examine the capacity of existing systems to regulate, detect, and deter such activity. Each affected sector operates within its own regulatory framework, often governed by distinct authorities and varying degrees of oversight. While such differentiation is necessary, it also creates gaps that illicit networks can exploit. Fragmentation across regulatory regimes weakens overall policy effectiveness and allows illicit operators to benefit from inconsistent enforcement intensity, taxation structures, and compliance requirements.

ROLE OF LEAS & JUDICIARY

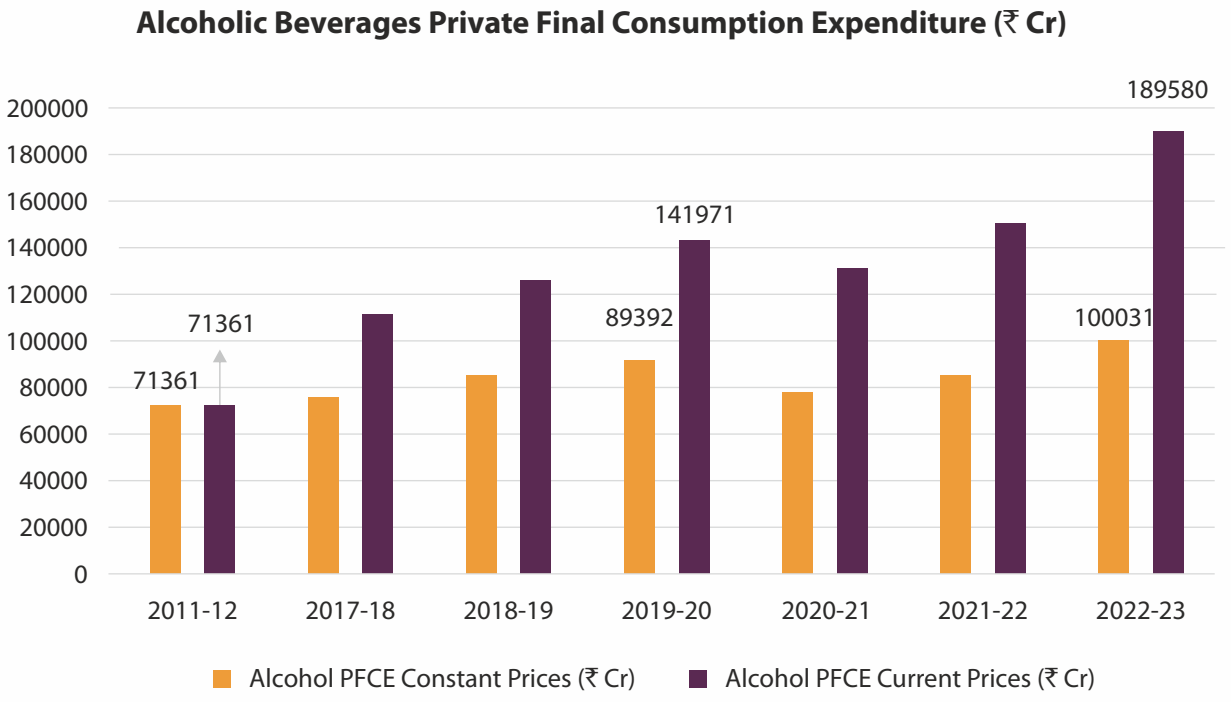
This is why the role of the judiciary and enforcement agencies becomes so important. Legal frameworks are not merely instruments of prohibition but mechanisms through which accountability is enforced and deterrence is established. Without timely adjudication, clear legal interpretation, and consistent penalties, even well-designed policies lose force. Yet policy and judicial systems alone cannot address the operational realities of illicit trade. Enforcement must evolve from reactive seizure-led action to intelligence-led detection, supported by data integration, technology deployment, and inter-agency coordination. India has made progress in recognising these challenges, but gaps remain in uniform implementation, digital oversight, resource deployment, prosecution efficiency, and coordination across jurisdictions.

CONSTRAINTS IN SIN GOODS

These constraints become particularly evident in sectors such as alcoholic beverages, where rising consumption, regulatory variation, and the coexistence of recorded and unrecorded markets create conditions that enable illicit trade to continue expanding despite formal controls.

Year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Supply (₹ Cr)	83,962	93,364	95,921	81,236	1,01,337
Consumption (₹ Cr)	1,10,041	1,25,287	1,41,971	1,30,054	1,49,471

Figure 3. Growth in alcohol expenditure and the demand-supply gap underscores the persistence of unrecorded and illicit consumption.



Source: Central Statistical Office (CSO), Ministry of Statistics & Program Implementation

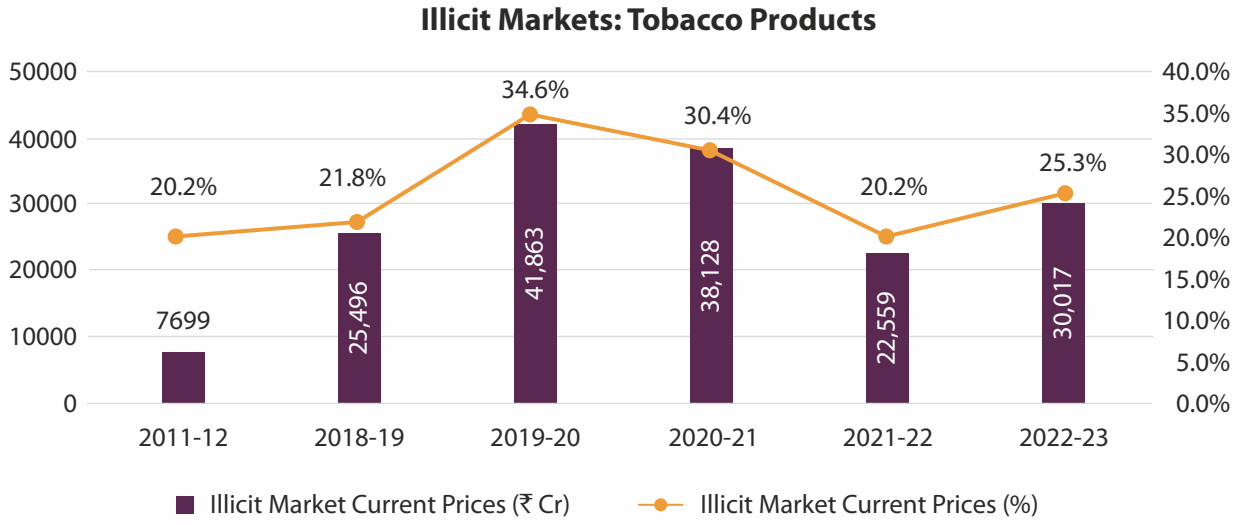
Figure 4. The steady rise in private final consumption expenditure on alcoholic beverages underscores the expanding market size within which unrecorded and illicit trade can persist.

Figures 3 and 4 illustrate why alcoholic beverages occupy a particularly important place in the illicit trade discussion. Private consumption expenditure on alcohol at current prices rose from ₹71,361 crore in 2011-12 to ₹1,89,580 crore in 2022-23, while at constant prices it increased from ₹71,361 crore to ₹1,00,031 crore over the same period. This steady rise in expenditure reflects not only the growing size of the market but also the expanding opportunity for illicit operators to exploit gaps created by taxation, state-level regulatory variation, and uneven enforcement. In practical terms, the coexistence of recorded and unrecorded consumption means that a meaningful share of alcohol demand can fall outside formal taxation and product oversight, thereby increasing fiscal losses and risks to consumer safety.

The tobacco sector is even more stark, and here the issue must be stated plainly. In tobacco, the relationship between taxation and illicit trade is not incidental but direct. High taxation creates an arbitrage and is a significant factor in the growth of the illicit tobacco market. This is borne out by the numbers. At constant prices, the illicit tobacco market grew from ₹7,699 crore in 2011-12 to ₹13,198 crore in 2022-23, while in value terms it rose by 120 percent to ₹16,819 crore over the same period. When taxes move too far ahead of market realities and enforcement capabilities, demand does not disappear. It shifts into illicit channels. That is the central policy lesson here, and it needs to be acknowledged clearly. Public health objectives remain legitimate and necessary, but they must be pursued in a manner that does not inadvertently expand the illegal market or weaken revenue collection and regulatory oversight.

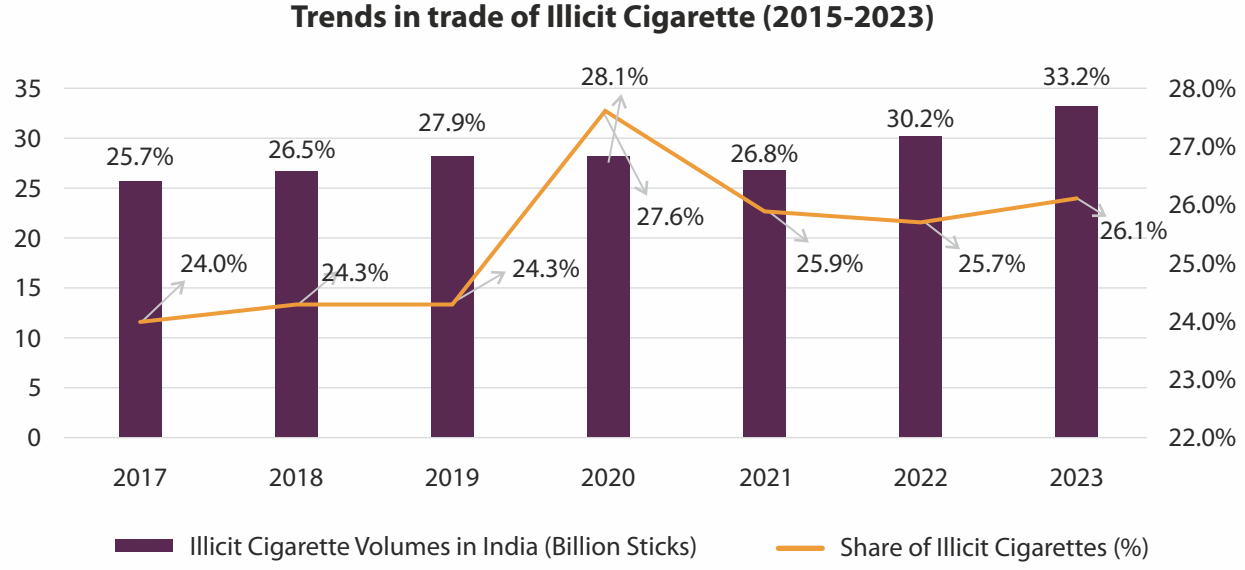
Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Supply (₹ Cr)	91,616	78,980	87,413	89,094
Consumption (₹ Cr)	1,17,113	1,20,842	1,25,541	1,11,653

Figure 5. Growth in tobacco expenditure and the demand-supply gap underscores the persistence of unrecorded and illicit consumption.



Source: TARI Estimates

Figure 6. The expansion of India's illicit tobacco market shows how tax-driven price arbitrage can redirect demand into illegal channels.



Source: Euromonitor International, 2024

Figure 7. The rising trend in illicit cigarette trade between 2015 and 2023 highlights the growing scale and persistence of illegal supply in the Indian tobacco market.

Figures 5, 6 and 7 make the scale of this challenge unmistakable. The Government of India has demonstrated maturity over the past five years by refraining from further sharp increases in tobacco taxation. This has given the legal industry an opportunity to retain a meaningful share of the market and compete more effectively with illicit players on both price and quality, thereby helping to moderate the otherwise unchecked expansion of illegal trade. It is well established that once illicit trade becomes deeply embedded through a strong and extensive distribution network, it becomes exceedingly difficult to reverse through enforcement alone. This is precisely why the growth of such networks must be contained before they become structurally entrenched in the market. Global illicit cigarette consumption is estimated at around 600 billion sticks, or roughly 10

percent of total consumption. In India, illicit cigarettes accounted for 26.1 percent of the market in 2023, with volumes reaching 33.2 billion sticks. India's illicit cigarette problem is therefore far more severe than the global benchmark. This is not a peripheral leak in the system, but a deeply embedded parallel channel of supply. It is precisely why the tobacco tax question cannot be discussed solely in terms of intent. However legitimate the public health objective, a tax structure that materially outpaces enforcement capacity and consumer affordability can end up enlarging illicit trade.

The challenge is further compounded by linkages to organised activity. Governments elsewhere have explicitly described illicit tobacco as a trade that funds organised crime, undercuts law-abiding businesses, and imposes wider social and fiscal costs. That broader lesson applies here as well. Once illicit trade becomes entrenched, it is no longer only about counterfeit goods on shelves. It becomes a matter of economic governance, revenue integrity, organised evasion, and weakening public trust in legal institutions.

ILLICIT TRADE-A GLOBAL PHENOMENON

The issue is not confined to India. OECD and EUIPO estimate that counterfeit and pirated goods accounted for USD 467 billion in 2021, or 2.3 percent of global imports, with the equivalent figure for the European Union at USD 117 billion, or 4.7 percent of total EU imports. There are, however, useful lessons from abroad. The European Union's tobacco traceability and security features systems became operational on 20 May 2019 and were designed specifically to help authorities monitor legitimate supply chains and address illicit trade. The United Kingdom reports that its cigarette duty gap fell from 16.9 percent in 2005-06 to 6.9 percent in 2022-23 under a comprehensive anti-illicit tobacco strategy. Singapore has long required a visible duty-paid cigarette mark on every cigarette intended for sale and consumption in the country, reinforcing compliance and giving both authorities and consumers a clear way to distinguish legal products.

There are important lessons for India to learn from these experiences. First, traceability works best when it is system-wide, legally enforceable, and technologically supported. Second, enforcement must be coordinated across borders, tax administrations, police, regulators, and consumer protection agencies. Third, consumer-facing compliance tools matter because they make legality more visible in the marketplace. Fourth, continuity matters. Countries that have made measurable progress against illicit markets tend to treat the issue as a standing governance challenge rather than an episodic campaign.

In essence, illicit trade operates as a system. Consumer demand creates opportunity, policy gaps create access, and enforcement limitations allow continuity. Unless all three are addressed simultaneously, interventions in one area are often offset by weaknesses in another. That is why the way forward must combine informed consumption, coherent policy architecture, intelligence-led enforcement, and integrated stakeholder alignment. This is also why rationalising taxation, particularly in tobacco, must be part of the policy conversation. Taxation cannot be treated as detached from market outcomes when the evidence shows that excessive price gaps are directly driving illicit substitution.

Ultimately, the challenge of counterfeiting and illicit trade is both economic and ethical. It concerns not only the protection of markets and revenues but also the safety, trust, and well-being of consumers. The integrity of institutions, the credibility of regulatory systems, and the resilience of legitimate industry are all at stake. A critical outcome of any serious response must therefore be the rebuilding of consumer trust. Trust in products, markets, and institutions forms the foundation of a healthy economic system. Without it, even robust frameworks struggle to achieve their intended outcomes.

CONCLUSION

I believe the challenge before India is now unmistakably clear. We cannot afford to respond to illicit trade only after its damage has already spread through markets, institutions, and households. What is required is a deliberate and sustained alignment of consumer behaviour, policy frameworks, taxation choices, enforcement mechanisms, technological capability, and stakeholder coordination. If we are serious about protecting consumers, preserving legitimate industry, and strengthening trust in our markets, then we must act with greater coherence and urgency. In my view, only such a comprehensive and determined approach can dismantle the conditions that allow illicit trade to flourish and secure for India a lawful, reliable, and worthy marketplace of public confidence.

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MEDIA COVERAGE

India boosts global ties on 5th Anti-Smuggling Day

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi



Underscoring the expanding scale and sophistication of transnational smuggling networks, Mohan Kumar Singh, Member – Compliance Management, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), on Wednesday 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.

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 120 kilograms of cocaine, around 50 kilograms of heroin, nearly 350 kilograms of amphetamines and close to 3,700 kilograms of hydroponic cannabis at airports. We have also detected over 100 wildlife trafficking cases, along with seizures involving dual-use goods, arms, ammunition, drones and Fake Indian Currency Notes," Singh stated.

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

Highlighting the importance of collective international action, Anil Rajput, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE, said, "Combating smuggling cannot be the responsibility of one institution or one country alone. Strong partnerships among compliant nations are essential to promote legal trade, share intelligence, and decisively punish illicit operators.

"And as UN-designated days such as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking have mobilised global attention, recognition of an International Anti-Smuggling Day by the United Nations would provide a powerful platform to deepen international cooperation and address the root causes and consequences of smuggling. India, with its growing leadership on combating transnational crime and enforcement cooperation, is well placed to champion this cause."

"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. 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," Rajput added.

Delivering the Vote of Thanks, P C Jha, Advisor, FICCI CASCADE and Former Chairman, CBIC, stated that Anti-Smuggling Day is "not a symbolic observance but a structural necessity."

FICCI CASCADE has consistently highlighted the scale and impact of illicit trade through evidence-based research.

A 2024 study commissioned by CASCADE estimates that the illicit market in India stood at nearly Rs 16 lakh crore in 2022-23 across key sectors. Earlier findings in the report "IllicitMarkets: A Threat to Our National Interests" indicated that unlawful trade resulted in the loss of nearly 15.96 lakh legitimate jobs in 2019-20 alone, underscoring the deep economic and employment impact of smuggling on the formal economy.

The 5th Edition of Anti-Smuggling Day also featured two high-level panel discussions bringing together senior enforcement officials and international representatives.

Launched on 19th February 2022 as a global first, Anti-Smuggling Day has evolved into a significant policy and enforcement platform bringing together Government, industry, international organisations and civil society to collectively combat the growing menace of illicit trade, said a Press release.

India deepens global enforcement capabilities to curb smuggling, 21 more pacts in works: CBIC member

NEW DELHI: (Feb 11) 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 on Wednesday.

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NewsDrum Desk

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He stressed 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.

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



Senior enforcement officials and international experts on Tuesday called for intelligence-led, globally coordinated action to dismantle increasingly sophisticated smuggling networks, as India expanded its customs cooperation framework and stepped up measures across borders.

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



New Delhi, Feb 11 (ANI): Anil Rajput, Chairman of FICCI CASCADE, one of the country's top industry bodies, on Wednesday said the United Nations should declare February 11 as the 'International Anti-Smuggling Day' to raise awareness against smuggling globally.

Speaking to IANS during an event here, Rajput said that smuggling is increasingly both in the country and globally.

Therefore, "we urge the United Nations to declare February 11 as 'International Anti-Smuggling Day' to raise awareness against smuggling worldwide and to encourage all countries to join forces to raise their voice against the problem of smuggling on this day," he added.

At an event in the national capital, experts said that India has signed 42 mutual customs cooperation agreements and is negotiating 21 more with major trading partners. This has significantly strengthened the country's international enforcement framework against smuggling.

तस्करी पर सख्ती, 42 सीमा शुल्क समझौतों से प्रवर्तन ढांचा मजबूत

नई दिल्ली@पत्रिका. लगातार बढ़ते अंतरराष्ट्रीय तस्करी नेटवर्क के दायरे को रेखांकित करते हुए केंद्रीय अप्रत्यक्ष कर एवं सीमा शुल्क बोर्ड (सीबीआईसी) के अनुपालन प्रबंधन सदस्य (कम्प्लायंस मैनेजमेंट मेंबर) मोहन कुमार सिंह ने बताया कि भारत ने 42 पारस्परिक सीमा शुल्क सहयोग समझौतों (एमओयू) पर हस्ताक्षर कर और प्रमुख व्यापारिक साझेदारों के साथ 21 अन्य समझौतों पर बातचीत करते हुए अपने अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रवर्तन ढांचे को काफी मजबूत किया है। फिक्की कास्केड द्वारा आयोजित तस्करी विरोधी दिवस के 5वें संस्करण के दौरान उपस्थित लोगों को संबोधित करते हुए सिंह ने कहा कि आज के समय में तस्करी एक संगठित और टेक्नोलॉजी द्वारा संचालित आर्थिक अपराध बन गई है। इससे राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा और आर्थिक स्थिरता पर सीधा प्रभाव पड़ता है। हमारे सीमा शुल्क विभागों और राजस्व खुफिया निदेशालय ने प्रवर्तन के प्रयासों को काफी तेज कर दिया है। चालू वित्त वर्ष की पहली तीन तिमाहियों में ही हवाई अड्डों पर लगभग 500 किलोग्राम सोना, लगभग 15 करोड़ अवैध सिगरेट, 20 टन से अधिक लाल चंदन, लगभग 120 किलोग्राम कोकीन, लगभग 50 किलोग्राम हेरोइन, लगभग 350 किलोग्राम एम्फैटेमिन और लगभग 3,700 किलोग्राम हाइड्रोपोनिक कैनेबिस की जब्ती की गई है। फिक्की कास्केड के अध्यक्ष अनिल राजपूत ने कहा, 'तस्करी से लड़ना किसी एक संस्था या एक देश की जिम्मेदारी नहीं हो सकती।

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. #PBT



Capacity Building Programme for Police Officers on 'Prevention of Counterfeiting and Smuggling' at the Police Training School, Valaad, Goa (Image: X/FICCI)

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

ANI | Updated: Feb 02, 2026 16:59 IST

Panaji (Goa) [India], February 2 (ANI): Alok Kumar, Director General of Police, Goa has asserted that law enforcement agencies must recognise the deep and widespread presence of counterfeit and smuggled goods in Indian markets as these illegal activities harm the economy, erode social values, endanger public health, and ultimately affect the quality of life of citizens.

New Delhi, Saturday, 13 June 2026 (Page-10)

FICCI CASCADE calls for stronger action against counterfeiting & smuggling

Illicit trade has become a complex challenge with significant economic, social consequences: Amardeep Singh Rai, Special DGP, Punjab



CLOSER LOOK

- 'Tackling these challenges requires robust enforcement, continuous capacity building & and coordinated action'
- 'Illicit trade causes major losses to legitimate businesses and governments'

पंजाब पुलिस और फिक्की कैस्केड द्वारा तस्करी एवं जालसाजी से निपटने के लिए क्षमता निर्माण कार्यक्रम आयोजित

सेमिनार का उद्देश्य अंतिम स्तर पर निपटने के लिए पुलिस अधिकारियों को कानूनी एवं प्रक्रियागत जानकारों से सुसज्जित करना



MEDIA COVERAGE

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

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



नई दिल्ली, 11 फरवरी (आईएएनएस)। देश की शीर्ष इंडस्ट्री बॉडी में से एक फिक्की कैस्केड के चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत ने संयुक्त राष्ट्र से 11 फरवरी को इंटरनेशनल एंटी स्मगलिंग के घोषित करने की मांग की है, जिससे वैश्विक स्तर पर तस्करी के खिलाफ जागरूकता फैलाई जा सके।

समाचार एजेंसी आईएएनएस से बातचीत करते हुए अनिल राजपूत ने कहा कि तस्करी देश के साथ पूरी दुनिया में बढ़ती जा रही है। इस वजह से हमारी संयुक्त राष्ट्र से मांग है कि 11 फरवरी को इंटरनेशनल एंटी स्मगलिंग डे घोषित किया जाए, जिससे पूरी दुनिया में तस्करी के खिलाफ जागरूकता फैले और सभी देश मिलकर इस तस्करी के समस्या के खिलाफ आवाज उठाएं।

India strengthened inter'l enforcement architecture with 42 MoUs signed, 21 under negotiation: CBIC Member



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.

Fake goods surge, buyers face rising safety risk



Counterfeit goods and malpractice such as tampering with manufacturing and expiry dates have emerged as a serious and widespread concern, Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare said, calling for constant vigilance and stronger consumer awareness.

Speaking at the FICCI CASCADE seminar, Khare highlighted how offenders are manipulating product labels by erasing original manufacturing details and replacing them with fresh expiry dates, allowing expired goods to re-enter the market.

She described the issue as a "very huge problem" that continues to evolve despite enforcement actions.Officials noted that counterfeit products remain prevalent across sectors, often shifting locations to evade detection. Khare likened the challenge to a "cat and mouse" game, where regulatory interventions in one area push offenders to relocate and resume operations elsewhere.

Highlighting the scale, she cited data from a major e-commerce platform, which flagged over 121 crore counterfeit listings between August 2022 and June 2025. Of these, nearly 60 lakh listings were removed between April 2023 and September 2024, followed by over 12 lakh removals in subsequent months, underlining the persistent nature of the problem.

Khare also pointed to the increasing sophistication of counterfeit goods, which are often designed to closely resemble genuine products, making detection difficult even for aware consumers. She warned that such products exploit gaps in intellectual property enforcement while continuing to circulate due to their non-lethal nature.

— ANI

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

CENTRAL BOARD OF INDIRECT TAXES & CUSTOMS

केंद्रीय अप्रत्यक्ष कर और सीमा शुल्क बोर्ड (सीबीआईसी) के सदस्य मोहन कुमार सिंह ने बुधवार को कहा कि भारत ने प्रमुख व्यापारिक साझेदारों के साथ 42 पारस्परिक सीमा शुल्क सहयोग समझौतों के माध्यम से अंतरराष्ट्रीय तस्करी नेटवर्क पर अंकुश लगाने के लिए अपनी वैधिक प्रवर्तन क्षमता को काफी मजबूत किया है. इसके अलावा 21 और ऐसे समझौतों पर बातचीत जारी है. सिंह ने उद्योग मंडल फिक्की- कैस्केड द्वारा आयोजित तस्करी निरोधक दिवस के पांचवें संस्करण को संबोधित करते हुए कहा कि तस्करी एक संगठित, प्रौद्योगिकी-आधारित आर्थिक अपराध में बदल गई है. इसका राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा और आर्थिक स्थिरता पर सीधा प्रभाव पड़ता है.

पंजाब पुलिस और फिक्की कैस्केड द्वारा तस्करी एवं जालसाजी से निपटने के लिए क्षमता निर्माण कार्यक्रम आयोजित

13 जून, 2026 08:23 PM



चंडीगढ़/जालंधर : मुख्यमंत्री भगवंत सिंह मान की दूरदर्शी सोच के अनुरूप संगठित आर्थिक अपराधों के विरुद्ध अपनी प्रवर्तन क्षमताओं को उन्नत करने की प्रतिबद्धता को और मजबूत करते हुए पंजाब पुलिस द्वारा फिक्की कैस्केड (कमेटी अगेंस्ट स्मगलिंग एंड काउंटरफिटिंग एक्टिविटीज इंटरफेरिंग द इकोनॉमी) के सहयोग से पुलिस अधिकारियों के लिए आज दिन का क्षमता निर्माण कार्यक्रम आयोजित किया गया।

Illicit trade undermines consumer trust, economic integrity: Joshi

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 8 April



At a time when India is witnessing rapid economic expansion, reshaping consumption patterns and market dynamics, Minister of Consumer Affairs Pralhad Joshi on Wednesday said illicit trade, which he described as a shadow economy, is undermining consumer trust and economic integrity.

In a video address at a seminar organised by FICCI CASCADE, Pralhad Joshi said, "Smuggling and counterfeiting are far from victimless crimes. They expose consumers to unsafe, substandard, and even toxic products, undermining honest businesses and eroding government revenues that could otherwise be invested in public welfare and infrastructure."

Pointing to initiatives such as the Central Consumer Protection Authority, the National Consumer Helpline, and the Jago Grahak Jago campaign as key pillars in empowering citizens, he said, "The objective is not just consumer protection, but consumer prosperity."

Calling for a broader coalition, he said, "When a product is fake, it is not just a business loss, but it is a betrayal of consumer trust. Combating this requires shared responsibility across government, industry and society," he added.

In her inaugural address, Nidhi Khare, Secretary, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, said with India emerging as the world's fourth-largest economy consumer protection has evolved from awareness-building to a technology-enabled system. "From 'Jago Grahak Jago' to AI-driven grievance redressal, we are building a system that is faster, more efficient, and transparent," she added.

Highlighting improvements in grievance redressal, she said resolution timelines have come down from 63 days to around 21 days, and in some online cases even within 72 hours.

The secretary also said while the commerce platforms operate at scale and require continuous regulatory engagement, they are also increasingly stepping up through measures such as delisting and stronger monitoring, which is aimed at combating counterfeit products. Dr Ashwani Mahajan, National Co-Convener, Swadeshi Jagran Manch, who also took part in the seminar, said that tackling illicit trade requires strong and sustained political will, decisive policy interventions, such as demonetisation, were steps that have previously demonstrated how determined action can disrupt counterfeit and illicit ecosystems.

He stressed the need to strengthen enforcement mechanisms, particularly at the borders, stating that gaps in customs oversight continue to enable the entry of illicit goods into the domestic market.

Senior policymakers, judicial leaders, enforcement officials, industry representatives, and consumer organisations were part of the seminar, who brought in views on the growing threat of illicit trade and the need for stronger consumer-centric frameworks.

Counterfeit goods, expiry tampering a 'very huge problem', says Consumer Affairs Secretary



Apr 08, 2026

New Delhi [India], April 8 (ANI): Counterfeit goods and related malpractices such as tampering with manufacturing and expiry dates pose a serious challenge and require constant monitoring, says Consumer Affairs Secretary, Nidhi Khare.

Counterfeiting, smuggling a 'Shadow Economy' threatening consumers says minister Pralhad Joshi

ANI
8th April 2026, 20:31 GMT+05



New Delhi [India], April 8 (ANI): Counterfeiting and smuggling in India form a 'shadow economy' that directly harms consumers, undermines their trust through unsafe and substandard products, threatens honest businesses, and drains public funds, Pralhad Joshi, Minister of Food

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

New Delhi, Feb 11 (UNI) 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 fifth 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," he said. In the first three quarters of the current financial year alone, the enforcement agencies have

MEDIA COVERAGE

पंजाब पुलिस और फिक्की कैस्केड द्वारा तस्करी एवं जालसाजी से निपटने के लिए क्षमता निर्माण कार्यक्रम आयोजित

सेमिनार का उद्देश्य अवैध व्यापार से निपटने के लिए पुलिस अधिकारियों को कानूनी एवं प्रक्रियात्मक उपकरणों से सुसज्जित करना



चंडीगढ़, 14 जून (पिस)। सुरक्षाकर्मी भगवंत सिंह मान की दूरदर्शी सोच के अनुरूप संगठित आर्थिक अपराधों के विरुद्ध अपनी प्रवर्तन क्षमताओं को तेज करने की प्रतिबद्धता को और मजबूत करते हुए पंजाब पुलिस द्वारा फिक्की कैस्केड (फेडरेशन ऑफ एसोसिएटेड चैंबर्स ऑफ कॉमर्स एंड इंडस्ट्रीज) के सहयोग से पुलिस अधिकारियों के लिए आज दिन का क्षमता निर्माण कार्यक्रम आयोजित किया गया। महानिदेशक (गतिशीलता एवं सड़क सुरक्षा) पंजाब अम्बरीष सिंह पंजाब पुलिस अकादमी, फिल्लौर में पुलिस महानिदेशक (डीजीपी) पंजाब गौरव यादव के निर्देशों पर आयोजित इस प्रशिक्षण सेमिनार में राज्यभर के 60 पुलिस अधिकारियों ने भाग लिया। विशेष पुलिस महानिदेशक (गतिशीलता एवं सड़क सुरक्षा) पंजाब अम्बरीष सिंह राय ने कार्यक्रम का औपचारिक उद्घाटन करते हुए अवैध व्यापार की जड़ों, जटिलता और व्यापक प्रभाव को संबोधित करते हुए पंजाब के अधिकारियों से भाग लिया। विशेष सत्रों का व्यापार और तस्करी में केवल वैध व्यवसायों तथा सरकारी राजस्व को नुकसान पहुंचाती है, बल्कि उपभोक्ताओं की सुरक्षा को भी खतरे में डालती है तथा अवैध नेटवर्क को बढ़ावा देती है। सभा को संबोधित करते हुए डीजीपी पंजाब गौरव यादव ने आर्थिक अपराधों के विरुद्ध जवाबी कार्रवाई को तेज करने के महत्व पर रेखांकित किया। दिवस के पूर्व विशेष पुलिस आयुक्त एवं फिक्की कैस्केड के सलाहकार दीप भाटिया ने नकली सामान के व्यापार और तस्करी के संगठित आर्थिक एवं सामाजिक प्रभावों पर चर्चा की। उन्होंने संबंधित कानूनी और नियामक ढांचे को व्यापक जानकारी प्रदान करते हुए निर्वाचन अधिकारी, 1957 तथा भारतीय न्याय संहिता, 2023 के प्रभावी उपयोग के संबंध में अधिकारियों को मार्गदर्शन किया। इसके अलावा जल्द का दृष्टिकोण प्रस्तुत करते हुए आईटीसी में कॉर्पोरेट मामलों के उपाध्यक्ष आशीष पाल ने बड़े पैमाने पर हो रही तस्करी तथा नकली सिगरेट के व्यापार पर प्रकाश डाला। उन्होंने सरकार को होने वाले भारी राजस्व नुकसान, ट्रेडमार्क उल्लंघन तथा उपभोक्ताओं के विश्वास में कमी की ओर ध्यान आकर्षित किया। उन्होंने यह भी बताया कि तस्करी से प्राप्त धन का उपयोग कई बार आतंकवादी गतिविधियों के लिए भी किया जाता है। इस संदर्भ में उन्होंने ऐसी गतिविधियों के विरुद्ध त्वरित अधिनियम, 1992 के तहत अधिकारियों के कठोर दंड तथा सरकार, एजेंसियों के बीच मजबूत समन्वय की आवश्यकता पर बल दिया। मजबूत फील्ड प्रवर्तन सुनिश्चित करने के लिए दिल्ली उच्च न्यायालय के अधिवक्ता डॉ. ऋषि कुलश्रेष्ठ ने प्रतिभागी अधिकारियों को उन आवश्यक कानूनी एवं प्रक्रियात्मक प्रावधानों की जानकारी दी, जिनका जांच के दौरान पालन किया जाना चाहिए। उन्होंने यह भी बताया कि पकड़े सामान बनाने और तस्करी करने के आरोपियों को कठोर दंड दिलाने के लिए प्रक्रियात्मक नियमों का सावधानीपूर्वक पालन अत्यंत आवश्यक है।

भारत ने बहुपक्षीय समझौतों के साथ अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रवर्तन नेटवर्क को किया सशक्त: मोहन कुमार सिंह

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नई दिल्ली/टीम डिजिटल। केंद्रीय अप्रत्यक्ष कर एवं सीमा शुल्क बोर्ड (सीबीआईसी) के अनुपालन प्रबंधन सदस्य मोहन कुमार सिंह ने आज तस्करी विरोधी दिवस के 5वें संस्करण के दौरान कहा कि भारत ने अपने अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रवर्तन ढांचे को काफी मजबूत किया है। उन्होंने बताया कि भारत ने 42 पारस्परिक सीमा शुल्क सहयोग समझौतों (MOU) पर हस्ताक्षर किए हैं और 21 अन्य प्रमुख व्यापारिक साझेदार देशों के साथ भी ऐसे समझौतों पर बातचीत की है। सिंह ने तस्करी की बढ़ती समस्या का जिक्र करते हुए कहा कि यह अब एक संगठित और तकनीकी रूप से सक्षम अपराध बन गया है, जो राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा और आर्थिक स्थिरता के लिए खतरे की घंटी है। उन्होंने बताया कि देश के सीमा शुल्क विभाग और राजस्व खुफिया निदेशालय ने इस साल की तीन तिमाहियों में बड़ी मात्रा में अवैध सामान जब्त किए हैं, जिनमें लगभग 500 किलोग्राम सोना, 15 करोड़ से ज्यादा अवैध सिगरेट, 20 टन लाल चंदन, 120 किलोग्राम कोकीन और 350 किलोग्राम एम्फेटेमिन शामिल हैं। साथ ही, वन्यजीव तस्करी और दोहरे उपयोग वाले सामान से जुड़ी कई जब्तियां भी की गई हैं।

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 तिमाही में हवाई अड्डों पर लगभग 500 किलोग्राम सोना, लगभग 15 करोड़ अवैध सिगरेट, 20 टन से अधिक लाल चंदन, लगभग 120 किलोग्राम कोकीन, लगभग 50 किलोग्राम हेरोइन, लगभग 350 किलोग्राम एम्फेटेमिन और लगभग 3,700 किलोग्राम हाइड्रोपोनिक कैनेबिस की जब्ती की गई है। हमने वन्यजीव तस्करी के 100 से अधिक मामलों का भी पता लगाया है। दोहरे उपयोग वाले (डुअल यूज) सामान, हथियार, गोला-बारूद, ड्रोन और नकली भारतीय करेंसी नोटों से संबंधित जब्ती भी की गई है। फिक्की कास्केड के अध्यक्ष अनिल राजपूत ने कहा कि वैध व्यापार को बढ़ावा देने, खुफिया जानकारियां साझा करने और गैरकानूनी ऑपरेटरों को निर्णायक रूप से दंडित करने के लिए देशों के बीच मजबूत साझेदारी आवश्यक है।

Network-Based Disruption: India's Technology-Led Strategy Against Transnational Smuggling

SDG IX (Invest, Work and Economic Growth) | SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions)
Ministry of Commerce and Industry | Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs | Ministry of Finance

At FICCI CASCADE's 5th Anti-Smuggling Day, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) reaffirmed its commitment to a technology-driven, network-based disruption strategy against transnational smuggling. With illicit markets in India estimated at nearly **₹8 lakh crore** in 2022–23, smuggling has evolved into a highly organized, commodity-agnostic ecosystem crime with direct implications for national security. To counter this, India has established **42 Mutual Customs Cooperation Agreements (MoUs)**, with 21 more under negotiation, aimed at targeting financial flows and international linkages. Seizures in the first three quarters of the current financial year include approximately **500 kg of gold**, 150 million illicit cigarette sticks, and significant quantities of narcotics like hydroponic cannabis and cocaine, alongside the detection of over 100 wildlife trafficking cases.

Key Pillars of the Enhanced Enforcement Architecture The CBIC and FICCI CASCADE have identified several critical foundational pillars for dismantling illicit trade ecosystems:

- **Transition to Network-Based Disruption:** Shifting from event-based seizures to targeting the financial layering, logistics enablers, and international syndicates that sustain smuggling.
- **AI-Powered Surveillance and Analytics:** Utilizing AI-driven image analytics and expanded container scanning at major ports to identify suspicious consignments before they enter the domestic market.

सीमा शुल्क करार से तस्करी पर अंकुश बढ़ा : सीबीआईसी

नई दिल्ली। केंद्रीय अप्रत्यक्ष कर और सीमा शुल्क बोर्ड (सीबीआईसी) के सदस्य मोहन कुमार सिंह ने बुधवार को कहा कि भारत ने प्रमुख व्यापारिक साझेदारों के साथ 42 पारस्परिक सीमा शुल्क सहयोग समझौतों के माध्यम से अंतरराष्ट्रीय तस्करी नेटवर्क पर अंकुश लगाने के लिए अपनी वैश्विक प्रवर्तन क्षमता को काफी मजबूत किया है। इसके अलावा 21 और ऐसे समझौतों पर बातचीत जारी है। सिंह ने उद्योग मंडल फिक्की- कैस्केड द्वारा आयोजित तस्करी निरोधक दिवस के पांचवें संस्करण को संबोधित करते हुए यह बात कही। सामूहिक अंतरराष्ट्रीय कार्रवाई का जिक्र करते हुए फिक्की कैस्केड के चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत ने कहा, तस्करी से लड़ना किसी एक संस्था या एक देश की जिम्मेदारी नहीं हो सकती।

India deepens global enforcement capabilities to curb smuggling, 21 more pacts in works: CBIC member

NEW DELHI (Feb 11) 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 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, approximately 120 kilograms of cocaine, around 50 kilograms of heroin, and close to 3,700 kilograms of hydroponic cannabis at airports," he said.

अवैध व्यापार को रोकने को उद्योग व समाज भी जिम्मेदारी निभाए: जोशी

नई दिल्ली | केंद्रीय उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य एवं सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री प्रह्लाद जोशी ने "नकली उत्पादों से कारोबार को नुकसान और उपभोक्ता के साथ हो रहे विश्वासघात से निपटने के लिए उद्योग और समाज को साझा जिम्मेदारी निभाने को कहा है। फिक्की कास्केड द्वारा आयोजित उपभोक्ताओं की सुरक्षा : तस्करी और जालसाजी के खतरे से निपटना विषयक सेमिनार में वीडियो संबोधन में उन्होंने कहा कि तस्करी चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत ने कहा कि केंद्र सरकार ने 'उपभोक्ता संरक्षण अधिनियम' के माध्यम से 'केंद्रीय उपभोक्ता संरक्षण प्राधिकरण' की स्थापना और 'जागो ग्राहक जागो' जैसी पहल के माध्यम से कदम उठाए हैं। लेकिन अवैध व्यापार के बदलते स्वरूप को देखते हुए इस दिशा में विभिन्न संस्थाओं के बीच समन्वय की जरूरत है। तस्करी को रोकने के लिए विभिन्न एजेंसियों के बीच खुफिया जानकारियों को साझा करने

'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

तस्करी से उपभोक्ताओं पर खतरा, सरकार ने बताया 'शेडो इकोनॉमी'

नई दिल्ली@पत्रिका. भारत का तेज आर्थिक विकास उपभोग के तरीकों और मार्केट डायनामिक्स को नया रूप दे रहा है। इसे ध्यान में रखते हुए भारत सरकार के उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य एवं सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री प्रह्लाद जोशी ने वर्चुअल माध्यम से सेमिनार को संबोधित करते हुए अवैध व्यापार को एक छाया अर्थव्यवस्था (शेडो इकोनॉमी) की संज्ञा दी। फिक्की कास्केड द्वारा "उपभोक्ताओं की सुरक्षा: तस्करी और जालसाजी के खतरे से निपटना, विषय पर आयोजित सेमिनार में मंत्री ने कहा, तस्करी और जालसाजी ऐसे अपराध नहीं हैं, जिनसे किसी को खतरा नहीं है। ये गतिविधियां उपभोक्ताओं को असुरक्षित, घटिया और कई मामलों में जहरीले उत्पादों के संपर्क में लाती हैं। उन्होंने नागरिकों को सशक्त बनाने के मुख्य स्तंभों के तौर पर केंद्रीय उपभोक्ता संरक्षण प्राधिकरण, राष्ट्रीय उपभोक्ता हेल्पलाइन और 'जागो ग्राहक जागो' अभियान जैसी पहलों का जिक्र किया।

फिक्की कास्केड के चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत ने कहा, आज के दौर में उपभोक्ता संरक्षण की दिशा में बढ़ने के लिए सिर्फ प्रतिरि या देने से काम नहीं चलेगा। हमें इससे आगे रोकथाम पर केंद्रित, व्यवस्थित और भविष्य को ध्यान में रखने वाली प्रणाली तैयार करने की दिशा में निर्णायक तरीके से बढ़ना होगा। इसके साथ-साथ, तस्करी और जालसाजी से प्रभावी ढंग से निपटने के लिए 'संपूर्ण समाज को साथ लेकर चलने का दृष्टिकोण अपनाना भी अनिवार्य है।

MEDIA COVERAGE

TOP 3 NEWS

FICCI CASCADE Hosts Seminar on Protecting Consumers from the Threat of Smuggling and Counterfeiting

By Mobility_India



FICCI CASCADE Hosts Seminar on Protecting Consumers from the Threat of Smuggling and Counterfeiting



GLIMPSES

FICCI CASCADE successfully organized a high-impact seminar titled **"Protecting Consumers: Addressing the Threat of Smuggling and Counterfeiting"** at Federation House, New Delhi, bringing together key policymakers, enforcement authorities, industry leaders, and consumer rights experts to address the growing challenge of illicit trade.

The seminar focused on strengthening policy frameworks, enhancing enforcement mechanisms, and increasing consumer awareness to safeguard markets from counterfeit and smuggled goods.

उपभोक्ताओं का भरोसा घटाता है अवैध व्यापार: प्रल्हाद जोशी

नई दिल्ली। फिक्की कास्केड द्वारा ''उपभोक्ताओं की सुरक्षा: तस्करी और जालसाजी के खतरे से निपटना'' विषय पर आयोजित सेमिनार में अपने विशेष वीडियो संबोधन में केन्द्रीय उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य एवं सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री प्रह्लाद जोशी ने कहा, ''तस्करी और जालसाजी गतिविधियां उपभोक्ताओं को असुरक्षित, घटिया और कई मामलों में जहरीले उत्पादों के संपर्क में लाती हैं। इनसे ईमानदारी से व्यवसाय करने वालों को नुकसान होता है और सरकारी राजस्व भी कम होता है।''इस सेमिनार मे केन्द्रीय उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य एवं सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्रालय की सचिव निधि खरे और फिक्की कास्केड के चेयरमैन अनिल राजपूत समेत अन्य दिग्गजों ने भी संबोधित किया।

Goa DGP: Counterfeit goods harm economy, endanger public health



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

News

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

ANI

Updated: 3rd Feb, 2026 at 10:50 PM

Panaji (Goa) [India], February 2 (ANI): Alok Kumar, Director General of Police, Goa has asserted that law enforcement agencies must recognise the deep and widespread presence of counterfeit and smuggled goods in Indian markets as these illegal activities harm the economy, erode social values, endanger public health, and ultimately affect the quality of life of citizens.

FICCI-CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy) today organised a Capacity Building Programme for Police Officers on 'Prevention of Counterfeiting and Smuggling' in Panaji, Goa. The Goa police chief extended his support for the initiative and highlighted the importance of such capacity-building programmes in strengthening the competence, readiness, and on-ground effectiveness of police personnel in combating illicit trade.

అక్రమ వాణిజ్యం వినియోగదారుల నమ్మకానికి ముప్పు



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

STATESMAN 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 120 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 container scanning across major ports will further strengthen enforcement capabilities, while GST simplification and customs reforms continue to promote compliance and reduce incentives for illicit trade.











MEDIA COVERAGE

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS











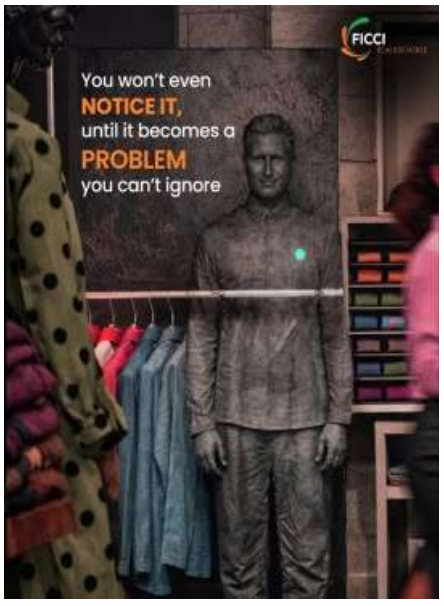






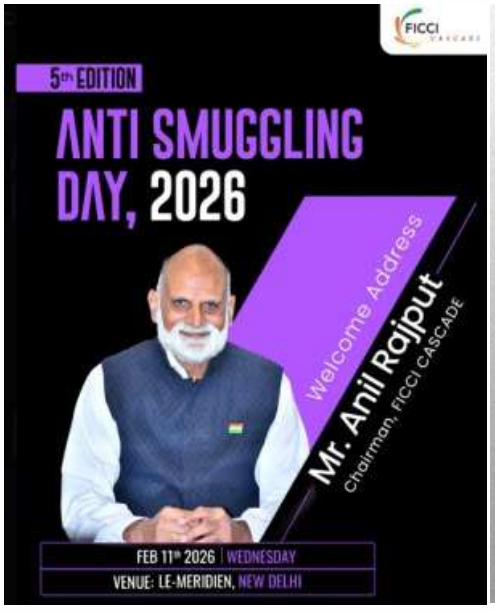


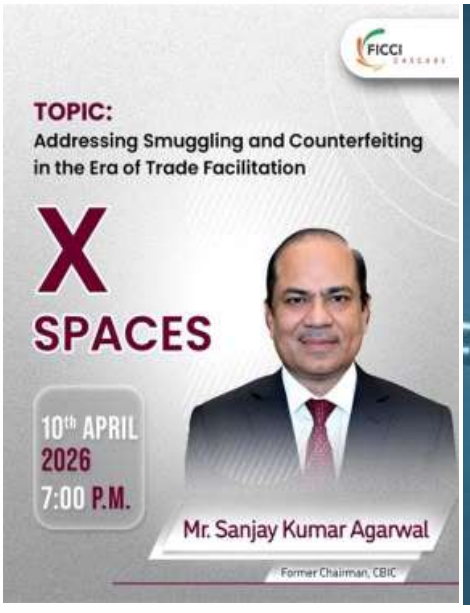
SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

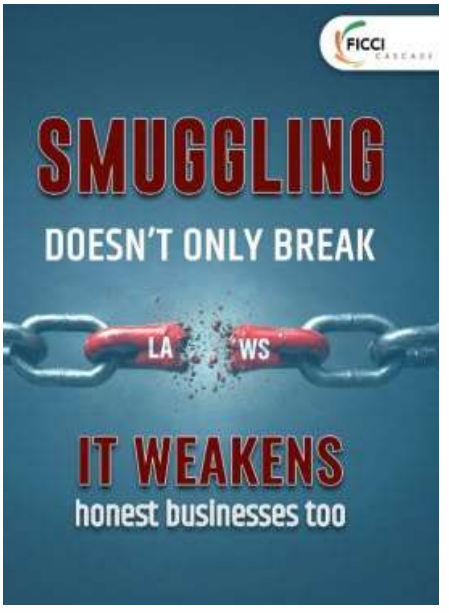




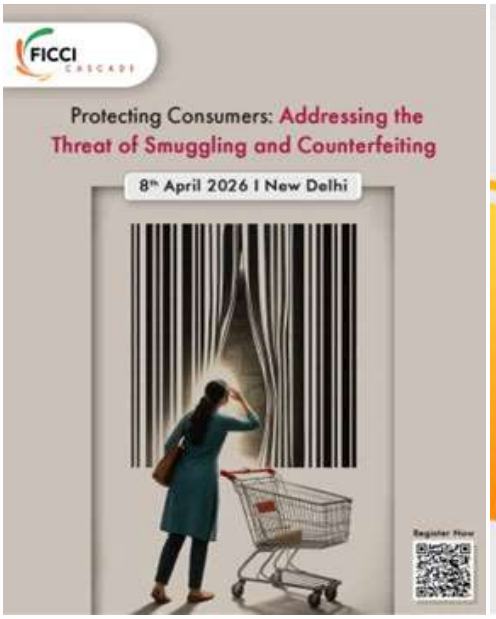














INTERNATIONAL NEWS

1. P202-M counterfeit footwear, equipment seized; 4 Chinese arrested

18 January 2026 | Philippine News Agency

MANILA - Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) agents seized PHP202 million worth of counterfeit footwear, products and machinery in Bulacan and Pampanga on Saturday. Four Chinese nationals were also arrested.
https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1267212?__cf_chl_f_tk=0iBAfg6PSkA.0My_ERkA9Qr8ZJeP3mCqph5WDrmsm4o-1782885043-1.0.1.1-CXBOb1QcqY1g__YI8TtnN1Hmgo2aO.Fq2I6mURtTNi0

2. Nearly 22,000 packs of counterfeit cigarettes seized in Chui region

19 February 2026 | 24 KG

An attempt to transport a large shipment of cigarettes without excise stamps was foiled in Issyk-Ata district of Chui region, the State Tax Service of the Kyrgyz Republic reported. According to the agency, during a tax inspection raid in the village of Birdik, tax officers discovered a Mercedes-Benz Sprinter that was unloading tobacco products into another vehicle.

https://24.kg/english/362688_Nearly_22000_packs_of_counter feit_cigarettes_seized_in_Chui_region/

3.EUR 1.2 billion in counterfeit cash stopped in postal operation

11 February 2026 | Europol

Law enforcement authorities from 18 countries have stopped an estimated EUR 1.2 billion in counterfeit banknotes and coins from entering circulation during Operation DECOY III, a Europol-coordinated action led by Austria, Portugal, and Spain.

https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/eur-12-billion-in-counterfeit-cash-stopped-in-postal-operation

4. ₱138M illegal cigarettes seized in citywide CCPO-BIR crackdowns

20 February 2026 | Cebu Daily News

CEBU CITY, Philippines - More than P138 million worth of illegal, smuggled, and counterfeit cigarettes were seized during the simultaneous joint operations conducted by the Cebu City Police Office (CCPO) and the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) across Cebu City on Thursday afternoon, February 19.

https://cebudailynews.inquirer.net/698840/illegal-cigarettes-worth-peso138m-seized-in-cebu-city-wide-crackdown

5. Investigation Grey Cloud: EPPO dismantles illegal cigarette factory and seizes 25 tonnes of cigarettes and tobacco

18 March 2026 | European Public Prosecutors Office

At the request of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) in Palermo (Italy), the Italian Financial Police (Guardia di Finanza) of Palermo carried out searches and seized a clandestine cigarette factory, several storage facilities, and 25 tonnes of cigarettes and shredded tobacco.

https://www.eppo.europa.eu/media/news/investigation-grey-cloud-eppo-dismantles-illegal-cigarette-factory-and-seizes-25-tonnes-cigarettes-2026-03-18_en

6.Almost €7m worth of cigarettes seized by Revenue at Dublin Port

14 April 2026 | The Irish Times

Revenue seized more than seven million cigarettes at Dublin Port earlier this month with an estimated value of almost €7 million.The seizure on April 3rd was made following routine risk profiling, with the assistance of Revenue's mobile X-ray scanner and detector dog Milo.

https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/2026/04/14/almost-7m-worth-of-cigarettes-seized-by-revenue-at-dublin-port/

7. Global crackdown on illicit pharmaceuticals sees $15.5 million in seizures

7 May 2026 | Reuters

Interpol said on Thursday an operation across 90 countries and territories has resulted in the seizure of 6.42 million doses of unapproved and counterfeit pharmaceuticals worth $15.5 million. Operation Pangea XVIII led to 269 arrests and the dismantling of 66 criminal groups involved in the illicit pharmaceutical trade, the organization said.

https://www.reuters.com/legal/litigation/global-crackdown-illicit-pharmaceuticals-sees-155-million-seizures-2026-05-07/

8. Hong Kong customs seize $20 million in fake goods ahead of the World Cup

11 June 2026 | The Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) - Just hours before the World Cup kicked off, Hong Kong authorities announced they seized 230,000 suspected counterfeit items worth an estimated $20 million, including jerseys tied to the tournament.

https://apnews.com/article/fake-jerseys-world-cup-hong-kong-8b79f31a905bdb7295966effb0e74c5c

9. 11 million cigarettes seized in an operation against tobacco smuggling and counterfeiting

16 June, 2026 | Border Security Report

The Civil Guard has seized 11 million cigarettes, equivalent to 585,374 packs, and more than eight tons of loose tobacco, all valued at five million euros, in an operation against tobacco smuggling and counterfeiting.

https://world-border-congress.com/11-million-cigarettes-seized-in-an-operation-against-tobacco-smuggling-and-counterfeiting-2/

10. Canal Street raid nets $151M in bootleg goods in latest NYPD crackdown on sidewalk vendors

26 June 2026 | New York Post

The NYPD carried out another Canal Street raid on Thursday - seizing a whopping $151 million worth of knockoff Rolexes, fake fragrances, bootleg Knicks jerseys and other phony goods peddled on the infamous strip.

https://nypost.com/2026/06/26/us-news/canal-street-raid-nets-151m-in-bootleg-goods-in-latest-nypd-crackdown/

NATIONAL NEWS

1. 56,000 Liquor Bottles Worth 4 Crores Seized in Dry Gujarat

20 February 2026 | NDTV

A police station in Gujarat's Bhuj is faced with a one-of-a-kind challenge - where to store 56,000 liquor bottles. The police station's storage rooms are proving too small to accommodate liquor worth Rs 4 crore. Staff members have been working for hours to catalogue and stack thousands of liquor boxes, a task that remains pending due to the sheer volume.

https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/56-000-liquor-bottles-worth-4-crores-seized-in-dry-gujarat-11113007

2. Boat smuggling foreign cigarettes worth Rs 5 crore caught off Gujarat coast

22 February 2026 | INDIA TODAY

The operation was carried out on the morning of February 21 when an ICG ship, on forward area patrol under Coast Guard Region (North West), spotted the boat about 115 nautical miles west of Dwarka. Officials said the vessel's movement appeared suspicious, prompting the Coast Guard to move in for inspection.

https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/iranian-crewed-boat-smuggling-foreign-cigarettes-caught-off-gujarat-coast-dwarka-2872521-2026-02-22

3. Fake iPhone Parts Racket Busted in Delhi, Five Held; Items Worth Rs 1.6 Crore Seized

08 March 2026 | NDTVPROFIT

The Delhi Police has busted a racket involved in selling counterfeit spare iPhone spare parts and accessories as genuine products in Rohini and arrested five shop owners, officials said on Sunday. Fake items worth around Rs 1.6 crore were seized during the operation.

https://www.ndtvprofit.com/india/fake-iphone-parts-racket-busted-in-delhi-five-held-items-worth-rs-1-6-crore-seized-11185762

4. Rs 38 crore gold seized, 24 women arrested at Mumbai airport smuggling racket bust

10 April 2026 | INDIA TODAY

In a major crackdown on organised gold smuggling, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has busted a syndicate, seizing 29.37 kg of gold valued at Rs 37.74 crore and arresting 24 carriers. DRI officers identified a group of female carriers arriving from Nairobi who were attempting to smuggle large quantities of gold.

https://www.indiatoday.in/cities/mumbai/story/dri-mumbai-busts-gold-smuggling-syndicate-seizes-gold-arrests-women-2894551-2026-04-10

5. 24 Women Arrested with Gold Worth Rs 37 Crore at Mumbai Airport

10 April 2026 | NDTV

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence seized 29.37 kg of gold worth Rs 37.74 crore from 24 women at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, busting a major smuggling racket, an official said.

https://www.ndtv.com/mumbai-news/24-women-arrested-with-gold-worth-rs-37-crore-at-mumbai-airport-11336763

6.2,000 kg Fake Ghee Worth Rs 14 Lakh Seized In Surat Factory Operating For 2 Years

17 April 2026 | NDTV

Officials in Surat have seized 2,029 kilograms of adulterated ghee and arrested two men after raiding a manufacturing unit in the Sachin GIDC area as part of a targeted crackdown on food adulteration.

https://www.ndtv.com/food/2-000-kg-fake-ghee-worth-rs-14-lakh-seized-in-surat-factory-operating-for-2-years-11367765

7. Over 1.13 lakh foreign cigarettes seized at Ahmedabad airport; 3 passengers detained

13 May 2026 | MATHRUBHUMI ENGLISH

Customs officials at Ahmedabad's Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport (SVPIA) have seized more than 1.13 lakh sticks of foreign-origin cigarettes and intercepted three passengers arriving from Dubai.

https://english.mathrubhumi.com/news/india/ahmedabad-airport-cigarette-smuggling-seized-dubai-soe12gkj

8.In Late Night Raid, Cops Seize 2,100 Fake Liquor Bottles in Dry Gujarat

16 May 2026 | NDTV

In a late-night raid in dry state Gujarat, police and crime branch officials arrested two persons for running a sophisticated counterfeit liquor manufacturing unit inside a residential property in the Budasan village of Kadi in the Mehsana district.

https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/in-late-night-raid-cops-seize-2-100-fake-liquor-bottles-in-dry-gujarat-11505689

9. Gold Bars Worth Rs 5.5 Crore Hidden in Pants, US Man Caught at Delhi Airport

16 May 2026 | NDTV

A US citizen of Indian origin, arriving from the US, was arrested at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport after he concealed 115 gold bars, worth Rs 5.5 crore, inside his trousers. The man arrived in Delhi from San Francisco on Friday.

https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/gold-bars-worth-rs-5-5-crore-hidden-in-pants-us-man-caught-at-delhi-airport-11505258

10. DRI seizes 71 lakh smuggled cigarette sticks worth Rs 14 crore in Northeast, arrests four

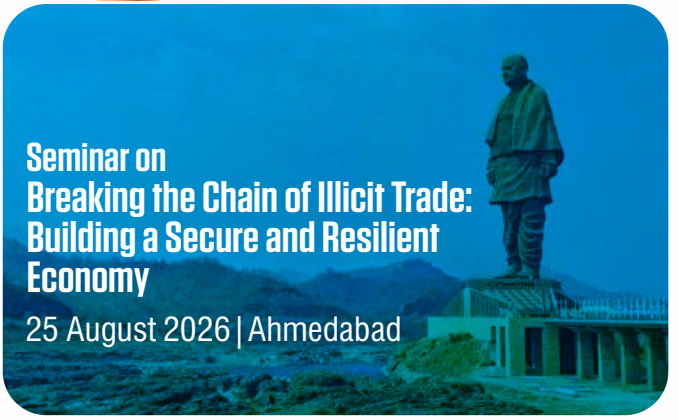
12 June 2026 | INDIATODAYNE

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized around 71 lakh sticks of foreign-origin smuggled cigarettes valued at approximately Rs 14 crore in a series of operations conducted across the Northeast since May this year, officials said.

https://www.indiatodayne.in/assam/story/dri-seizes-71-lakh-smuggled-cigarette-sticks-worth-rs-14-crore-in-northeast-arrests-four-1407034-2026-06-12











FICCI CASCADE

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

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