

## Large & Booming Smuggled Cigarettes a Roadblock for Livelihood, Say Farmers on WTGD 2022



On the occasion of World Tobacco Growers' Day (WTGD) on October 28, the Federation of All India Farmer Associations (FAIFA) appealed the Government against high Taxation and stringent regulations, lesser crop production and lack of export incentives, never ending boom of illegal/smuggled/contraband cigarettes, that don't use tobacco grown in India.

FAIFA also highlighted the false propaganda of foreign vested NGOs and sought representation of tobacco farmers in the committees set up by the Government to deliberate upon the issues that would impact the livelihood of farmers.

Mr Mareddy Subrahmanyeswara Reddy, Executive Member of the Federation said, "FCV farming community has faced business losses of over Rs 6,000 crore, with a drop in Flue-Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco production from 325 million kg in 2014-15 to 180 million kg in 2020-21."

“Presently, India is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest illegal cigarette market in the world... As smuggled cigarettes do not use Indian tobacco, the offtake of tobacco for manufacture of legal cigarettes in India is declining. As a result, FCV cultivation is reducing and farmers are incurring a loss in excess of Rs 1,300 crore every year. We demand immediate and strict measures to curb rising illicit cigarette markets so that Indian framers can benefit,” Mr. Reddy added.

Mr Gadde Seshagiri Rao, Vice President of FAIFA stated “Tobacco provides direct and indirect employment to more than 47.5 million people, around 70% of whom are in the agricultural sector. Tobacco is a highly remunerative crop providing economic/social benefits to farmers in the tobacco growing regions. Studies conducted by the Central Tobacco Research Institute (CTRI) have also shown that there is no other equally remunerative crop in the tobacco growing regions. Hence, it is important that Government of India extends the required support to FCV growers in meeting international standards”.

Mr. Murali Babu, General Secretary, Federation of All India Farmer Associations (FAIFA), said, “Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) recommends the need to balance socio-economic dependence of tobacco cultivation and tobacco control activities. However, anti-tobacco activists in India are pushing policy makers to take extreme decisions citing FCTC without giving due regard to the recommended stance of calibrated approach to the cultivation and the needs of tobacco farming community.”

FAIFA urged the policy makers to pay attention to the extreme pain and injury that is being faced by the tobacco farmers and take steps which will not precipitate the crisis going forward.

FAIFA is a non-profit organization representing the cause of millions of farmers and farm workers of commercial crops across the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Gujarat etc.

**FAIFA demands Centre to bail out crisis-hit tobacco growers**  
TNN | October 28, 2022  
GUNTUR: Federation of All India Farmer Associations (FAIFA), representing the cause of millions of tobacco farmers and farm workers, has appealed to the Centre to take a relook at the high-taxation and stringent regulations as they were crippling the entire farming sector. The association said that low production of the crop, lack of export incentives and non-stop smuggling of illegal/contraband stocks are also needed close monitoring by the Centre to bail out the tobacco growers from the red.

The FAIFA celebrated world tobacco growers' day on Friday in the presence of scores of tobacco farmers. Speaking on the occasion, tobacco board member Mareddy Subrahmanyeswara Reddy said that FCV farming community has faced business losses of over Rs 6,000 crore, with a drop in Flue-Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco production from 325 million kg in 2014-15 to 180 million kg in 2020-21.

Rising illicit cigarette trade has become rampant due to the high taxes being imposed by the Centre, said Reddy. "The massive taxes imposed on tobacco products are actually counter-productive move as it is helping the illicit trade," said Reddy.

He explained that India is the 4th largest and fastest growing illegal cigarette market in the world. The illicit cigarette market in India has doubled from a level of 13.5 billion sticks in 2006 to 30 billion sticks in 2021.

"As smuggled cigarettes do not use Indian tobacco, the off-take of tobacco for manufacture of legal cigarettes in India is declining. As a result, FCV cultivation is reducing and farmers are incurring a loss in excess of Rs 1300 crore every year. We demand immediate and strict regulations to curb rising illicit cigarette markets so that Indian framers can benefit," said Gadde

**High taxes, stringent regulations crippling tobacco farming: FAIFA**  
Sundani.MN@timesgroup.com  
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**Farmers' representation sought in framing tobacco control regulations**  
Hoon News Service  
Chennai (Prakashan District)  
THE Federation of All India Farmer Associations (FAIFA), in consultation with the International Tobacco Growers Association (ITGA), addressed World Tobacco Control Day in Ongole on Friday. Speaking on occasion, the leaders and members of the farmers' associations stressed that the Flue-Cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco growers are facing troubles due to the extensive regulations imposed by the late propaganda of

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