

Tobacco farmers seek withdrawal of COTPA Amendment Bill

OUR BUREAU

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The Federation of All India Farmer Associations (FAIFA) has appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to go ahead with the COTPA Bill, which will boost the illegal cigarette trade in the country.

This, in turn, would adversely impact the domestic demand for the home grown tobacco and incomes of the tobacco farmers in the country.

“The government is circulating the draft Bill for feedback. We request the government to withdraw the Bill and not to get influenced by the international non-governmental organisations that are misrepresenting facts to promote the interest of vested groups,” said

Murali Babu, General Secretary of Federation of All India Farmer Associations (FAIFA). He said the illicit cigarette trade is causing a loss of ₹1,300 crore every year to the tobacco farmers in the country.

The FAIFA has submitted memorandum to the Prime Minister and Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Commerce and Labour, urging them not to go ahead with the bill.

The Bill seeks to make efforts to eliminate all direct and indirect advertising, promotion and sponsorship concerning tobacco. It also calls for curbs on promotion, distribution and sale of cigarettes. Violations would attract a jail term and fine.