

## **APPEAL TO HON'BLE PRIME MINISTER TO SUPPORT INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE AT THIS HOUR.**

### **Hon'ble PM**

There is something just not right about this decision of the Health Ministry to push for an Ordinance to ban E-cigarettes.

At a time when farmers and traders are so severely stressed, the news about the Ministry of Health attempting to forcefully bring an ordinance to ban E-Cigarettes is a fatal blow for the tobacco growing, trading and processing industry.

You are aware that tobacco farmers have been in very tight situation ever since the ban on Gutka was implemented. We have found a small outlet for our crop by supplying to the Nicotine manufacturers. Now through this ban, this option is also being snatched.

In light of the fact that our land is not suitable for any other crop, we are hoping that Nicotine, for which the tobacco grown in Gujarat is highly suitable, will be our way to survival –in fact Gujarat has the scope to expand its Nicotine industry to assume the number one slot in the world, which will benefit the farmers and the industry of Gujarat, as well as create jobs.

World over it is acknowledged that E-cigarettes are a much safer option of tobacco consumption and the trend for the future is that more and more people will opt for switching to the safer way of consuming tobacco. Globally this is poised for growth and India should seize the opportunity.

If the ban is imposed, the only result will be loss of revenue to farmers, tobacco traders and adversely impact consumers, as black market will rule the roost.

Is ban the solution each time a sensitive category is discussed? Is our regulatory edifice so weak that we have to resort to blanket bans?

What the Doctor is prescribing is worse than the disease.

Has the impact of this ban been considered on the trade, the farming community? Sure it is a small component today but by banning it we are killing its potential to grow. India is one of the world largest processor of Nicotine and Gujarat leads in that category. This will be a body blow to industry and agriculture at the same time.

More importantly, this will only embolden internationally funded anti-tobacco activism and endanger the livelihoods of millions of farmers across India.

We therefore hope that before taking a drastic step like banning e-cigarettes, which is the only ray of hope for the tobacco farmers and traders, we will get an opportunity to present our views, before whosoever you designate for discussing this important subject.

Hon'ble PM, there is something just not right about this decision of the Health Ministry to push for an Ordinance. Please step in and ask them to consult and reconsider. We assure you we are with you in the event of any reasonable proposal.

For Gujarat Tobacco Merchants Association



Authorized Signatory

**Bhikhubhai N. Patel**  
**President**

**Gujarat Tobacco Merchants Association &  
Gujarat Tobacco Growers & Merchants Association  
203-204, Triveni Arcade, Anand – V V Nagar Road  
V V Nagar – 386120, Gujarat**

