TRACEABILITY & AUTHENTICATION TIMES

The official magazine of the Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA)

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FEATURED INSIDE

HEALTHCARE WITHOUT COMPROMISE
Technology-Driven protection from manufacturing to the patient

Expert Insights by
Mr. Sheetal Arora
Promoter & CEO,
Mankind Pharma Ltd.

TAF CONNECT MUMBAI 2026

A Defining Industry Moment

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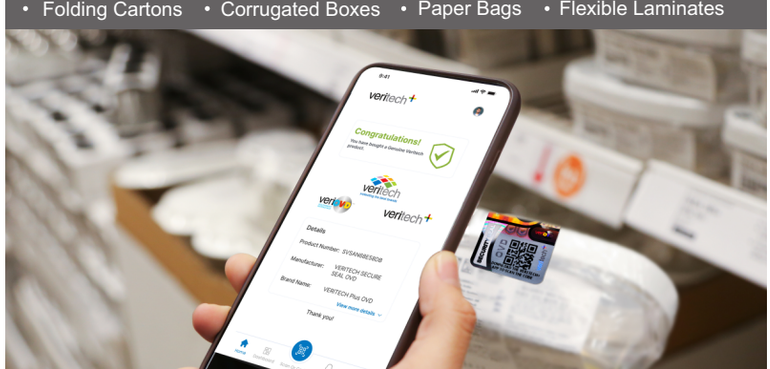

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TAT
TRACEABILITY & AUTHENTICATION TIMES
The official magazine of the Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA)

Editor's Corner

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 59th edition of Traceability & Authentication Times, ASPA's flagship publication that continues to highlight the growing importance of authentication and traceability in an increasingly complex and risk-prone marketplace.

This edition comes at a significant moment for industry. With the successful conclusion of **TAF Connect 2026 in Mumbai**, ASPA has further strengthened its role as a catalyst in bringing together industry leaders, policymakers, enforcement agencies, and solution providers. The conference underscored a clear and urgent message—combating counterfeiting requires not just technology adoption, but collective action and ecosystem-wide collaboration.

A key highlight of this edition is the **ASPA–CRISIL "State of Counterfeiting in India 2025" report**.

This edition is further enriched by valuable industry insights, including a perspective from **Mr. Sheetal Arora, Promoter & CEO, Mankind Pharma Ltd.**, who highlights how technology is transforming pharmaceutical integrity—from manufacturing to patient-level authentication. His views reinforce the critical role of end-to-end traceability, smart packaging, and consumer empowerment in safeguarding healthcare systems.

Rising instances of counterfeit medicines and adulterated food products further emphasize the urgent need for robust authentication, traceability, and forensic-backed enforcement mechanisms. As supply chains become more interconnected, ensuring product integrity from origin to consumption is no longer optionality is essential.

This edition brings together key insights, expert perspectives, and developments that reflect both the challenges and the opportunities ahead. As always, we remain committed to driving dialogue, innovation, and action in the fight against counterfeiting..

Happy reading!!

Yours Sincerely,

Puneet Maithani
Editor,
Traceability & Authentication Times

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TAT TRACEABILITY & AUTHENTICATION TIMES
The official magazine of the Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA)

About the Traceability & Authentication Times

Traceability & Authentication Times is the official magazine published by Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA). The publication offers in-depth analysis, news, research, article, and expert opinion on the latest developments on Anti-counterfeiting, Brand Protection, Serialization and Traceability in and out of India. The editorial team welcomes news, contributions, and comments.

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Counterfeit & Adulterated Packaged Foods in India

Strengthening Detection, Enforcement and Conviction through Authentication, Traceability and Forensics

The Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA), in collaboration with Dr. Keshav Kumar, IPS (Retd.), Ph.D.; Former Joint Director, CBI; Director General of Police & Director, Anti-Corruption Bureau, Gujarat, has released a white paper examining the growing challenge of counterfeit and adulterated packaged foods in India and the critical role of authentication, traceability and forensic science in strengthening detection, enforcement and conviction.

A Growing Public Health and Economic Concern

Food adulteration and counterfeit packaged foods have increasingly evolved into a structured and profit-driven organised economic crime with serious public health and economic implications. Adulterated milk, spices, edible oils, sweets, and packaged foods often enter markets through clandestine manufacturing units and organised distribution networks operating across wholesale markets, transport corridors, and digital commerce platforms.

Despite routine inspections and seizures by regulatory authorities, enforcement outcomes frequently remain limited because investigations rarely extend beyond retail-level detection or routine sampling. This gap between detection and prosecution allows organised adulteration networks to operate with relative impunity.

Scale of the Problem

Available evidence indicates that the scale of the problem is substantial. Regulatory surveillance suggests that approximately 25–33% of food samples tested annually across India are non-conforming or unsafe.

Market data further highlights the magnitude of the challenge. India's FMCG sector, valued at around 4,500 billion, derives nearly half of its volume from packaged food products. The CRISIL–ASPA State of Counterfeiting in India report 2022 estimates that counterfeit penetration in FMCG and packaged food categories may range between 25–30%.

Consumer surveys also reveal that 42% of consumers have knowingly purchased counterfeit FMCG products, while many others unknowingly purchase such products due to the difficulty in distinguishing genuine goods from counterfeits.

The consequences are significant. Adulterated food products often contain industrial chemicals, synthetic dyes, non-food-grade oils, and contaminated ingredients, which can lead to long-term health risks including gastrointestinal disorders, liver damage and other chronic illnesses. At the same time, legitimate businesses suffer brand dilution, loss of consumer trust and unfair competition from illicit operators.

Challenges in Detection

Modern counterfeiters are capable of replicating packaging elements with high accuracy, including

labels, colour schemes, holograms, batch numbers and expiry markings. As a result, visual inspection alone is often insufficient to identify counterfeit products.

In addition, the multi-layered structure of food supply chains, involving numerous intermediaries and distribution channels, makes traceability difficult and allows counterfeit goods to circulate widely before detection.

Laboratory testing remains essential for enforcement, but challenges such as limited forensic capacity, delays in testing, and procedural complexities can sometimes weaken evidentiary value during prosecution.

Role of Authentication and Traceability Technologies

Authentication and traceability technologies provide an important first line of defence against counterfeit and adulterated foods by enabling real-time product verification and supply chain visibility.

Key solutions include:

- Secure packaging design and overt security features
- Covert and forensic markers
- Serialized and non-clonable product identifiers
- QR-based consumer authentication systems
- RFID and NFC-enabled tracking technologies
- Blockchain-based supply chain monitoring

These technologies generate verifiable digital records that help investigators trace product movement, identify sources of counterfeit goods, and support enforcement actions.

Strengthening Enforcement through Forensic Science

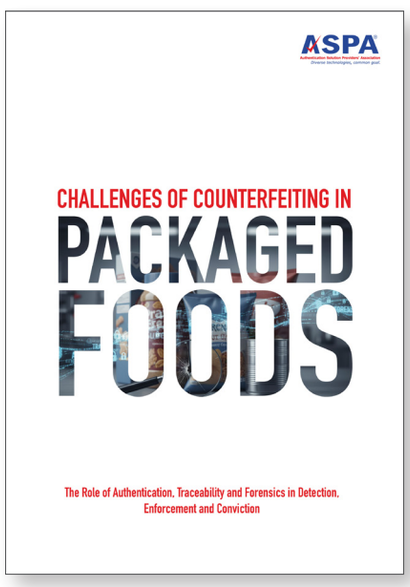
While preventive technologies enable early detection, forensic science remains central to successful prosecution and conviction. Techniques such as chemical profiling, isotopic analysis, microbiological testing, and packaging forensics help investigators establish the origin, composition and scale of adulteration operations.

When integrated with authentication and traceability systems, forensic investigation enables authorities to move beyond isolated seizures and identify organised criminal networks involved in counterfeit food production and distribution.

Towards an Integrated Prevention and Enforcement Model

The white paper emphasises the need for an integrated “Prevention + Forensics” model, where authentication and traceability technologies work alongside forensic investigation and coordinated enforcement to improve detection and prosecution outcomes.

By strengthening collaboration between regulators, enforcement agencies, forensic institutions and industry stakeholders, India can significantly enhance its ability to combat counterfeit foods and protect public health.



Download the Full White Paper:

Challenges of Counterfeiting in Packaged Foods: Role of Authentication, Traceability and Forensics in Detection, Enforcement and Conviction

NHRC, India, organises an Open House Discussion on “Measures to Curb Spurious Medicines in India”

https://nhrc.nic.in/media/press-release/nhrc,-india,-organises-an-open-house-discussion-on-%E2%80%9Cmeasures-to-curb-spurious-medicines-in-india%E2%80%9D

NHRC, India, organises an Open House Discussion on "Measures to Curb Spurious Medicines in India"

New Delhi: 26th February 2026

NHRC, India, organises an Open House Discussion on "Measures to Curb Spurious Medicines in India"

NHRC Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi chairing the meet emphasises risks of isolated regulatory challenges translating into large-scale human distress if not addressed decisively and systematically.

NHRC Member Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani says, the issue requires to be urgently addressed by placing in place strengthened oversight and accountability mechanisms in the pharmaceutical ecosystem.

Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal highlights spurious drugs being different from substandard drugs but both require coordinated institutional action to combat the menace.

Among various suggestion from the discussions involving multi-stakeholders stress upon the need to establish a comprehensive, centralised databank on spurious and sub-standard medicines, integrating inputs from enforcement agencies, regulators and states

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), India organised an Open House Discussion (OHD) in hybrid mode on the theme 'Measures to Curb Spurious Medicines in India' at its premises in New Delhi. NHRC Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi chaired it. NHRC Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani; Former Member, NHRC, Shri Rajiv Jain; Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal; Director General (Investigation), Smt. Anupama Nilekar Chandra; Registrar (Law), Shri Joginder Singh; Joint Secretaries, Shri Samir Kumar, Smt. Saidingpuii Chhakchhuak; along with senior government functionaries from the centre and state governments; regulators; law enforcement authorities; domain experts and representatives from the pharmaceutical sector participated.

Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi said that in a country as vast and diverse as India, even isolated regulatory challenges can translate into large-scale human distress if not addressed decisively and systematically. He said that growing threat posed by spurious, substandard and falsified medicines and its direct implications on the right to life and health, demands coordinated, multi-sectoral action to address this grave issue of human rights violation.

NHRC Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani reflected on the human cost of substandard treatment. She recalled how a member of her family suffered permanent loss of eyesight due to improper treatment and the use of poor-quality medicines. She said that the issue requires to be urgently addressed by placing in place strengthened oversight and accountability mechanisms in the pharmaceutical ecosystem.

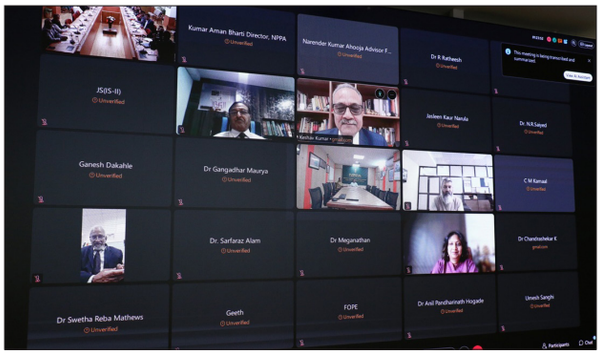
Former NHRC Member, Shri Rajiv Jain emphasised that to strengthen enforcement and deterrence, there is a need for establishing special drug courts for expeditious trial of the accused; real-time drug testing mechanisms; mandatory QR codes and track-and-trace systems, including blockchain-based supply chain authentication. He also stressed upon compulsory use of NABL-accredited laboratories; AI-based anomaly detection in distribution patterns; surprise inspections; strengthened whistle-blower protection; digital case tracking; creation of a centralised national database on spurious drug cases; improved public helplines; and examination of regulatory safeguards concerning e-prescriptions.

Before this, setting the tone for deliberations, NHRC Secretary General Shri Bharat Lal underscored that the discussion is focused on spurious drugs but both spurious and substandard medicines impacts the right to life and health, calling for coordinated institutional action to combat the menace. He emphasised that citizens consume medicines in good faith, trusting the state's obligation to safeguard life and dignity and cautioned that any breach may result in violation of human rights of the victims. Stressing that 'medicines must heal, not harm,' he also highlighted the clear distinction between 'spurious drugs' in different manifestations defined under Section 17-B of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and 'substandard drugs' (out-of-specification authorised products failing quality standards/ specifications). Citing the National Survey on Drugs, he noted that about 10% of government samples were found substandard.

Shri Lal further said that spurious drugs are produced and distributed as part of criminal activity with no clearly identifiable manufacturer, which require criminal investigation, whereas manufacturers of substandard drugs can be traced. He said that the NHRC has been very proactively taking suo motu cognizance of such reported incidents of rights violation due to alleged consumption of spurious medicines. In this context he referred to its one of the recent notices sent in October 2025 to the Governments of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh and to Union health and regulatory authorities following media reports of children allegedly succumbing after consuming contaminated cough syrups. The Commission directed a comprehensive supply-chain

investigation and mandated state laboratories to submit sample test reports, underscoring the urgency of coordinated regulatory action.

Dr. Keshav Kumar, Special Rapporteur, NHRC, who has undertaken extensive research on the subject, proposed enhanced monitoring, creation of central and state-level task forces, strengthening of regulatory compliance, improved inter-agency coordination, training of law enforcement and judicial officers, victim compensation mechanisms and collaboration with international bodies. He highlighted trends, including low conviction rates in spurious drug cases,



significant delays in investigation and adjudication and a higher prevalence of substandard samples in certain procurement channels. He emphasised that there is a need to clearly distinguish between “spurious drugs” - counterfeit, fake or deliberately mislabelled products and “substandard drugs” - genuine products that fail to meet prescribed quality standards.

Ms. Nishtha Tiwari, Joint Secretary, MHA, highlighted key interventions by the Ministry to combat the scourge of spurious drugs. She also underscored the critical importance of addressing this issue. Shri Chandrashekhar Ranga, Joint Drugs Controller (DCGI), highlighted the steps already undertaken by the drug regulatory authorities, including coordinated inspections, strengthening of surveillance systems and enhanced training of drug inspectors. He emphasised the need for continued capacity building to address emerging challenges. Shri Prashant Reddy T., author of The Truth Pill, underscored the importance of rigorous quality assurance and transparency. He also highlighted regulatory and bioequivalence concerns, observing that not all generic formulations necessarily behave identically to the innovator drug.

The discussion also examined recent enforcement trends, including coordinated inter-state investigations, invocation of organised crime provisions in counterfeit drug cases and the evolving jurisprudence of the Supreme Court and High Courts relating to prosecution, police jurisdiction, victim rights and trial procedures. The participants were invited to submit further detailed written suggestions to the Commission to enable NHRC to finalise its recommendations.

The other multi-sectoral participants and stakeholders included Ms. Anupama James, AIG, National Investigation Agency; Shri P. Krishnamurthy, Chairman, NPPA; Ms. Sai Ahlladini Panda, Member Secretary, NPPA; Dr. Keshav Kumar, IPS(Retd.), Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance; Shri Om Prakash Sadhwani, Joint Commissioner (Retd.), FDA; Dr. N.R. Saiyad, Deputy Commissioner, Food and Drug Controller Administration (FDCA); Dr. Bhoomika Patel, Dean, School of Pharmacy, NFSU; Dr. P.K. Sharma, Professor and Head, Department of Pharmacology, SLB Medical College; Prof (Dr.) Yogendra Kumar Gupta, President, AIIMS Kalyani; Shri Ankit Gupta, President, ASPA; Shri Harish K. Jain, National President, Federation of Pharma Entrepreneurs (FOPE); Shri Narendra Ahooja, Regulatory Advisor, FOPE; Shri Sandeep Sikaria, FOPE; Dr. Ilyas K.P.A., Deputy Director Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D); Shri Dube Patil, FDA Commissioner, Maharashtra.

Some of the other suggestions that emanated from the discussions were as follows:

- There is a need to establish a comprehensive, centralised databank on spurious and sub-standard medicines, integrating inputs from enforcement agencies, regulators and states;
- Technological interventions should be done to facilitate predictive analytics, pattern recognition, supply-chain mapping and early risk detection;
- Capacity-building of Drug Inspectors through structured and periodic training programmes should be institutionalised;
- A formal feedback mechanism may be introduced to document field-level investigative processes adopted by trained officers, including evidence collection, prosecution strategy, and inter-agency coordination to serve as a model protocol for nationwide adoption;
- A sustained and intelligence-driven vigilance framework is essential. Preventive surveillance, market sampling and coordinated inspections should be strengthened, with emphasis on identifying repeat offenders and vulnerable supply-chain nodes;
- Best practices from states demonstrating effective regulatory performance should be systematically documented, benchmarked and replicated across jurisdictions through inter-state coordination platforms;
- Consideration may be given to establishing a coordinated centre–state joint enforcement mechanism dedicated to monitoring and combating spurious and sub-standard drugs; and
- Take appropriate steps to ensure that pending cases currently before Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) courts or other subordinate courts are transferred to the competent Sessions Courts in light of the Supreme Court judgment that offences under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act are triable exclusively by Sessions Courts.

ASPA
Authentication Solution Providers' Association
Diverse technologies, common goal.

Recommendations to Curb Spurious Medicines in India

To

National Human Rights Commission

1. Introduce a mandatory, **multi-layered (phygital) authentication framework for pharmaceutical packaging**. A single security feature is not complete independently combat organized counterfeiting.
2. Mandate at least one robust overt **(visible)** security feature on prescription and high-risk medicines (e.g., secure holograms, tamper-evident seals, dynamic QR codes) to enable instant verification and deter tampering.
3. Require covert and forensic security features **(e.g., invisible inks, microtext, taggants) to support scientific investigation and strengthen conviction rates**.
4. Implement a nationwide end-to-end Track & Trace system with primary and secondary level serialization, real-time data reporting, and duplication/diversion detection.
5. Promote secure, non-clonable digital verification systems enabling patients and pharmacists to authenticate medicines in real time and automatically flag suspicious scans.
6. Treat pharmaceutical counterfeiting as a serious public **health offence, with stringent penalties for tampering, duplication, or misuse of authentication features**.
7. Adopt a phased implementation approach, beginning with life-saving and high-risk medicines, with transitional support for MSMEs.

The mandatory integration of authentication and traceability solutions will significantly reduce spurious medicines, enhance regulatory transparency, and protect citizens' right to safe healthcare. ASPA remains committed to supporting the Government and the National Human Rights Commission in building a secure pharmaceutical ecosystem.

Submitted by:
Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA)

35% of Indians encountered fake products in the last one year alone: ASPA–CRISIL "State of Counterfeiting in India 2025" Report Reveals Alarming Trends

Counterfeiting remains deeply entrenched in India's consumer markets. According to the latest "State of Counterfeiting in India 2025" report released by the Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA) in collaboration with CRISIL Intelligence, nearly 35% reported encountering fake products in the past year. Alarmingly, almost 9 out of 10 urban consumers (89%) admitted to having purchased a counterfeit product at least once in their lifetime.

The nationwide study, based on a Consumer Survey of 1,639 respondents across nine major Indian cities – Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Jaipur and Indore – highlights the growing scale, changing channels, and increasing consumer awareness regarding counterfeit products across multiple industries.

The report covers key sectors including healthcare, FMCG, automotive parts, apparel, consumer durables, and agro-products, providing one of the most comprehensive insights into India's counterfeiting ecosystem.

Key Findings from the ASPA–CRISIL 2025 Study

Counterfeits Widely Encountered Across Consumer Markets. The study highlights widespread exposure to counterfeit products among urban consumers.

- 89% of respondents reported purchasing a counterfeit product at least once in their lifetime.
- 35% encountered counterfeit products in the past 12 months, indicating ongoing exposure in daily markets.
- Consumers estimate that around 29% of products available in local markets may be counterfeit.
- 74% of respondents believe counterfeiting has increased in their region over the past year.

Sector-wise Counterfeiting Exposure

The report highlights varying levels of counterfeit exposure across sectors.

- **Apparel**

The apparel sector emerges as one of the most affected categories, with 31% of consumers reporting that they encountered or purchased counterfeit apparel in the past 12 months, reflecting the high prevalence of fake fashion products in both online and offline markets.

- **FMCG**

Counterfeiting is increasingly visible even in daily-use consumer goods. 27% of consumers reported encountering counterfeit FMCG products within the last year, indicating risks in everyday household products such as packaged food, personal care, and home care items.

- **Automotive Parts**

Counterfeit automotive components pose serious safety concerns. 22% of respondents reported encountering counterfeit automotive parts, highlighting the risks associated with fake spare parts in the vehicle replacement market.

- **Consumer Durables**

The fast-growing appliances and electronics segment is also vulnerable. 18% of consumers reported encountering counterfeit consumer durable products, with over half of such exposure occurring through online channels.

- **Healthcare**

Consumers estimate that perceive 28% of healthcare products in the market may to be counterfeit, up from 20% in 2022. 80% of consumers believe counterfeiting in healthcare has increased in the last 12 months.

- **Agro-products**

Counterfeit agro-products continue to threaten farm productivity and rural incomes. The study indicates that 35% of farmers have encountered counterfeit agro-products, and farmers estimate that close to 30% of agro-inputs available in the market may be counterfeit, raising concerns for crop yield, farmer trust, and food security.

Digital Channels Emerging as Major Source of Counterfeits

The study highlights the growing role of digital commerce in the distribution of counterfeit products.

- Online aggregator platforms account for 53% of counterfeit purchases, making them the largest channel.
- Local retail outlets remain dominant for agro-products (75%).
- Social media advertisements are emerging as a major channel, especially for apparel (46%) and consumer electronics (35%).

Changing Consumer Behaviour

Despite widespread exposure, consumer attitudes toward counterfeits are gradually shifting.

- Counterfeit products are perceived to be around 22% cheaper than genuine goods.
- However, only 36% of consumers cite price as the primary reason for purchasing counterfeit products.
- In addition, 50% of consumers say they would file a complaint if they received a counterfeit product, reflecting rising consumer awareness and intolerance toward fake goods.

Growing Need for Authentication & Traceability

The findings reinforce the urgent need for stronger authentication and traceability mechanisms, improved regulatory enforcement, and greater industry collaboration to combat the growing threat of counterfeiting.

Technologies such as secure packaging, serialization, track-and-trace systems, digital authentication, and consumer verification solutions are increasingly being adopted globally to safeguard supply chains and protect consumers.

About the Study

- The ASPA–CRISIL “State of Counterfeiting in India 2025” report is based on:
- Primary consumer survey of 1,639 respondents
- Coverage across nine major Indian cities
- Industry consultations and secondary research

The study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of counterfeiting trends, consumer perceptions, and sector-specific risks in India, helping policymakers, brand owners, and industry stakeholders design stronger strategies to combat illicit trade.

ASPA's TAF Connect 2026 in Mumbai Combines Strong Brand Participation with Release of CRISIL Counterfeiting Report

In an increasingly complex and interconnected global marketplace, trust has become the most valuable currency. For consumers, it is the assurance that what they purchase is genuine and safe. For brands, it is the foundation of reputation and long-term growth. For regulators, it is the cornerstone of compliance and public safety. As the Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA) completes 27 years, the association's journey reflects a powerful evolution—from securing products to building trust ecosystems.

Trust: The Core of ASPA's Mission

Established with the objective of combating counterfeiting through authentication solutions, ASPA has grown into a unified voice for the industry. Today, ASPA represents over 80 member companies offering a comprehensive spectrum of physical, digital, and phygital solutions. Collectively, these solutions have helped protect 15,000+ brands globally, across sectors where counterfeiting has serious economic and societal consequences.

Over the years, ASPA has consistently emphasized that counterfeiting is not merely a commercial challenge—it is a consumer safety issue. This belief has guided the association's efforts to build trust not only between brands and consumers, but also across the entire supply chain.

Track: Strengthening Supply Chain Visibility

As counterfeiting methods have grown more sophisticated, ASPA has championed the adoption of traceability and track & trace technologies as essential tools in modern supply chains. From security design, holograms, and overt–covert features to non-cloneable codes, RFID/NFC, and blockchain-enabled platforms, ASPA members continue to push the boundaries of innovation.

Beyond technology advocacy, ASPA has played a crucial role in knowledge creation and dissemination. The association's research reports and white papers, including sector-focused studies and the State of Counterfeiting in India findings, have helped quantify risks, identify trends, and provide data-backed insights to brand owners and policymakers. These reports have become valuable reference points, enabling informed decision-making and stronger anti-counterfeiting strategies.

Transform: From Awareness to Action

ASPA's impact is most visible in its ability to transform awareness into action through collaboration. Central to this effort is the Traceability & Authentication Forum (TAF)—ASPA's flagship event platform. Over six successful editions, TAF has brought together brand owners, regulators, enforcement agencies, solution providers, and industry leaders to engage in meaningful dialogue.

TAF has evolved into more than a conference; it is a collaborative ecosystem where real-world challenges are discussed, best practices are

shared, and partnerships are forged. The forum has played a pivotal role in aligning stakeholders around the common goal of protecting consumers and strengthening supply chain integrity.

TAF Connect 2026: Trust. Track. Transform. in Action

Building on the strong legacy of TAF, ASPA is set to host TAF Connect 2026 in March 2026—a focused, high-impact conference designed to address sector-specific challenges.

Guided by the theme "Trust. Track. Transform.", TAF Connect 2026 will concentrate on three critical sectors:

- Pharmaceuticals, where counterfeiting directly threatens patient safety
- Agriculture, where fake seeds and agro-inputs impact farmer livelihoods and food security
- FMCG, where counterfeit everyday products erode consumer confidence and brand trust

TAF Connect 2026 is envisioned as a compact, outcome-driven platform. The conference will feature:

- Insights on emerging counterfeiting risks and regulatory expectations
- Case studies from brand owners who have implemented successful authentication and traceability strategies
- Showcasing of innovative, scalable solutions by ASPA members

- Dialogue between industry, regulators, and standards bodies

Why TAF Connect 2026 Matters?

In an era where compliance alone is no longer sufficient, TAF Connect 2026 aims to help organizations move beyond reactive measures. It will focus on how businesses can embed trust into their operations—using technology, data, and collaboration as enablers.

The conference is particularly relevant for:

- Brand owners seeking end-to-end supply chain visibility
- Policymakers shaping future authentication and traceability frameworks
- Solution providers driving next-generation anti-counterfeiting technologies
- Industry leaders committed to consumer safety and transparency

The Road Ahead

As ASPA marks 27 years, the association stands firmly rooted in experience while looking decisively toward the future. The road ahead calls for greater collaboration, smarter technologies, and stronger awareness. Counterfeiting is a shared challenge, and trust can only be built through collective effort.

With its continued focus on Trust. Track. Transform., ASPA remains committed to leading the industry—enabling secure supply chains, informed stakeholders, and a safer marketplace for consumers.

The journey continues, and ASPA invites the ecosystem to walk this road together.

Pharma Without Compromise: Technology-Driven Protection from Manufacturing to the Patient

There is a compact at the heart of every medicine: a silent agreement between the industry and the patient that what has been manufactured is exactly what it claims to be, pure, potent, and safe. For decades, honouring that compact relied largely on process discipline and regulatory oversight. Today, we have something far more powerful at our disposal. Technology has become the guardian of that promise, and the industry that does not embrace it risks falling short of the responsibility it carries.

The Indian pharmaceutical sector is projected to reach $130 billion by 2030. As the world's pharmacy, India holds a position of immense importance in global healthcare. This distinction carries not just commercial opportunity, but also a deep responsibility. At scale, the consequences of a compromised supply chain are not measured in returned stock or regulatory penalties. They are measured in patient outcomes. Counterfeit medicines, cold chain failures, and manufacturing lapses are real risks that require an equally serious and systemic response.

This is where the transformation driven by Pharma 4.0 and Pharma 5.0 becomes critical. The industry is moving from reactive quality management to proactive, technology-embedded assurance. Continuous manufacturing supported by artificial intelligence and machine learning allows real-time monitoring of production processes, enabling early detection of deviations and improving consistency in quality. Robotics in sterile manufacturing environments reduce contamination risks and enhance operational precision. At the same time, technologies such as 3D printing are beginning to redefine the future of personalised medicine by enabling customised dosages and complex drug formulations.

However, safeguarding medicines cannot end at the manufacturing floor. Trust must extend across the entire supply chain. Blockchain-based systems and end-to-end product serialisation are enabling unprecedented levels of transparency and traceability. By creating secure digital records of product movement from raw materials to dispensing points, these technologies significantly reduce the risk of counterfeit products entering the system.

Equally important is the role of smart logistics and digital monitoring. Many advanced therapies and biologics require strict environmental conditions during transportation. Internet of Things-enabled sensors now allow companies to monitor temperature and humidity throughout the cold chain in real time, ensuring that medicines maintain their safety and efficacy during transit.

Sheetal Arora,
Promoter & CEO, Mankind Pharma Ltd.

The final and perhaps most important layer of protection lies in empowering patients themselves. Smart packaging solutions, including QR codes and NFC-enabled labels, place the power of authentication directly in the hands of consumers. A simple smartphone scan can verify the authenticity of a medicine and provide critical product information. In India, the government's push for QR code implementation across major pharmaceutical brands is an important step forward. As an industry, we

must view such initiatives not merely as compliance requirements, but as opportunities to strengthen public trust.

Technology alone, however, cannot address these challenges in isolation. Protecting patients requires collaboration across the entire ecosystem. Pharmaceutical companies, regulators, authentication solution providers, and technology innovators must work together to build stronger frameworks for traceability, compliance, and consumer awareness.

The technologies available today represent a fundamental shift in how the pharmaceutical industry safeguards patient health. Our responsibility is to embrace this shift with urgency and purpose. Because when it comes to medicines, compromise is never an option.

Industry News

In the dynamic realm of innovation and collaboration, ASPA (Authentication Solution Providers' Association) has embarked on groundbreaking collaborations, aligning with renowned organisers to fortify the industry and deliver immense value to ASPA members.

- **Indusfood Manufacturing 2026:** Indusfood Manufacturing, India's premier trade platform for the food and beverage manufacturing industry, was successfully held from 6–8 January 2026 at Yashobhoomi Convention Centre, Dwarka, New Delhi. The event showcased the latest advancements in food processing technology, packaging solutions, ingredients, and hospitality equipment, bringing together global leaders, technology providers, and industry professionals. It served as a dynamic platform for networking, collaboration, and exploring new avenues for market expansion. ASPA proudly supported the event as a Supporting Partner, reinforcing its commitment to innovation, secure packaging, and technology-driven growth across the food manufacturing ecosystem. Building on this successful association, ASPA is also pleased to continue its partnership for the upcoming 2027 edition of Indusfood Manufacturing.
- **PackVision Expo 2026:** PackVision Expo, the country's foremost exhibition dedicated to packaging machinery, materials, and technology, was successfully held from 19–21 February 2026 at the Pune International Exhibition & Convention Centre (PIECC), Moshi, Pune. The expo showcased a comprehensive range of packaging innovations, including advanced packaging machinery, sustainable and biodegradable solutions, automation and robotics, smart and secure packaging, traceability and tracking solutions, logistics, and next-generation packaging technologies. ASPA was proud to support the event as a Supporting Association, contributing to industry engagement and dialogue around innovation, authentication, and traceability in packaging.
- **IAI Smart Irrigation Summit 2026 (31st March – 1st April 2026, Tosham, Bhiwani, Haryana) –** ASPA as Supporting Association for this mega event for smart Irrigation sector.
- **SmartTech Asia 2026:** SmartTech Asia Expo, representing cutting-edge technologies such as AI, IoT, RFID, biometrics, barcodes, digital payments, and smart cards, continues to be a leading platform for innovation and industry collaboration, building on its strong legacy over the past two decades. The upcoming edition is scheduled to be held on **7th–8th April in Mumbai**, where it will showcase next-generation smart technology solutions and offer valuable networking and business opportunities for industry stakeholders. The event will feature knowledge-rich conferences with industry experts discussing emerging trends in identity, accessibility, traceability, and the evolving security challenges associated with AI. ASPA is proud to support the event as a Supporting Association, further strengthening its commitment to promoting secure, authenticated, and traceable technology ecosystems.
- **Bharat Pack & Bharat Food Expo 2026:** Bharat Pack and Bharat Food Expo 2026 will be held from **23–25 July 2026 at Hall 2, JECC, Jaipur**, bringing together key stakeholders from the packaging and food processing ecosystem. The event will showcase innovative solutions in packaging, food technology, processing, and supply chain, while offering valuable opportunities for networking, collaboration, and business growth. ASPA is proud to support the event as a Supporting Association, further strengthening its commitment to promoting secure, innovative, and traceable solutions across the packaging and food industries.

These collaborations exemplify ASPA's proactive approach to fostering innovation, promoting security, and championing cutting-edge solutions across sectors such as Food and Beverage, Beauty and Cosmetics, Healthcare, Pharmaceuticals, Packaging, Brand Security, Security Services, Logistics, and technology. ASPA continues to be a driving force, navigating the industry toward a future of enhanced security and technological excellence.

Stay tuned for more exciting developments as ASPA continues to shape the landscape of authentication and traceability solutions.

accenture

ASPA
Authentication Solution Providers' Association
Diverse technologies, common goal.

SCAN the QR Code to download the report

Indian Traceability & Authentication Industry Study 2025

Report Key Findings

- **Research Basis:** This study, conducted by Accenture, is based on survey responses from ASPA member companies along with in-depth interviews with industry stakeholders, government authorities, and global bodies
- **Indian Market Size:** The Indian A&T industry stood at ₹9,705 crore in FY 2023-24, registering a CAGR of 7.4% between FY 2019-20 and FY 2023-24.
- **Forecast:** The market is projected to grow to ₹10,612 crore in FY 2024-25 and further reach ₹16,575 crore by FY 2028-29, representing a CAGR of 11.3%.
- **Global Context:** The global A&T market was valued at USD 147 billion in 2023 and is expected to grow to USD 382 billion by 2032, with Asia-Pacific showing the fastest CAGR of 14.2%.
- **End-User Segments:** Pharmaceuticals (17%), consumer products (14%), cosmetics (13%), and auto components (13%) are the largest adopters of authentication and traceability solutions in India.
- **Growth Drivers:** Rising counterfeiting, consumer awareness, regulatory requirements, and the expansion of e-commerce are key demand triggers.
- **Technology Adoption:** While traditional methods like holograms and QR codes remain dominant, emerging solutions such as AI, blockchain, IoT, and phygital (physical + digital) technologies are expected to drive the next phase of growth.

The Seal of Genuineness

HOLOSTIK®
Authenticating Supply Chains, Securing Lives

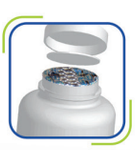
AUTHENTICATING
SUPPLY CHAINS, SECURING LIVES

Anti-Counterfeiting Solutions


Security Holograms (OVDs)


Tax Stamps


Holographic Hot Stamping Foils


Holographic Sealing Wads


Secure & Smart Labels (QR Code & RFID)


Shrink Labels


UV-embossed 3D Speciality Labels


Holographic Folding Cartons


Holographic & UV Packaging Films & Pouches

and many more...

Digital Solutions

Supply Chain Management

Product Authentication

Track & Trace

Warranty Management

Inventory Management

Reward Management

and many more...

Awards & Recognitions

ASPA Authentication Solution Providers' Association — Diverse technologies, common goal
IOTA International Optical Technologies Association
FINAT Linking the Label Community
CII
LMAI Label Manufacturers Association of India
Inc. 5000
innovative 100 Presented by Inc India
IFCA
FIPSA 2025

Certifications & Accreditations

DSIR Recognized
CMMI DEV/3
Indian Banks' Association
Government of India
DMFs Drug Master Files
ISO 14298:2013 · 9001:2015 · 14001:2015 · 45001:2018 · 27001:2013 · Registered

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