

FICCI CASCADE urges govt to launch robust international campaign against smuggling

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The FICCI Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Destroying the Economy (CASCADE) has urged the government to launch a robust international campaign against the menace of smuggling.

It said the magnitude of smuggling and the consequent loss to the country's economy might become a roadblock in India's march towards a 40 trillion-dollar economy under the Government's vision of Amrit Kaal.

While last year FICCI CASCADE took the initiative to mark February 11 as Anti-Smuggling Day, the body is

appealing to the Indian government to highlight the issue of smuggling on the world stage and work with the United Nations to declare this as an 'International Anti-Smuggling Day'.

The significance of the need for a high-impact international campaign against smuggling can be understood in the context of the massive loss that smuggling inflicts on the Indian economy.

As per a 2022 FICCI CASCADE's study titled - 'Illicit Markets: A Threat to Our National Interests', over a period of 10 years, the tax loss to the Government of India because of the illicit trade has jumped by 163 per cent to reach a mam-



moth Rs 58,521 crore (from Rs 22,230 crore) for 5 key industries - Alcoholic Beverages, Mobile Phones, FMCG-Household and Personal Goods, FMCG-Packaged Foods and Tobacco Products.

P C Jha, Former Chairman, Central Board of Indi-

rect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) and Advisor- FICCI CASCADE said given the massive damage that smuggling is inflicting on the Indian economy, the government has to take up the issue at the international stage and lead a campaign against it.

Anil Rajput, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE said, "While we will continue to highlight the issue of smuggling in the country, an International Anti-Smuggling Day declared by the UN will enable momentum to an international campaign against smuggling by bringing together nations — both developing and developed, international institutions, policymakers, industry, enforce-

ment agencies and media.

It will highlight the growing hazard of smuggling and create awareness amongst consumers and the youth to mitigate smuggling which has now become an obstacle to nation-building, he said.

On the occasion of the second Anti-Smuggling Day, FICCI CASCADE is organising a conference in New Delhi on February 11. The conference will feature several senior functionaries from leading international organisations, such as World Customs Organization (WCO), United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), US Homeland Security and Australian Border Force.