



FEDERATION OF ALL INDIA FARMER ASSOCIATIONS

H.No. 26-3-274, 4th Line Devapuram, Ashok Nagar, Guntur Andhra Pradesh
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Date: January 20, 2021

To

Shri Vikas Sheel, IAS

Joint Secretary

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Room No: 244 (A-Wing), Nirman Bhavan

New Delhi. – 110011

Email : sheelv@nic.in

Respected Sir,

Sub: Comments/views on the 'Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) (Amendment) Bill, 2020'

We are extremely grateful that you had invited us to be take part in the Pre-Legislative Consultation on the draft COTPA Bill 2020 on 31 December 2020 in which we had duly participated. During the interaction with you, we had pointed out that majority of FCV tobacco farmers belong to the poorer section of the society and are not formally educated and have no facility to send their views/comments on the proposed tobacco law by email.

You had very kindly agreed to our suggestion that feedback to the draft laws would also be received by ordinary post/ courier and will be considered in the consultation process prior to making any decision

The excessive regulatory environment in our country in this sector and the impact of the pandemic has already led to loss of livelihoods and jobs, pushing many members of the trade which includes farmers, retailers etc. into poverty. These members are aware of the further changes being proposed in the regulations and are extremely concerned that they would lose whatever little they are earning. They are all therefore, keen to participate in the public consultations and would like to send their views to the Ministry.

However, there are some technical difficulties that need to be addressed for the process to be much more transparent -

- A large number of our members like farmers and retailers are also computer illiterate and live in rural areas (with different native mother tongues) are unable to understand some of the important technical terminology associated with (Amendment) Bill, 2020'. Hence they are not conversant in English language, **so it would be really helpful if the COTPA**



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amendment details are in a vernacular language to assist most of the rural area farmers'. In this backdrop, we request your Hon'ble office to allow tobacco stake holders to express themselves in their local language.

- Some of our members have already sent their comments in their native languages by post. Their views/representations sent by post should be considered. Meanwhile, a section of our members who have access to e-mails, have complained that their emails are bouncing back. They also want to send their views through the post, vide letters. In view of delayed postal services, due to the pandemic their comments may not reach the Ministry in the current stipulated time. **We would like to highlight the scenario that farmers are sending their views through posts and letters but as your Hon'ble self might be aware of delayed postal services, due to the pandemic, farmers are worried that their comments may not reach the Ministry in the current stipulated time.**
- **We would, therefore, request you to extend the date till 31st May, 2021 for receiving comments. This would facilitate all the stakeholders to participate in the public consultation process.**

We hope you will address the concerns at the earliest.

Thanking you.

For Federation of All India Farmers' Association [FAIFA]

P S Murali Babu, General Secretary

Copy to :

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