



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Pesticide Industry opposes to stand in same league as Bootleggers, Drug Offenders, Dangerous persons, Sand smugglers and Black marketeers**

#### ***All four National Associations - CLI, CCFI, PMFAI & ACFI file joint plea***

**New Delhi, 06<sup>th</sup> December 2023:** The leading Industry Associations of agro-chemical, seeds and Fertilizers (“agri-products”) manufacturers and importers in the country, have opposed the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly Bills as the same are disproportionately harsh besides being ambiguous and contrary to the initiatives of the Central Government for ease of doing business and Decriminalisation. This plea was filed in response to the suggestions invited by the Maharashtra Legislative Secretariat on the Legislative Assembly Bill Nos. 40, 41, 42, 43 and 44 of 2023.

The joint representation submitted by the leading crop protection industry national associations, viz. Crop Care Federation of India (CCFI), CropLife India (CLI), Pesticides Manufacturers & Formulators Association of India (PMFAI) and Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI) foresee that there will be drastic consequences of the proposed amendments, which will travel way beyond the stated objectives of preventing crop loss and financial loss to farmers, and have the potential of destroying genuine businesses and depriving the farmer of crucial insecticides.

The MPDA act provides for preventive detention of offenders. Even minor offences are cognizable and non-bailable. The Police will have unlimited powers to arrest but are ill equipped to deal with technicalities of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides and Central laws governing them. The new amendments grant a free run to the law enforcers and puts manufacturers and sellers at their peril, with likely possibilities of harassment. These amendments makes it virtually impossible for genuine manufacturers/stake holders to conduct business in Maharashtra, under the looming threat of arrest & detention in police custody without recourse to bail for even minor offenses, no officer of any Co. would be willing to be nominated as the ‘responsible person’.

**Dr. K. C. Ravi, Chairman, CropLife India** said, “Sufficient penal provisions are already available to law enforcing agencies to act and weed out spurious seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. For instance the Agro-Chemical sector is governed by The Insecticide Act 1968 which enables the Maharashtra Directorate of Agriculture to prosecute errant pesticide manufacturers”.

**Dr. Ravi** added, “A single complaint from a farmer on problems with pesticide or seed or insecticide could land up corporates in trouble. Any person nominated as the company's representative could be arrested by police on a complaint lodged by a farmer and the clause under which the arrest is made is non-bailable.”

The agri-inputs industry — comprising seed manufactures, pesticide makers, crop protection and formulation manufacturers— is, in particular, worried over clubbing of the four sectors with dangerous persons, drug offenders and slum lords.



“Safety and quality in all aspects are ensured and today India is the second-largest manufacturer of agrochemicals after China and our products are exported to over 100 countries. The sector is already well regulated by the Union and State Governments and the proposed provisions are unreasonable as the agri inputs industry has a fool proof mechanism to check quality, **Dr. Ravi** elaborated.

**Mr. Deepak Shah, Chairman, Crop Care Federation of India (CCFI)** said, “The Agri input industry have jointly opposed the proposed introduction of Bills as amendment to MPDA Act, because the reputed, genuine and law abiding manufacturers of Pesticides, Seeds and Fertilizers will be treated at par with Slumlords, Bootleggers, Drug Offenders ,Dangerous persons, Sand smugglers and Black marketeers in case of any contravention to any of the provisions to Relevant Central Govt Acts and will be prosecuted and arrested without bail.”

This step would therefore, be counter-productive and would not be in the interest of the State or its people and will hamper agriculture as well as business. The said amendments, may also compel many companies which have been established and operating in Maharashtra since last several years, to shift their offices outside the State of Maharashtra.

**Mr. Pradip P. Dave, Pesticide Manufacturers & Formulators Association of India (PMFAI)** said, “we, along with the entire Indian agro-chemical industry are extremely concerned with the aforesaid Bills introduced by the Govt. of Maharashtra to indiscriminately make many offences under various acts cognizable and non-bailable irrespective of gravity of the offence.”

Such provisions, if implemented, would create immense fear of unfair prosecutions among the genuine manufacturers and authorized Distributors who have been working hard since last several decades to provide quality seeds, fertilizers and insecticides to farmers.

**Mr. Parikshit Mundhra, President, Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI)** said, “At a time when the Central government seeks to de-criminalize & facilitate ease of business, yet conversely Maharashtra government seeks to categorize Agri input Industry & trade in the same league as drug mafia, boot-leggers & dacoits. The Double Engine Sarkar seems working in different directions”.

There are several stringent provisions with suitable clauses for punishing those who fail to adhere to the requirements under the Insecticide Act which is a central Govt. Act. In case Maharashtra govt is seeking additional powers to act against adulterated, Fake, Duplicate inputs, in such case, such powers cannot be applied on genuine manufacturers. **The bills as proposed should not be passed.**

The manufacturers and sellers of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides have made repeated submissions in the past two months to the Maharashtra Agriculture Minister and officials and now plead for an urgent hearing before the commencement of the Winter Session at Nagpur.



### About [CropLife India](#):

[CropLife India](#) is committed to advancing sustainable agriculture and it is an association of 16 R&D driven member companies in crop protection. We jointly represent ~ 70% of the market and are responsible for 95% of the molecules introduced in the country. Our member companies have annual global R & D spend of 6 billion USD and are firmly committed to engaging with the farming community to enable Safe, Secure Food Supply.

Our member companies were established in India as far back as the 1950s; we continue to work hand-in-hand with the Government to build the agriculture sector – from direct investment of building factories, jobs creation, bringing in agriculture innovation and working endlessly over the years with multi-stakeholders to enhance agriculture productivity.

#### Our Members



#### Our Associate Members



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