

Tobacco farmers ask govt to shun policies aping West

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New Delhi: The Federation of All India Farmer Associations (FAIFA), a non-profit organization representing farmers and farm workers of commercial crops on Friday lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Vocal for Local' campaign and appealed to the government to shun the legacy of tobacco control policies aping the Western world and adopt policies that are rooted in the reality of tobacco consumption pattern of India.



FAIFA has asked the government not to get influenced by the propaganda of the global tobacco control NGOs.

It has appeals not to take policy decisions in present pandemic that increases instability and adverse impact on the livelihood of Indian FCV tobacco farmers while promoting foreign smuggled tobacco brands.

Over 120 million kg of FCV tobacco worth around Rs 2000 crores remains unsold in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

It said that there has been more than Rs 5,000 crore loss to the FCV tobacco farming community in last 6 years.

It has asked the government to adopt policies that are rooted into the reality of tobacco consumption pattern of India.

The Federation also appealed to the government to be sensitive towards the financial distress faced by FCV tobacco farmer because of COVID pandemic and reduce cigarette taxes to pre-GST levels so the market share of smuggled foreign brands can reduce and Indian industry and farmer can benefit in line with the Vocal for Local vision of the Prime Minister.

India has a unique pattern of tobacco consumption and cigarettes are the smallest component of tobacco consumption in India and constitute only 9% of tobacco use.

However, it is facing the brunt of these most draconian and stringent regulations in the world. Also, the per capita annual consumption of cigarettes in India is just 96, amongst the lowest in the world.

Only 3 per cent of the adult population consumes cigarettes. While, smokeless tobacco product users and bidi smokers outnumber cigarette smokers by 6 times and 3 times respectively.

However, Cigarettes account for more than 80% of revenue from tobacco taxation, while the contribution to tax collections from the other two segments is insignificant. Majority of the tobacco industry (68%) is in the untaxed or unorganized sector, it said.

Source: <https://www.sify.com/finance/tobacco-farmers-ask-govt-to-shun-policies-aping-west-news-topnews-uf3nO7ffbgdih.html>