

# CM seeks penalty waiver for state tobacco growers

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Amaravati: Chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has requested the Centre to allow tobacco growers to sell excess stock grown during 2022-23 crop season without levying penalty.

The chief minister said that the Centre had already removed penalty on tobacco growers of Karnataka and similar relief should be granted in AP as well.

In a letter to the Union commerce minister Piyush Goyal, the chief minister said the tobacco growers incurred huge losses due to Mandous cyclone in last November-December. He said the tobacco growers were compelled to go for recultivation as soil in Prakasam and Nellore districts were unsuitable to go for other crop. He said that recultivation to replace the damaged crop has resulted in excess yield in some areas.

Since tobacco is a regularized crop by Indian Tobacco Board, farmers have to pay penalties for sale of additional crop which is beyond the authorized crop size, explained the CM.

“More than 50 per cent of 53,000 hectars in Guntur, Palnadu, Bapatla, Prakasam and Nellore districts particularly in Southern Light Soils (SLS) and Southern Black Soils (SBS) areas and Northern Black Soils (NLS) of West Godavari and East Godavari districts where tobacco was cultivated got damaged due to Mandous cyclone,” said the chief minister.