

## India's COP8 Delegation should Include Industry Stakeholders, Says TII

With the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) Conference of Parties (COP8) Meeting being scheduled for October 1-6, 2018 in Geneva, Switzerland, The Tobacco Institute of India (TII) has called upon the Indian Government to undertake prior consultation with farmers and other Industry stakeholders on the FCTC Articles contained in the COP8 Agenda.

In a Press Statement, issued on August 13, 2018, the Institute has also sought inclusion of stakeholder representatives in the official Indian delegation to the FCTC COP8 which will discuss and adopt measures in relation to the FCTC Articles.

“This will ensure that the stakeholder view point on various issues arising out of the Agenda is taken cognizance of and no unilateral and discriminatory one-sided decision is taken by the Parties to the Conference that is inimical to the livelihood of millions dependent on tobacco in India,” TII emphasised.

TII pointed out that contrary to the United Nations doctrines and assertions of the FCTC, the COP processes have become extremely non-inclusive and secretive. “Despite repeated appeals by tobacco growers and farmer organizations over the years from across the world, participation of this vital stakeholder group in the Conference has consistently been denied,” TII noted.

TII said that framing of tobacco control policies at the Conference without the involvement of tobacco farmers, whose livelihood is seriously threatened, is unfair and unprincipled with the risk of their genuine concerns being subverted and severely compromised.

The Institute also apprehended that anti-tobacco activists and NGOs, who attend and participate in COP proceedings, will “seek to influence the decisions on the various Articles of the FCTC at the COP8 meeting through contentions that are not based on scientific evidence, leading to the serious undermining of the interest of tobacco farmers and other industry stakeholders”.

According to TII, any decision arrived at the COP8 unilaterally without taking the views of those that derive their livelihood from tobacco and which is not based on livelihood considerations will have a devastating impact on farm incomes and the lives of millions that are dependent on tobacco.

The Government of India as the President of COP8 should therefore, uphold the high democratic principles of the Indian Constitution and take a leadership position in facilitating the participation of tobacco farmers and other industry stakeholders in policy-making in the proceedings of the FCTC COP8, TII submitted.

# 'Include industry men, farmers in WHO tobacco control meet'

**NEW DELHI:** Tobacco Institute of India (TII) on Monday asked the government to undertake prior consultation with farmers and industry stakeholders before the WHO tobacco control conference in October.

The tobacco industry lobby group also demanded inclusion of 'stakeholder representatives' in the official Indian delegation to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) COP8 meeting to be held in Geneva from October 1-6.

"Framing of tobacco control policies at the conference without the involvement of tobacco farmers, whose livelihood is seriously threatened, is unfair and unprincipled with the risk of their genuine concerns being subverted and severely compromised," TII Director Syed Mahmood Ahmad said in a statement.

Stating that "millions of small and marginal retailers" derive their livelihood from sale of tobacco products in India, he said, "Policy development without consulting for the genuine concerns and apprehensions of this stakeholder group will have serious livelihood consequences resulting in huge unemployment and poverty issues."



**Tobacco acreage and production in the country have started declining as the Govt is encouraging farmers in 10 states like Andhra Pradesh to shift to alternative crops in a big way**

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"We request the government of India to engage extensively with the industry stakeholders on the FCTC articles contained in the COP8 agenda and also include industry stakeholders and representatives from the farming community to the official Indian delegation to the conference," he added.

This is extremely important in order to arrive at a balanced and pragmatic position on various proposals and guidelines at the conference, TII said.

Meanwhile, tobacco acreage and production in the country have started declining under the leadership of the government in favour of other crops in 10 states like Andhra Pradesh to shift to alternative crops in a big way, a senior government official

said on Monday. Alternative crops like foodgrains, cereals, pulses, oilseeds, vegetables, sugarcane, oil palm, and even dairy and poultry activities have been identified for tobacco growing areas in different states, he said.

"Both area and production of tobacco are declining every year because the government is supporting with funds to encourage the tobacco growers to shift to alternative crops," the official said.

About 64.5 crore was released to the tobacco-growing states in the 2017-18 fiscal to shift to alternative farming. Funds are being provided under the Sakshar Krishi Vikas Yojana (SKVY), he said.

As per the latest data, the tobacco area has declined by 11.56 per cent to 5.99 lakh hectares in 2016-17 from 6.67 lakh hectares in 2014-15. Total tobacco output has come down to 8.85 lakh tonnes in 2016-17 from 10.25 lakh tonnes in 2014-15.

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## TII wants industry representatives to be included in WHO tobacco control conference

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TII, which represents leading cigarette manufacturers such as ITC, Godfrey Philipson VST, further said despite repeated appeals by tobacco growers

and farmer organisations over the years from across the world, their participation in the Conference has consistently been denied.

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नई दिल्ली: टोबैको इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ इंडिया (TII) ने अक्टूबर में होने वाले वर्ल्ड हेल्थ ऑर्गेनाइजेशन (WHO) की टोबैको कंट्रोल कॉन्फ्रेंस में शामिल होने की मांग की है। इसके अलावा वे 1-6 अक्टूबर तक होने वाले फ्रेमवर्क पर 2018 के टोबैको नियंत्रण प्रतिक्रिया में इंडस्ट्री के स्टैकहोल्डर्स को शामिल करने की मांग भी की गई है। TII के डायरेक्टर सैयद महमूद अहमद ने कहा, "टोबैको किसानों को शामिल किए बिना टोबैको में टोबैको कंट्रोल पॉलिसी बनाना गलत होगा। उन्होंने कहा कि देश में लाखों छोटे और मछले दुकानदारों की आजीविका टोबैको उद्योगों को मिली है। TII ने FCTC, फ्रेमवर्क और VST जैसे देश की सभी स्मॉल बजट कंपनियों सहज के और पर शामिल है।

## Tobacco industry wants to be part of FCTC conference in Geneva

The guidelines for the international tobacco control conference say no person connected to the industry can be nominated for participation

Tobacco Institute of India has appealed to the Government of India to undertake prior consultation with farmers and other industry stakeholders and include stakeholder representatives in the official Indian delegation to the FCTC COP 8.

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) Conference of Parties (COP8) Meeting, presided over by India, is being held in Geneva from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, October 2018 to discuss and adopt measures in relation to the Articles of the Convention. FCTC is an international convention that makes it obligatory on signatory countries to take prescribed tobacco control measures.

The request is bound to be rejected as the Guide for Delegates to the Conference of Parties 2018 clearly lays down: "In accordance with Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC as the Guidelines for implementation of Article 5.3 adopted by COP in 2008, Parties should not nominate any person employed by the tobacco industry or any entity working to further its interests, or any person benefiting from the proceeds of tobacco

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## एफसीटीसी-कॉप 8 में टंबाकू किसानों और उद्योग से जुड़े अन्य लोगों को शामिल करने की अपील

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"We request the government of India to engage extensively with the industry stakeholders on the FCTC articles contained in the COP8 agenda and also include industry stakeholders and representatives from the farming community to the official Indian delegation to the conference," he added.

## TII asks govt to consult farmers prior ban

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, AUG 13

The Tobacco Institute of India (TII) on Monday requested the Union government to undertake prior consultation with farmers and other industry stakeholders and include stakeholder representatives in the official Indian delegation to the FCTC COP 8.

The country's tobacco farmers have also appealed to the government to hold consultation with their representatives before the conference to ensure that their livelihood dependence on tobacco is not undermined by extreme and unilateral decisions at the FCTC COP8. The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) Conference of Parties (COP8) meeting, presided over by India, is being held in October to discuss and adopt measures in relation to the Articles of the Convention. "Framing of tobacco control policies at the conference without the involvement of tobacco farmers, whose livelihood is seriously threatened, is unfair and unprincipled with the risk of their genuine concerns being subverted and severely compromised," said director TII, Syed Mahmood Ahmad.

"We request the government of India to engage extensively with the industry stakeholders on the FCTC articles contained in the COP8 agenda and also include industry stakeholders and representatives from the farming community in the official Indian delegation to the conference," it added.

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## Tobacco control policy: The

Tobacco Institute of India (TII) requested the government to undertake prior consultation with farmers and industry stakeholders, and include their representatives in the Indian delegation to the FCTC COP8 ensuring that their livelihood is not undermined by extreme and unilateral decisions. Syed Ahmad, director of TII, said, "Framing of tobacco control policies at the conference without the involvement of tobacco farmers is unfair."

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