

Commerce ministry seeking views of ministries, NITI on draft bills on 5 cash crops

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Synopsis

India's commerce ministry has circulated notes to seek views from government think tank Niti Aayog on draft bills pertaining to five cash crops, namely tea, coffee, spices, rubber and tobacco. The ministry aims to boost their growth and foster a conducive environment for businesses by decriminalising minor offences. They plan to take the comments of the think tank and other ministries, and in due course seek the Union Cabinet's approval on the list of Spices (Promotion and Development), Rubber (Promotion and Development), Coffee (Promotion and Development), Tea (Promotion and Development) and Tobacco Board (Amendment) bills.

The commerce ministry is seeking views from different ministries and government think tank



The Department of Commerce proposes the repeal of Tea Act, 1953; Spices Board Act, 1986; Rubber Act, 1947; Coffee Act, 1942 and updation of Tobacco Board Act, 1975.

Niti Aayog on draft bills pertaining to five cash crops like tea and tobacco, an official said. The ministry has circulated separate notes for the bills related to cash crops of tea, coffee, spices, rubber and tobacco, which seek to promote their growth and create a conducive environment for businesses by decriminalising minor offences, the official said.

After taking the comments, the ministry will approach the Union Cabinet for approval on the drafts of the Spices (Promotion and Development) Bill; the Rubbe (Promotion and Development) Bill; the Coffee (Promotion and Development) Bill; the Tea (Promotion and Development) Bill; and the Tobacco Board (Amendment) Bill.

In 2022, the Department of Commerce proposed the repeal and updation of decades-old laws on these sectors and to introduce new legislation with a view to promoting their growth and creating a conducive environment for businesses

"Earlier the Niti Aayog had raised certain issues with the ministry on these five bills. Now all the issues have been resolved," the official added.

The commerce ministry had conducted stakeholder consultations on these draft bills to address the concerns.

The Department of Commerce proposes the repeal of Tea Act, 1953; Spices Board Act, 1986; Rubber Act, 1947; Coffee Act, 1942 and updation of Tobacco Board Act, 1975.

According to the draft bills, the new proposed legislations reflect the present realities and objectives of these sectors.

Explaining the rationale behind the proposal to repeal the Rubber Act, the draft bill has stated that in recent years, there have been widespread changes in the industrial and economic scenario especially with regard to development in rubber and allied sectors.

The draft Coffee (Promotion and Development) Bill has underlined that substantive portions of the existing Act dealing with pooling and marketing of coffee have become redundant/inoperative.

According to the draft Spices (Promotion and Development) Bill, 2022, there is a need to enable the Spices Board to provide focused attention across the entire supply chain of spices.

The ministry has proposed repeal of the archaic Tea Act as there is a paradigm shift in the recent decade with respect to the way tea is grown, marketed and consumed.

Similarly, the draft bill on tobacco has sought to update the existing law by promoting ease of doing business in the sector.

Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/commerce-ministry-seeking-views-of-ministries-niti-on-draft-bills-on-5-cash-crops/printarticle/102692829.cms>