

## MASCRADE 2022

FICCI's Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE) organized the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of its International Conference: MASCRADE 2022– Movement Against Smuggled and Counterfeit Trade on September 22-23, 2022 in New Delhi. The theme of this year's conference was "Unleashing the Power of Consumers in the fight against Smuggling and Counterfeiting".

The conference aimed to empower, inspire, and connect consumers for a safer and healthier world. It provided a platform to analyze and promote deliberations among the stakeholders on the adverse socio-economic impact of illicit trade.

Leading international institutions like WCO, INTERPOL, UNODC, OECD, WIPO, Australian High Commission, US Homeland Security Investigations, Senior Government Officials, among others, participated in the two-day programme. Besides, key dignitaries from the Indian government, police, judiciary, customs and captains of the industry were present on the occasion.

Attending the event as the Chief Guest, Mr M Venkaiah Naidu, Former Vice President of India said that it is imperative for all stakeholders to reform, perform and transform in order to end the menace of counterfeiting and smuggling. "There is a need to strengthen the existing laws. Unless all of us join together, the fight against illicit trade and smuggling cannot be won," he emphasized.

Mr Naidu also asserted that sharing of ideas, experiences and sharing of views in formulating a more effective legislation with implementation is required to create awareness and industry to play a critical role in this. "Transformation of the system, society, governance, is required for the happiness of the people and is required to create awareness among the consumers," he added.

Former Vice President of India also stated that it is imperative to protect the rights of the consumers. "Consumer awareness has to be taken as a mission with a passion for the sake of the nation and then the real change will come," stated Mr Naidu.

India, he said is on the move and one of the fastest growing economies in the world and we must all join together to end the menace of counterfeiting and smuggling.

Mr Sandeep Kumar, Member, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs said, "Due to technology advancements, the industry today has the opportunity to create tools that can empower consumers to take on smuggling and counterfeiting. This, along with strong enforcement can make a big difference on the ground. The fight against illicit trade has to become a mass movement."

Mr Sanjiv Mehta, President, FICCI, said, "Strong cooperation between different stakeholders and innovative action is required to free India of illicit trade. Smuggling and counterfeiting is all-pervasive and industry, government and society directly bear its brunt." He further added that consumer Protection Act is a stepping-stone towards empowering the consumers.

