

**The Authentication Forum 2018 inaugurated by Shri Suresh Prabhu, Hon'ble Union Minister, Ministry of Commerce & Industry & Civil Aviation in New Delhi**

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**New Delhi, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018:** In a strong move against counterfeiting and solutions to eradicate this menace, two-day event, International Leadership Summit on Anti-Counterfeiting and Brand Protection "The Authentication Forum 2018" held on March 15-16, 2018 at New Delhi, India.

The second edition of the Authentication forum is being organised by Authentication Solutions Providers Association (ASPA) which was inaugurated by **Mr. Suresh Prabhu, Union Minister, Ministry of Commerce & Industry & Civil Aviation, Government of India.**



*Picture caption: From left to right: Mr Anil Rajput, Chairman FICCI CASCADE, Mr. Nakul Pasricha, Gov. Body Member - ASPA, Mr. Arun Agarwal, Vice-President-ASPA, Shri Suresh Prabhu Hon'ble Union Minister, Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Government of India, Mr. U K Gupta, President – ASPA & Mr. Luv D Shriram, Gen. Secreary & Treasurser – ASPA*

In his inaugural address, Prabhu reiterated the government's resolve to deal harshly with the rising menace of counterfeiting. "We are going to make a very modern Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) era in India and that would lead to creating people investing into the brand and that will lead to a knowledge economy which in turn will make India a far better place and developed place," he said.

To make Brand India a clearly acceptable brand we must first protect IPR because countries, companies, even Indian companies that are going to invest huge amount of money into brand building, creating new rights in form of patents, copyrights or new product development or molecule development all of them would need IPR protection. "If Indian brands want to become global then they must also be able to respect global brands in India," he added.

Besides, Union Minister, eminent dignities including Registrar General, Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Right Authority, Central Board of Excise & Customs, Hyundai, Society of Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), Ernst & Young, KPMG, Hero Motor Corp., FMC Corporation, Pesticide Manufacturers Association of India (PMFAI), Anand & Anand and others also shared their viewpoints at the summit.



**Dr. R.C. Agrawal, Registrar General, Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Right Authority, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare** said: "Even as industry revenues take a major hit by counterfeits, the biggest loss is to the consumer. All of us need to work together to address this growing concern and the panel discussion with various cross-sector stakeholders at this important forum will serve this purpose."

At the occasion, **Dr. S K Singh, Scientific Advisor, Union Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers**, said, "Indian government is taking big steps in digitising agriculture sector to ensure farmers rights. He also emphasis need of that measures like traceability & anti-counterfeiting solutions which will ensure the quality commitment of agricultural products produce in India". It is being noted that the size of the spurious pesticide market in India is as high as 30% by volume and 25% by value. It is predicted that the market for spurious Agrochemicals will reach 40% by value of pesticides sold in the country by 2019.

At the occasion, **Mr. U.K. Gupta, President, ASPA**, said, "Counterfeiting is increasing globally. In India also, the problem is growing with an alarming rate of almost 44% per year. As per industry body FICCI-CASCADE, from the counterfeiting activity the Government of India incurred a loss of **26,190 crores** in fiscal year 2011-12 which has increased to **39,239 crores** in 2013-14, a growth of **49.8%** in two years. "The market for fakes are on a constant rise in India and has surpassed over Rs 40,000 crore in the organised sector alone, as law enforcement remains weak and fraudsters freely make inroads into the market," he further added.

Day one of the summit witnesses three panel discussion Role of Govt. & Industry in fighting fake and protecting consumer, understanding 5W's of Counterfeiting and engaging consumers in fight against counterfeiting. At the last session of day companies including Holostik, Manipal Technologies and Rolling Optics delivered presentation on current authentication solutions against counterfeiting.

The day two of summit started with case studies from brand owners understanding their perspectives. Whilst, Dr. Bakul Joshi, Brand Protection Expert, FMC Corporation shared case study on protecting Agrochemicals products, Mr. Naveen Chauhan, Head Sales & Marketing (parts Business) shared automotive perspective. Presenting pharma perspective Mr. Sourav Mitra, Associate Vice-President Packaging Strategy – OSD said, Health is Wealth and to ensure it we need to firm stand against fakes. The event also witnessed a dedicated session on future of anti-counterfeiting technologies including blockchain, NFC, Optical and offline authentication. The audience also got a chance to have presentation on importance of branding, IPR and effective intelligence.

The forum was ended with a The Big Debate - Global Growth of Counterfeiting Trade - Why is it increasing – lack of intent, of action or of awareness? In the debate a question arises who important consumer or profit, replying to it one of moderator says, both are important but, we must keep in mind that if consumer survives, then the profit exists. One of panellist express his views as that sometime consumer himself buys counterfeit products especially in electronics products like mobile. Answering this one of delegate disagree with speakers and question will any parent buy a fake medicine for his/her child. The brand is baby of brand owners and it is he, who is mainly responsible for its protection. The debate ended with conclusion is that Today, having an effective anti-counterfeiting and brand protection strategy is no longer an option but an essential part of any business strategy. Consumer protection is very important and authentication solutions in integration with digital technologies can play a vital and important role in it.