

F.No.1/14/2019-EPL-I
Government of India
Ministry of Commerce & Industry
Department of Commerce
(EPL-I Section)

Subject: Major Achievements of Department of Commerce during October 2023

I. Export Performance

- Merchandise exports during October 2023 were USD 33.57 Billion as compared to USD 31.60 Billion in October 2022, registering a positive growth of 6.21 percent.
- For the month of October 2023, under merchandise exports, 22 of the 30 key sectors exhibited positive growth in October 2023 as compared to same period last year (October 2022). These include Iron Ore (2595.91%), Ceramic Products & Glassware (48.16%), Tobacco (47.6%), Cereal Preparations & Miscellaneous Processed Items (40.95%), Meat, Dairy & Poultry Products (38.57%), Cotton Yarn/Fabs./Made-Ups, Handloom Products Etc. (36.49%), Oil Seeds (29.7%), Drugs & Pharmaceuticals (29.31%), Electronic Goods (28.23%), Fruits & Vegetables (24.48%), Oil Meals (17.32%), Carpet (16.63%), Plastic & Linoleum (12.83%), Spices (10.78%), Man-Made Yarn/Fabs./Made-Ups Etc. (10.23%), Coffee (8.45%), Marine Products (8.16%), Engineering Goods (7.2%), Handicrafts Excl. Hand Made Carpet (4.72%), Tea (4.12%), Cashew (3.29%) and Jute Mfg. Including Floor Covering (0.42%).

II. Bilateral Trade

- A high-level delegation led by Commerce and Industry Minister (CIM) visited UAE on 5th and 6th October, 2023 for High-Level Task Force on Investments (HLTFI).
- A meeting of CIM with his UK counterpart was held on 13th October, 2023 in Delhi to take stock of the progress in India-UK FTA negotiations.
- A meeting between CIM and Mr. Pankaj Khimji, Advisor, Foreign Trade and Cooperation, Oman was held on 13th October 2023 in Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi.
- Ms. Claudia Sanhueza, Vice Minister of Commerce of the Republic of Chile met CIM on 23rd October 2023 in New Delhi in connection to their proposal for Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).
- A high-level delegation led by CIM visited Saudi Arabia to attend 7th edition of Future Investment Initiative Forum from 24th October 2023 to 26th October 2023.
- CIM had a virtual meeting with Mr. Guy Parmelin, Swiss Federal Councilor on 27th October, 2023 to review the progress of India-EFTA TEPA.
- The 3rd G7 Trade Ministers' Meeting was held from 28th – 29th October in Osaka-Sakai, Japan. India is one of the five invitee countries to the outreach programme to exchange views on the subjects of Trade and Sustainability, Economic Coercion and Enhancing Supply Chain Resilience, and the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC13).

- The 6th meeting of Azerbaijan-India Inter-Governmental Commission on Commercial, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation (IA-IGC) was held on 25th October 2023 in Baku, Azerbaijan. A delegation headed by Minister of State (MOS) attended the meeting.
- The 7th round of India-Australia CECA negotiations was held from 3rd to 20th October, 2023 through hybrid mode. In exploratory discussions, convergence on many elements of Labour and Environment Tracks has been achieved.
- The 6th round of India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations was held during 15th – 27th October 2023 in hybrid mode. Negotiations on 18 chapters of India-EU FTA were conducted in 71 technical sessions.
- A special round of negotiations for the India - Peru Trade Agreement was held virtually on 10th-11th October, 2023. Negotiations for the India-Peru Trade Agreement commenced in the year 2017 and the 5th round was concluded in August, 2019. On account of Covid, the negotiations came to a pause. The 6th round is expected to be held in December 2023.
- The 6th negotiating round of the IPEF was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 15th - 24th October 2023.
- The 12th round of Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ECTA) negotiations between India and Sri Lanka took place from 30th October to 1st November 2023 in Colombo.
- The first session of meeting of 'Sub-Committee on Trade in Goods' under India-UAE CEPA was held on 3rd October 2023 in virtual mode with UAE side to discuss the agenda finalization. The second session of meeting of 'Sub-Committee on Trade in Goods' under India UAE CEPA was held on 30th October 2023 with UAE .
- A meeting with EXIM Bank of India to initiate study to explore the feasibility of India- Southern African Customs Union (SACU) FTA was held on 9th October 2023.
- A meeting with CII to discuss the strategy to boost India's exports and investments in Africa region was held on 17th October 2023.

III. **SEZ**

- Development Commissioners of various SEZs during the month of October 2023 have approved the proposals for investment of Rs. 9,765 Crore, which will also provide employment to approx. 15,459 persons.

IV. **Export Infrastructure**

- The fund as detailed below has been released/reassigned for the projects under TIES during the month of October, 2023
 - i. Rs. 1.69 crore to Himachal Pradesh State Industrial Development Corporation (HPSIDC) for the project – Pharma Lab Baddi Phase-II
 - ii. Rs. 0.59 crore to Punjab Small Industries & Export Corporation for the project – Upgradation of existing STPs in the IFPs in Punjab.

- iii. Rs. 0.7050 crore to Andhra Pradesh Trade Promotion Corporation for the project – Development of Export Warehouse Facility at Vishakhapatnam.
- iv. Rs. 0.3175 crore to Tripura Industrial Development Corporation for the project – Setting up of Border Haat at Kamalpur, Dhalai, Tripura.
- v. Rs. 2.50 crore to Tamil Nadu Trade Promotion Organization (TNTPO) for the project- Expansion of Chennai Trade Centre.
- vi. Rs. 2.33 crore to APEDA for the project – Setting up Common Infrastructure facilities at Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel Niryat Suvidha Kendra at Chunar Tehsil Mirzapur – UP.

V. **Export Promotion**

- CIM convened a meeting with EPCs representatives / exporters and the apex Chambers of Commerce and Industry on 9th October 2023.
- Projects Export Promotion Council of India (PEPC) circulated information about 63 upcoming projects in Infrastructure, Water, Power and Consultancy to its members in October 2023.
- Chemicals and Allied Products Export Promotion Council (CAPEXIL) organized a 15 members' participation in UK Construction Week cum B2B Meets in UK during 3rd to 7th October, 2023.
- CAPEXIL conducted a programme on “Capacity Building Session on Emerging Opportunities from Free Trade Agreements – Industry Perspective” jointly with CII, in Chennai, on 31st October 2023. Also, a webinar programme on “Export-Import Finance and its strategies to reduce the cost” through virtual mode was conducted on 17th October 2023.
- Basic Chemicals, Cosmetics & Dyes Export Promotion Council (CHEMEXIL) organized participation of 20 exhibitors at Khimia 2023, Moscow under MAI from 30th October 2023 to 1st November 2023. CHEMEXIL organized participation of its members in Buyer Seller meets with importers of Argentina at Buenos Aires on 2nd October 2023 and with importers of Chile at Santiago on 5th October 2023 under the MAI Scheme. CHEMEXIL organised various webinars on topics like Japanese Industrial Standards, EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, Export Import Documents, Export Incentives with focus on Chemical Industry, KKDIK Obligations and Cosmetic Compliance in Turkey and RODTEP data format for its member exporters.
- Shellac Export Promotion Council (SHEFEXIL) organised the India Pavilion at SupplySide West, 2023, Las Vegas, USA under MAI Scheme during 25th and 26th October 2023 in which 10 Indian exporters participated. SHEFEXIL extended membership to 21 new companies during October 2023.

VI. **APEDA**

- **Participation in International Exhibitions: (i) Saudi Food Exhibition 2023 (23rd – 26th October):** APEDA actively participated in the Saudi Food Exhibition 2023 in

Riyadh, hosted under the India Pavilion. The event served as a platform to promote Indian food exports in Saudi Arabia which is APEDA's third largest export destination. (ii) **Anuga Food Fair 2023 (7th – 11th October)**: APEDA organized its presence at the Anuga Food Fair 2023, featuring the India Pavilion. This event included wet sampling of potential products and engaging cultural activities at the APEDA Pavilion. Anuga is the world's leading trade fair for food and beverages. And (iii) **International Rice Congress (16th – 19th October)**: APEDA marked its debut at the International Rice Congress organized by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Manila. APEDA highlighted its initiatives in establishing an efficient supply chain for rice exports, showcasing India as the leading producer and exporter of rice. The event also featured value-added rice products developed under an APEDA-IRRI project.

- **Bilateral Engagements: (i) Meeting with Egyptian Agencies:** APEDA organized a crucial meeting through an Expression of Interest (EOI) to discuss the potential for a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) for Halal Certification. And **(ii) Japanese Delegation Visit:** APEDA facilitated a visit by a Japanese delegation to explore sourcing opportunities for pineapples from the GI Vazakkulam pineapple cluster in Kerala.
- **Knowledge Dissemination:** APEDA conducted a knowledge session aimed at educating exporters on the regulatory requirements for exporting to the USA and Canada.

VII. MPEDA

- MPEDA has enrolled 103 farms, formed 50 new cluster farms and organised 1245 training programmes during October 2023.
- 9 exporters, 2 processing plants, 3 storages and 1 peeling shed were issued certificate of registration. Currently 431 EU approved seafood processing establishments and 69 EU approved cold storages are present.

VIII. Export Credit and Insurance

- During October 2023, ECGC Ltd. has supported exports of Rs 50,682 Crore, earned a premium of Rs 98.55 Crore, issued 902 policies, added 1,339 new buyers and settled claims worth Rs 26.93 Crore.

IX. DGFT

- Regional Authorities of DGFT have issued 16,185 Authorizations/Scripts under various FTP Schemes viz., 12,436 under Importers/Exporters Code (IEC), 15 under Service Exports from India's (SEIS), 2,157 under Advance Authorizations and 1,577 under Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) during October 2023.
- **Amendment in Policy condition No.07 (ii) of Chapter - 27 of Schedule-I (Import Policy) of ITC (HS), 2022 vide Notification No. 34/2023 dated 04/10/2023:** Time period for applying registration under Coal Import Monitoring System (CHIMS) has been revised from existing five days to zero days (arrival of shipment at port of entry)

- **Amendment in import policy condition of silver covered under Chapter-71 of Schedule-I (Import Policy) of ITC (HS), 2022 vide Notification No. 35/2023 dated 11/10/2023 :** In addition to nominated agencies as notified by RBI (in case of Banks) and Nominated agencies notified by DGFT, qualified jewelers as notified by International Financial Services centers Authority (IFSCA) will also be permitted to import Silver under certain specific ITC (HS) codes through India International Bullion Exchange IFSC Ltd. (IIBX).
- **Amendment in Policy Condition No. 4 of Chapter 84 of schedule 1 (import policy) of ITC (HS), 2022 vide Notification No. 38/2023 dated 19/10/2023 :** Import of IT Hardware manufactured in SEZ into DTA shall be exempted from an Import Authorisation. Import by private entities on behalf of Central & State Government Entities, for Defense & Security purposes, shall be exempted from an Import Authorisation.
- **Amendment of Import Policy Conditions for item under ITC (HS) Code 0511 99 99 of Chapter 05 of ITC (HS), 2022, Schedule –I (Import Policy) vide Notification No. 39/2023 dated 23/10/2023:** In addition to Human Embryo, import of Human Gametes under ITC(HS) 0511 99 99 have now been placed under “Prohibited” list in accordance with the ART (Regulations) Act, 2021 and the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021.
- **Automatic issuance of status holder Certificate** for exporter was made effective w.e.f. 9th October 2023. Now, the exporter will not be required to apply to the office of Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) for a Status Certificate and the export recognition will be provided by the IT system based on available Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIS) merchandise export electronic data and other risk parameters. With the launch of this new system, the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry will be recognizing about 20,000 exporters under FTP 2023 as Status Holders which will be a quantum jump from the earlier number of 12,518 exporters. The biggest increase in Status certification is seen in the 1 Star category, which is the lowest category and requires an export performance of at least US\$ 3 Million in the last 3 preceding financial years plus the 3 months of the current financial year. This will enable the Government to hand hold a larger number of small exporting entities and create a vibrant export ecosystem and help reach our export target of US\$ 2 Trillion by 2030.

X. DGTR

- Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) has issued Final Findings on Sunset Review Investigation of anti-dumping duty on import of “Meta Phenylene Diamine (MPDA)” originating in or exported from China PR in the month of October 2023.
- CBIC has imposed anti-dumping duty on imports of flax yarn of below 70 lea count originating in or exported from China PR vide notification no. 10/2023-Customs (ADD) dated 12th October 2023 on the recommendation of DGTR.
- During the month of October 2023 Trade Defence Wing (TDW) submitted various questionnaire responses, briefs and comments before different investigating authorities in the following Countervailing Duty (CVD) and Anti-Dumping Duty

(ADD) investigations and reviews initiated by other WTO member countries against exports from India:

Date of Submission/ Response	Product	Case No	Issuing Authority	Type of Proceeding	Remarks
06/10/2023	Forged Steel Fluid End blocks	C-533-894	USDOC	CVD Administrative Review	Filed New Subsidy Allegation Questionnaire Response
06/09/2023	Paper shopping bag	C-533-918	USDOC	CVD Administrative Review	Filed 1 st Supplemental Questionnaire Response
10/10/2023	Carbazole Violet Pigment	C-533-839	USDOC	CVD New Shipper Review	Filed Questionnaire Response
13/10/2023	Carbon Steel Welded Pipes	RR-2017-005	CBSA	CVD Expiry Review Investigation	Filed Expiry review questionnaire
18/10/2023	Glycine	C-533-884	USDOC	CVD Administrative Review	Filed Questionnaire Response Initial
24/10/2023	Paper shopping bag	C-533-918	USDOC	CVD Administrative Review	Filed Supplemental Questionnaire Response 2 nd

XI. Sawachhata Activities

- Swachhata Hi Sewa: On 1st October 2023, Sharamdaan was undertaken at 183 sites in 18 states covering 75 districts with 7568 participants including local residents, school students, resident associations, ward communities and municipal authorities under the slogan “Ek Tareekh Ek Ghanta Ek Saath”.
- Swachhata Pakhwada campaign was carried out from 15th September to 2nd October 2023 in which DoC along with its attached and subordinate offices organized activities Swachhata Run, Swachhata Pledges and Samvad totaling 158 activities.
- Special Campaign 3.0 was carried out from 15th September to 31st October 2023 during which pending references and records were identified for disposal and weeding out. DoC along with its attached and subordinate offices have weeded out 1,77,018 physical files, closed 5,261 e-files, conducted 516 campaigns, disposed 40 MP references, 1 IMC reference, 310 public grievances, 3 State Govt. grievances, 57 public grievance appeals and generated a revenue of Rs. 13,65,989 by scrap disposal.

XII. GeM

- GeM has achieved a remarkable milestone by surpassing Rs. 1.7 Lakh Crore in GMV till 31st October 23.

- In October 2023, GeM achieved a significant milestone by successfully enforcing Mandatory BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) codes in all relevant product categories available on the platform. This complex undertaking involved a thorough evaluation of 553 Mandatory BIS codes in relation to over 11,500 live product categories on GeM. The entire implementation process has been successfully concluded, and more than 550 categories underwent rigorous scrutiny, resulting in the creation of new categories as needed.
- A new service on Livestock Insurance has been started on GeM in October 2023.
- GeM has successfully completed a pilot for showcasing products in AR-VR for better user experience. This is a unique feature and is not available in similarly placed marketplaces in India. This service would be extended for more products and categories.
- During the month 140 training sessions and 18 events were conducted for various Buyer and Seller organizations with a total participant count of 7204 with 4800+ Buyers and 2400+ Sellers.
- GeM has signed an MoU with Indian Fan Manufacturing Association (IFMA) to enhance e-procurement with a user-friendly platform, aiming for innovation, quality, and excellence on 17th October, 2023.
- GeM has signed an MoU with Kerala State Small Industries Association to enhance capacity-building and expedite regional Sellers and Service Providers' onboarding onto the GeM platform on 7th October 2023.
