VOICE OF FICCI

SHAPING THE AGENDA

January 2026



From the Director General

January 2026 witnessed sustained high-level engagement by FICCI with government and international partners, whilst advancing twenty-seven policy submissions spanning healthcare, food safety, chemicals, financial services, intellectual property, and regulatory modernisation.

The month saw significant ministerial engagement across critical portfolios. FICCI Leadership met with Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of Communication and Development of North Eastern Region Jyotiraditya Scindia, Minister of Food Processing Industries Chirag Paswan, and Minister of State for Commerce and Industry and Electronics and Information Technology Jitin Prasada. Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilisers Anupriya Patel graced the fourteenth edition of the FICCI Chemicals and Petrochemicals Awards Ceremony. Engagements also encompassed Principal Secretary-2 to the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shaktikanta Das and OSD (Research and Strategy) in the Prime Minister's Office, Pratik Doshi.

Bureaucratic engagement proved extensive, encompassing Financial Services Secretary M. Nagaraju, Secretary (South) at MEA Dr Neena Malhotra, Secretary of Statistics and Programme Implementation Dr Saurabh Garg, Additional Secretary at DPIIT Himani Pande, NITI Aayog CEO B. V. R. Subramaniyam, Member NITI Aayog Rajiv Gauba, Chief Economic Advisor Dr Nageswaran, and Invest India MD and CEO Nivruti Rai. International diplomacy encompassed meetings with the Ambassador of Brazil, H.E. Kenneth Félix Haczyński da Nóbrega, and the Ambassador of Spain, H.E. Juan Antonio March Pujol.

Healthcare and medical devices advocacy proved particularly extensive, addressing manufacturing age criteria for refurbished equipment, IPDMS registration challenges, a differentiated pricing pathway for innovative knee implant technologies, GST rationalisation for life-saving devices, streamlining the post-HTA listing process under AB-PMJAY, and budget proposals for FY 2026–27 submitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare. Food safety submissions encompassed FSSAI representations on food additive testing interpretation, coffee-chicory standards, malt-based food amendments, labelling harmonisation under Legal Metrology Rules, and multiple CODEX inputs.

Chemicals and manufacturing advocacy addressed environmental regulatory issues in coordination with MoEFCC and NITI Aayog, India–ASEAN Product Specific Rules, recalibrated GSTP tariff concessions, and import surge analysis. FICCI CASCADE submitted recommendations to combat illicit trade, estimated at over US$2 trillion in annual global losses. Additional submissions encompassed IPR compliance bottlenecks under the High-Level Committee on Non-Financial Regulatory Reforms, the Securities Markets Code 2025, IBC Amendment Bill representations, automotive display tariff rationalisation, textiles pre-budget recommendations, AYUSH drug registration concerns, and Deposit Refund Scheme challenges.

These submissions demonstrate FICCI's unwavering commitment to promoting dialogue between industry and government, enhancing India's competitiveness across key sectors, whilst ensuring regulatory frameworks balance development with accountability. As Indian industry enters a decisive phase of structural transformation, FICCI and its membership remain firmly aligned with the Viksit Bharat vision.

Jyoti Vij

Request for Extension of Compliance Deadline for Lyral Ban (February 2026)

The FICCI Committee on Fragrances and Flavours submitted a representation to CDSCO, requesting a 12–15-month transition period to phase out Hydroxyisohexyl 3-cyclohexene carboxaldehyde (HICC; Lyral) from cosmetic products, with complete withdrawal proposed by May 2027. This was submitted to the Deputy Drugs Controller (India), Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India, and the Deputy Director General, Standardization-I, Bureau of Indian Standards, Government of India.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Purtika Kalra at purtika.kalra@ficci.com

Representation on Classification of Automotive Display and Tariff Rationalisation

The FICCI Electronics Committee submitted a representation to MeitY requesting that automotive display modules be classified under Heading 8524 (8-digit code) rather than Chapter 87 (including 8708), with a Basic Custom Duty of 15% on finished automotive display assemblies, and with parts and sub-parts at a lower duty rate. This was submitted to the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Purtika Kalra at purtika.kalra@ficci.com

FICCI's Pre-Budget Recommendations for the Textiles Sector

The FICCI Textiles and Technical Textiles Committee submitted key recommendations to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the Indian Textiles and Apparel value chain, based on consultations with industry stakeholders. The recommendations address concerns about import distortions, capacity underutilisation, trade and customs rationalisation, and the strengthening of domestic manufacturing, in line with the objectives of Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat. These were submitted to the Economic Adviser, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Purtika Kalra at purtika.kalra@ficci.com

Recommendations to Combat Illicit Trade

Illicit trade poses a serious challenge by eroding government revenues, draining capital, and threatening national security and public health. According to estimates, illicit trade causes over US$2 trillion in annual losses to the global economy and significantly constrains India's GDP growth. FICCI Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting

Voice of FICCI is a service to all our members and shared with key policy makers and thought leaders. The document is a compilation of FICCI's views on macro-economic issues. These issues come to us directly from members, or through deliberations in conferences and seminars on sectoral issues, as also through Government notifications.

Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE) has been actively combating this threat by engaging with policymakers, industry, enforcement agencies, and consumers to raise awareness of this menace. The key recommendations included introducing a monetary reward system for informers who provide valuable information leading to the seizure of illicit products; leveraging the 'Mera Bill Mera Adhikar' initiative to curb tax evasion; strengthening the 'Jago Grahak Jago' campaign to enhance consumer awareness; empowering businesses through CSR initiatives to combat illicit trade; deploying advanced technologies for product authentication and border surveillance; strengthening cybersecurity awareness and digital literacy; and imposing stringent penal provisions to create a strong deterrent against offenders. These were submitted to the Principal Secretary to the PM; the Cabinet Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat; the Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade; the Secretary (Home Secretary), Department of Home; the Secretary, Department of Expenditure; the Secretary, Department of Financial Services; the Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs; the Secretary, Department of Justice; the Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs; the Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs; and the Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Kashifa Hasan at kashif.hasan@ficci.com

Stakeholder consultation meeting on Compliance Bottlenecks – Manufacturing & Industry Theme (DPIIT & MSME)

A High-Level Committee (HLC) on Non-Financial Regulatory Reforms (NFRR) was constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri Rajiv Gauba, Member, NITI Aayog, vide the Cabinet Secretariat notification dated 19 August 2025.

In furtherance of the mandate of the High-Level Committee on the IPR theme, key compliance bottlenecks faced by industry under the Trade Marks Act, 1999; the Patents Act, 1970; the Semiconductor Integrated Circuits Layout-Design Act, 2000; and the Copyright Act, 1957 were discussed during a virtual meeting on 20 January 2026 with IPR Committee stakeholders, including industry representatives and IP experts.

The inputs, furnished by FICCI IPR Division on 23rd January in the prescribed format, indicated Ministry-wise bottlenecks for ease of analysis and ex-post implementation. They covered compliance requirements arising from the relevant rules, regulations, notifications, orders, circulars, portals, SOPs, and processes relating to Licensing, Registration, and Inspections; Penal Provisions; Regulatory Cycle; and Digitally Enabled Compliance Framework, in line with the principles of Jan Vishwas Siddhant – Trust-Based Regulatory Framework.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Ruchita Singh at rushita.singh@ficci.com

Environmental Issues of Chemical and Petrochemical Industries

As part of the Next Gen reforms, an industry stakeholder meeting was scheduled with MoEFCC, to be chaired by the Secretaries of the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers and MoEFCC. Niti Aayog also coordinated the meeting, focusing on environmental issues affecting the chemical and petrochemical industries. It was submitted to the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Manoj Mehta at manoj.mehta@ficci.com

Comments requested on India-ASEAN PSR Proposal-reg

With reference to the ongoing review of the India-ASEAN Trade Agreement, ASEAN has shared a list of Product Specific Rules (PSRs) proposals at the HS 6-digit level for consideration. Our member company provided input on HS codes relevant to them. This was submitted to the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Manoj Mehta at manoj.mehta@ficci.com

Stakeholder Comments Invited on Recalibrated GSTP Offer – New List of Tariff Lines

India was a key founding member of the Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP), which aims to boost trade and economic cooperation among nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Following the conclusion of the Third Round (São Paulo Round), India offered tariff concessions covering 70% of dutiable lines for non-LDCs and 77% for Least Developed Countries (LDCs). However, the Agreement enters into force only after ratification by at least four countries. Currently, only three countries—India, Cuba, and Malaysia—have ratified the Protocol.

This status created a timely opportunity to recalibrate India's concession schedule. The Government of India proposes replacing sensitive items (such as gems, jewellery, and precious metal products) with industrial raw materials and intermediates, consistent with our current trade policy.

I. Lines Proposed for Removal: The proposal involves removing 166 lines (HS2022) related to precious metals, gems, and jewellery.
II. New Lines Proposed for Addition: The following Chemical lines are proposed to be added to the GSTP schedule:

Chapter 28: Phosphoric acid, polyphosphoric acid, and anhydrous ammonia.

Chapter 32: Synthetic organic colouring matter and preparations.

In this regard, inputs were sought from industry and were submitted to the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Manoj Mehta at manoj.mehta@ficci.com

Inputs/comments regarding import surge in respective chemicals-reg

Following communication from the Department of Commerce, inputs were requested to explain the reasons for the import surge of the following chemicals, along with data: 28046900 OTHER SILICON, 28401900 OTHER DISODIUM TETRABORATES, 28439019 OTHER COMPOUNDS, 29309099 OTHER ORGANO-SULPHUR COMPNDS, 29335990 OTHER CMPNDS CNTNG A PYRIMIDINE RING (W/N HYDRGNTD) OR PIPERAZINE RING IN STRUCTURE, 38159000 OTHER REACTION INITIATORS ETC, 28439019 OTHER COMPOUNDS. These were submitted to the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Manoj Mehta at manoj.mehta@ficci.com

Concerns Regarding Proposed Registration of Ayurveda & Unani Drugs containing Schedule E1 Ingredients Sale Counters: Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945 -reg. ASUDTAB meeting Schedule for 2nd Jan. 2026 – Agenda S.No. 3

FICCI recommends reconsidering the proposed additional registration requirements for the sale of Ayurvedic and Unani drugs containing Schedule E1 ingredients under the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945. While supporting regulatory reforms to strengthen quality standards in the AYUSH sector, FICCI believes the proposed licensing framework may impose significant financial and operational burdens on MSMEs and small retailers. The market for Schedule E1 products is limited and largely prescription-driven, with minimal OTC use. Stringent compliance requirements, high licensing costs, and additional administrative processes may reduce the availability of these medicines, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. Existing labelling norms, which mandate cautionary statements under medical supervision, already address safety concerns effectively. The proposed changes may also contradict Ease of Doing Business objectives and place further strain on licensing authorities. Given the marginal market share of Schedule E1 AYUSH medicines, FICCI recommends maintaining the current regulatory structure while continuing to focus on quality compliance and broader accessibility to support sustainable sector growth.

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Ayush, Government of India; Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, Government of India; The Drug Controller General of India, New Delhi.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Ishan Pandita at ishan.pandita@ficci.com

CIFTI-FICCI letter regarding the interpretation issue on testing food additives in product categories

The submitted representation to FSSAI addressed issues in the interpretation of testing parameters, specifically for food additives. Food Business Operators (FBOs) were facing on-ground challenges, with the natural presence of a nutrient or mineral being misinterpreted as the presence of an 'additive' in excess amounts. At times, additive testing was misconstrued as testing for naturally occurring nutrients and minerals in food products, rather than for intentionally added additives, which led to unwarranted enforcement actions, even in cases where additives were not permitted in certain commodities.

Many agricultural raw materials (such as coffee, oats, wheat, jowar, bajra, maize, pulses, etc.) used for further processing inherently contain minerals such as calcium, phosphorus, sodium, potassium and iron. These minerals often appear in analytical results but should not be mistaken for intentionally added food additives, which are determined using the same mineral analysis for additives, for example, phosphates (as phosphorus). Specifically, in cases concerning the presence of phosphorus, elevated natural levels in certain food commodities have resulted in food businesses being issued notices by food safety officers, even when the additive had not been added to the product. Higher phosphorus values reflected in test reports indicate the inherent presence, thereby creating ambiguity and resulting in enforcement actions.

In this regard, we had requested the Authority to issue a clarification to laboratories to ensure that due consideration was given to naturally occurring nutrients when products were tested for additives under the FSS (FPS&FA) Regulations, 2011.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Hemant Seth at hemant.seth@ficci.com

FSSAI invitation for Sectoral Stakeholder Consultation Coffee-Chicory Standards– 12 January 2026 at FDA Bhawan, New Delhi

With reference to the FSSAI invitation for Sectoral Stakeholder Consultation on Coffee-Chicory Standards dated 12 January 2026. In this regard, CIFTI submitted comments on the following agenda items:

1. Proposal to decrease the Chicory content in Coffee Chicory mixtures
2. Review of the caffeine content in "soluble coffee powder" prepared from Arabica coffee
3. Draft Standards of "Green Coffee."

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Hemant Seth at hemant.seth@ficci.com

First circular relating to EWG on Technological Justification of Food Additives under CCNFSDU

FICCI CODEX Cell submitted inputs to NCCP on the first circular relating to the EWG on the Technological Justification of Food Additives under CCNFSDU.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Hemant Seth at hemant.seth@ficci.com

CIFTI-FICCI request for harmonisation of implementation timeline for labelling provisions under Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011

This was in reference to the Central Government's decision to introduce a structured timeline for compliance with amendments to labelling provisions under the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011. To facilitate smooth implementation, the decision had been notified, stating that any amendments to labelling provisions would come into effect either on 1st January or 1st July, subject to a minimum transition period of 180 days from the date of notification. CIFTI had stated that the recently released FSSAI Order dated 06th January 2026 specified that the implementation timeline for any change in labelling requirements under the FSS (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020 or other regulations would come into force on 1st July, subject to a minimum transition period of 365 days from the date of notification. Further, it was stated that in emergency situations, the matter of implementation or enforcement might be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Given the regulatory purview of food products, under which Food Business Operators (FBOs) were required to comply with provisions laid down under various Food Safety and Standards Regulations (FSSR) and the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011, the existing duplication of effective dates and transition periods for labelling changes had the potential to create ambiguity for stakeholders and to pose challenges in ensuring label compliance. Therefore, in view of this concern, we had humbly requested the Authority to harmonise the implementation timeline for labelling changes under the Legal

Metrology Rules with the FSSAI Order (as enclosed) to ensure uniformity across food businesses. This was submitted to MoCA.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Hemant Seth at hemant.seth@ficci.com

CIFTI-FICCI Proposal for Amendment in 'Malt-Based Food' (2.4.11.2) Standard

In the submitted representation to FSSAI, CIFTI-FICCI shared comments for Amendment in 'Malt-Based Food' (2.4.11.2) Standard.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Hemant Seth at hemant.seth@ficci.com

Comments on Circular Letters for consideration of the 29th Session of CCFO

FICCI CODEX Cell submitted comments to NCCP on Circular Letters for consideration of the 29th Session of CCFO.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Hemant Seth at hemant.seth@ficci.com

CL 2026/13-RVDF- Request for comments at Step 3 on the Guidelines on risk-based actions to be taken by competent authorities following the detection of a residue of a veterinary drug in food caused by unavoidable le and unintentional carryover of vete

FICCI CODEX Cell submitted comments to NCCP on CL 2026/13-RVDF-Request for comments at Step 3 on the Guidelines on risk-based actions to be taken by competent authorities following the detection of a residue of a veterinary drug in food caused by unavoidable le and unintentional carryover of vete.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Hemant Seth at hemant.seth@ficci.com

Manufacturing Age Criteria for Import of Refurbished High-End Medical Equipment

FICCI recommended reconsidering the proposed 5-year manufacturing age limit for importing refurbished high-end medical equipment, as these devices often last 10–15 years with proper maintenance. Age restrictions could limit access in Tier II/III regions, raise costs, and offer minimal safety benefits.

The key recommendations were to shift to performance- and quality-based regulations and to emphasise refurbishment quality, international safety standards, maintenance history, OEM service support, and post-installation oversight. These were submitted to the DGHS, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Shilpa Sharma at shilpa.sharma@ficci.com

Request for Meeting on Practical Challenges in IPDMS Registration for Medical Devices

FICCI highlighted challenges for large capital equipment, including configuration-specific pricing, tender-based procurement, long lifecycles, upgrades, leasing and reagent rental models, which make SKU/MRP-linked reporting misaligned with sectoral needs. These were submitted to the Chairman of the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA).

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Shilpa Sharma at shilpa.sharma@ficci.com

Industry Representation on Challenges in Complying with Deposit Refund Scheme (DRS), 2025, notified by the State of Goa

FICCI MDC, in a joint representation with the FICCI FMCG team, raised concerns about ambiguity in the operational framework, unclear roles, and misalignment with EPR obligations. The scheme could create duplicative compliance burdens and operational and financial challenges. Stakeholders engaged with the Goa DRS Steering Committee and highlighted the need for a nationally consistent approach, requesting a review and deferral to avoid regulatory fragmentation. This was submitted to the Secretary, DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Shilpa Sharma at shilpa.sharma@ficci.com

Industry Representation on Proposed Deposit Refund Scheme under Plastic Waste Management Framework

FICCI MDC, in a joint representation with the FICCI Environment and FMCG Team, highlighted duplication with EPR obligations, increased operational costs, and adverse impact on Ease of Doing Business. Concerns were raised about pricing, logistics, invoicing, consumer refunds, MSME readiness, legal metrology, taxation, and infrastructure. FICCI recommended broader consultations, alignment with the national EPR framework, phased implementation, transitional support, and deferral of implementation on 1 April 2026. This was submitted to the Chairman, DRS Administrator Committee, GC&EMS, Government of Goa.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Shilpa Sharma at shilpa.sharma@ficci.com

Submission of additional industry concerns regarding GST

FICCI recommended: (1) Inclusion of ITC on services and capital goods in the refund formula through an amendment to Rule 89(5); (2) Annual refund of unutilised ITC; (3) Reduction of GST on RCM services from 18% to 5%; (4) Reduction of GST on IGCR imports of raw materials and parts to nil/5% for life-saving devices. These recommendations were submitted to the Joint Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilisers.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Shilpa Sharma at shilpa.sharma@ficci.com

FICCI Recommendation to Streamline Post-HTA Listing Process under AB-PMJAY

FICCI highlighted gaps in the post-HTA listing process for the Health Benefit Package (HBP), including the absence of defined timelines, tracking mechanisms, and clarity on inclusion pathways following HTA recommendations.

FICCI recommended time-bound processes for favourable HTA decisions, the assignment of unique HBP codes, and a transparent application-tracking dashboard. For technologies recommended at lower prices, it was suggested that competitive bidding, stakeholder consultations, and the timely publication of HBP codes be used. FICCI also advocated adopting an India-specific cost-effectiveness threshold, strengthening Centre–State harmonisation, and upgrading the digital portal for real-time tracking and stakeholder engagement. These

measures would enhance transparency, predictability, and patient access to innovative therapies under AB-PMJAY. This was submitted to the Chief Executive Officer, National Health Authority.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Shilpa Sharma at shilpa.sharma@ficci.com

Request for Creation of a Separate Category and Pricing Pathway for Innovative Knee Implant Technologies (Cementless & Smart Knees)

FICCI highlighted concerns that the current uniform pricing framework for all knee implant technologies had unintentionally constrained the introduction and adoption of advanced innovations, including cementless and smart knee systems. FICCI noted that differences in design, materials, clinical applications, and manufacturing complexity warranted a differentiated pricing approach. FICCI recommended a technology-sensitive pricing framework aligned with global best practices and national innovation objectives. FICCI reaffirmed its commitment to collaborate with NPPA and requested an opportunity to meet and present the industry perspective in detail. These were submitted to the Chairman, National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Shilpa Sharma at shilpa.sharma@ficci.com

FICCI Submission on Budget Proposals (FY2026-27) for the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare (2025-26)

FICCI submitted its Budget Proposals for FY 2026–27 in response to a request from the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare, presenting a strategic perspective on advancing India's healthcare system. The submission outlined the priority reforms needed to improve affordability, quality, sustainability, and equity in healthcare delivery.

The key highlights of the submission to the Director, Rajya Sabha Secretariat were:

1. Financing and Affordability: Recommends increasing public health expenditure, improving budgetary effectiveness, and reforming health financing schemes to reduce out-of-pocket spending and enhance sustainability.
2. Primary Care, Prevention and Digital Health: Emphasises strengthening primary and preventive healthcare, advancing NCD management, and deepening digital health integration to enable continuity and outcome-based care.
3. Workforce and Medical Education: Proposes reforms in medical education, faculty development, and the expansion of nursing and allied health training to address workforce gaps and regional imbalances.
4. Partnerships, Manufacturing and Innovation: Highlights the role of public–private partnerships, domestic manufacturing, and health R&D in improving access, strengthening self-reliance, and enhancing long-term system resilience.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Ms Shilpa Sharma at shilpa.sharma@ficci.com

Securities Markets Code

The Securities Markets Code, 2025, was tabled in the Lok Sabha on 18 December 2025 and then referred to the Standing Committee. FICCI submitted detailed inputs on the proposed Code, which will replace the existing Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992, the Depositories Act, 1996, and the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956, once notified. These were submitted to the CGM, SEBI; the Hon'ble Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance, Lok Sabha; and the Secretary, DEA, Ministry of Finance.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Santosh Parashar at santosh.parashar@ficci.com

Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code

Following the hearing before the Select Committee of the Lok Sabha on the IBC Amendment Bill in October 2025, FICCI submitted to the Hon'ble CIM the key changes required under the Code.

For detailed recommendations, please write to
Mr Santosh Parashar at santosh.parashar@ficci.com

Please share your valuable feedback at:
https://meet.ficci.in/voiceofficci/survey.asp

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